

# *The* **LIGHT** *of the* **DHAMMA**

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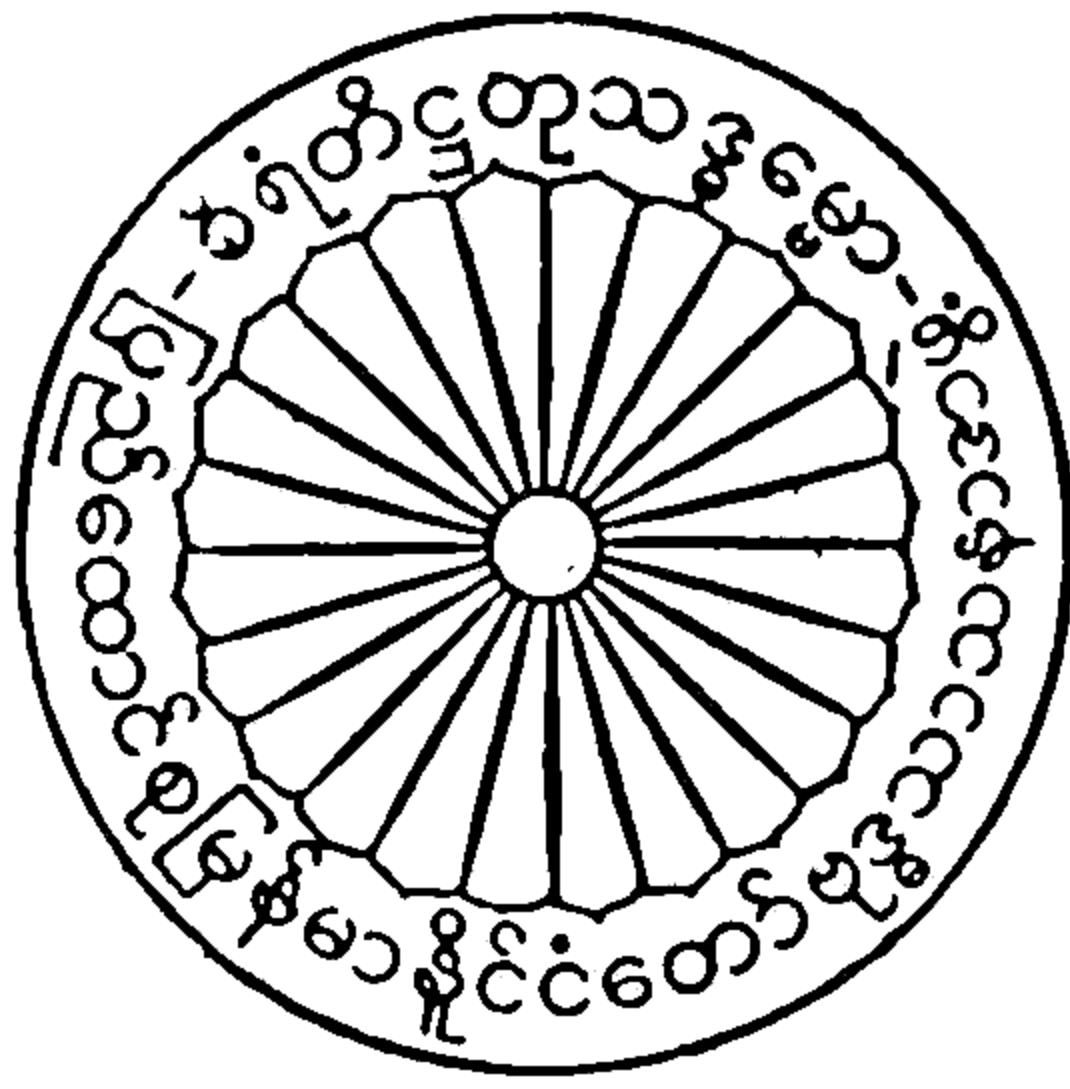
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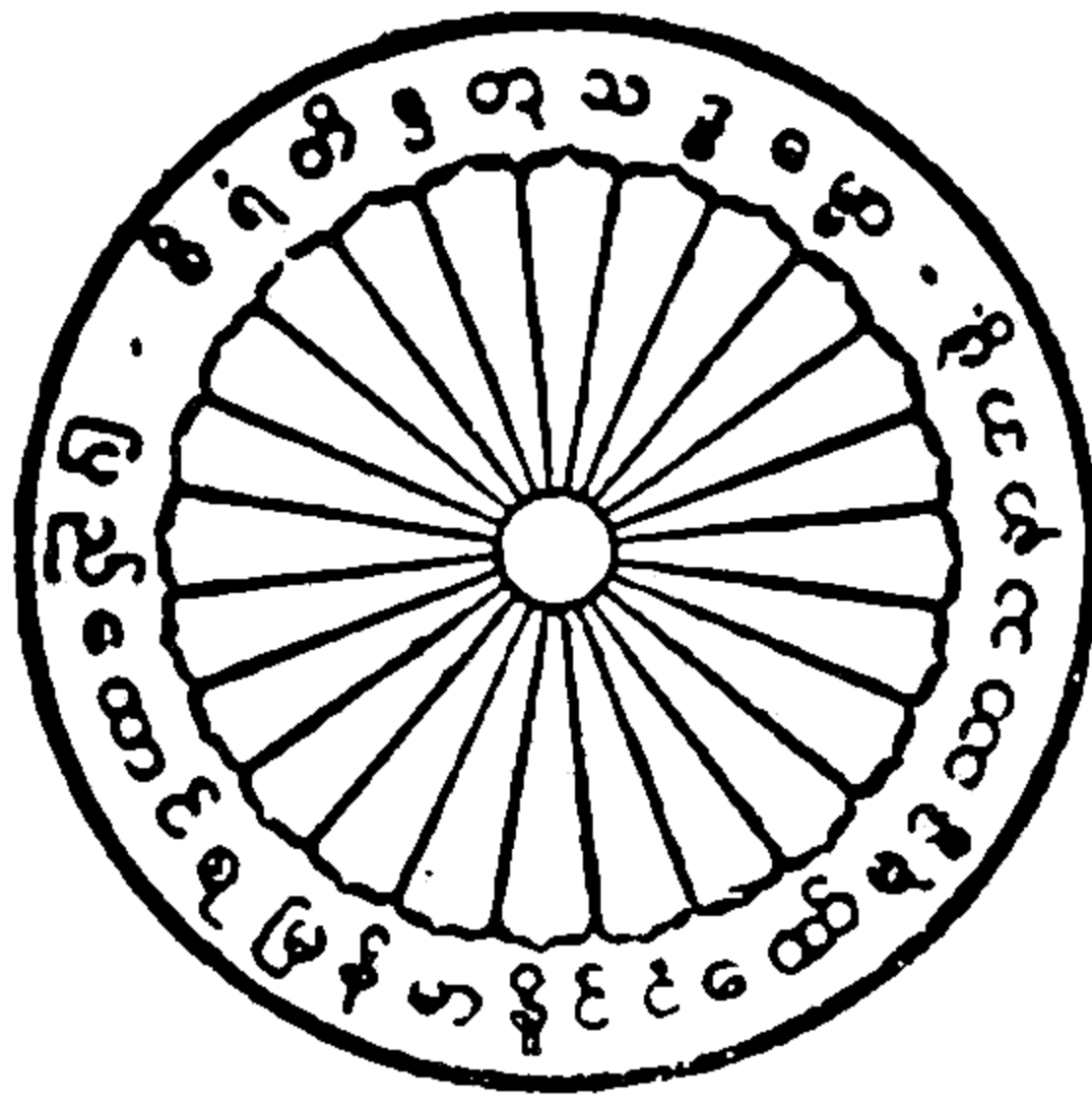
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## THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA

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THE EDITOR,  
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# SAMMĀDIṬṬHI DĪPANĪ

(The Manual of Right Views)

BY MAHĀTHERA LEDI SAYADAW, AGGAMAHAṬṬHĪ, D. Litt.

TRANSLATED FROM PĀLI INTO BURMESE BY LEDI PAṬṬHĪ  
U MAUNG GYI, M.A.

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

## PART TWO

### REFUTATION OF ISSARANIMMĀNA VIEW

#### Notion of a Creator :

In the *Ekaccasassata-vāda* (Eternity-belief with regard to some, and Non-eternity-belief with regard to others) of the Brahmajāla Sutta, Dīgha-nikāya; Brahmanimantana Sutta, Mūlapaṇṇāsa, Majjhima-nikāya; and the Brahma Samyutta of the Samyutta Nikāya, mention is made of the Great Brahmā who first resided in the First Jhāna Plane. This Great Brahmā may be regarded as the Supreme Being for the purpose of explaining this *Issaranimmāna* view.

Those who hold this Wrong View maintain as follows :

'Indeed this being, the Brahmā, the Great Brahmā, the Conqueror, the One who cannot be conquered by others, surely is All-seeing, All-powerful, the Ruler, the Creator of the three worlds—*Okāsaloka*, *Sattaloka* and *Sanḥāraloka*\*—, the Excellent, the Almighty the One who has already practised Calm, the Father of all that are and are to be. And he has created us.'

This *Issaranimmāna* View exists in this world on account of those *samaṇas* and brahmins who held the *Ekaccasassatavāda* the view held by those Brahmās who having fallen from the Brahmā Planes are reborn in the planes of men and Devas, and are able to remember their last existence. This *Issaranimmāna-vāda* has been clearly expounded in the Brahmajāla Sutta. Before the rising of the Omniscient Buddha, this Wrong View was maintained by many brahmins. When the Buddha arose, He fully refuted all Wrong Views, and this Wrong View of *Issaranimmānavāda* had no chance to thrive well in India.

Those who believe in the creation of a Supreme Being or God are called *Issaranimmāna-vādī*.

(The three modes of refutation of this *Issaranimmāna* View are the same as those in the case of *Pubbekata* View.)

(b) *One's own action only is one's own property.*

Those who hold this *Issaranimmāna* View totally reject the Right View expounded in the phrase "*Kammasakā sattā kammadāyādā*". Though they reject this Right View, yet they do not realise that they have unconsciously entered into the spheres of "*Kammasakā*" and "*Kammadāyādā*." This statement is true. Those who believe in the creation of a Supreme Being or God also become the "Owners of their kmmas" and "Heirs of their own kmmas." I shall clarify the matter.

In the matter of *Paccuppannakammasādhaniya* (Sphere in which present kmmas operate), those who maintain the *Issaranimmāna* View earn their livelihood by cultivating the lands. Simply by the act of cultivating lands themselves they become the 'owners of their own properties—actions done by themselves.' It means that they have their properties in the form of 'Cultivation.' Some of them earn their livelihood by trading. By the act of trading by themselves they become the 'owners of their properties—act of trading performed by themselves.' It means that they have their properties in the form of 'act of trading.' Some of the rest earn their living by serving under a government. Simply for their actions in serving under the government, they become the 'owners of their properties—act of serving under the government performed by themselves.' It means that they have their properties in the

\* *Okāsaloka* : World of space.  
*Sattaloka* : World of beings.  
*Sanḥāraloka* : World of formations.

form of 'government service.' The same principle holds good for other spheres of actions, such as arts, sciences, etc.

There are some people who believe in an Almighty God and take refuge in him. They are able to acquire wealth and glory only when they work for themselves in various walks of life. On the other hand, by simply having faith in the Almighty God, they will not be able to acquire such wealth and glory.

There are others who do not believe in God and also repudiate him. They also will have to work for their livelihood and thus acquire wealth and glory. So the wise understand that only those actions performed by beings themselves can bestow wealth and glory and that no God can give anything whatsoever to them.

*(c) How beings are saved by their own karmas:*

Those who believe in God, take refuge in him, have faith in him, and revere him throughout the whole of life. They believe that only those who have faith in God will be saved by him when they die, and that non-believers in God will not be saved by him.

Here, it is clear that only those who believe in God, have faith in him and take refuge in him will be saved by him, and not otherwise. This interpretation of *Issaranimmāna* View is perfectly clear. So, it is evident that only their actions in the form of 'believing in God,' 'taking refuge in him' and 'revering him' can save them, and the Almighty God cannot save them. This meaning is quite apparent.

*(d) Further explanation :*

In this very world, all people, believers and non-believers in God alike, have to follow various pursuits of life and earn their livelihood. There is no difference for any one in the 'Sphere in which present karmas operate.' Thus we see with our naked eyes that people work for themselves to earn their living, thus themselves becoming the 'owners of their own karmas in the form of volitional actions in the present life.'

In the sphere in which past karmas operate also, there is no difference whatsoever. We see with our naked eyes that conditioned by their past karmas, they are also working to maintain life. We have never noticed that any other specific benefit comes into existence simply by the agency of God

and without the operation of either past or present karmas.

*(e) Evil rules the world :*

In the world there are the following types of beings : well-bred people; low-bred people; wealthy people; poor and needy people; long-lived creatures; short-lived creatures; beings who seldom contract diseases; beings who often contract diseases; beautiful creatures; ugly creatures; moral people; immoral people; educated people; uneducated people; wicked people; insane people; thieves; robbers; leprous people; blind creatures; deaf creatures; dumb creatures; persons who commit matricide; persons who commit patricide; murderers; thievish persons; persons who are in the habit of indulging in sexual misconduct; people who tell lies; people who slander; people who use harsh language; people who talk flippantly; avaricious people; people who have ill-will against others; and people who hold Wrong Views. So, in this world there are very few people who are righteous; but there are many who are base and mean.

*(f) Right Views of those who believe in Karma and its result :*

Those who believe in both past and present karmas and their resultant effects maintain as follows :—

'Relating to the sphere in which past karmas operate, because beings have performed wholesome actions in their past existences, they now enjoy the resultant effect in the form of becoming superior types of people; and because they have performed unwholesome actions in their past existences, they suffer the resultant effect of becoming inferior types of people. Again, as regards the sphere in which present karmas operate, because beings work well in the present life, they become superior types of people; and because they perform evil deeds, they become inferior types of people.'

## **11. Refutation of Ahetuka View**

*(a) (The View of the Uncausedness of Existence)*

Those who hold this Ahetuka View maintain as follows :

'Everything in this world such as the corruptness or purity of beings is predestined by fate, and not by past or present karmas and energy and knowledge, and all of this has been explained in the chapter on the

refutation of *Pubbekata* View.\* Or in other words they hold that everything in the world comes into existence of itself and is neither caused nor conditioned by past karmas, generative kamma and sustained kamma. The various physical and psychical phenomena of existence conventionally termed Ego, Personality, Man, Woman, Animal, etc. are a mere play of blind chance, and not the outcome of causes and conditions. They come into existence of their own accord without being created by a Creator, nor caused and conditioned by generative and sustained karmas. Such things as 'richness,' 'poverty,' 'complacency,' 'destruction,' 'wickedness,' 'cleverness,' etc. come into existence of their own accord and not due to any cause or condition whatsoever.'

(The three ways of refuting the *Ahetuka* View are the same as those in the case of *Pubbekata* View.)

(b) *No action can arise of its own accord :*

Before the rising of the Omniscient Buddha, this *Ahetuka* Wrong View was held by such heretical teachers as Guṇakassapa as mentioned in the Nārada Jātaka. During the lifetime of the Buddha, this fatalistic 'View of Uncausedness' of existence was taught by Makkhali-Gosāla and Acela of India. Those who maintain this *Ahetuka* Wrong View reject the *Kammasakata* View—"Owners of their karmas are beings"—which is the Word of the Buddha. Although they reject this *Kammasakata* View, they are not aware of the fact that they themselves thereby become the holders of the *Kammasakata* View—"Owners of their karmas are the beings." If, according to this Wrong View, all physical and psychical phenomena of existence be a mere play of blind chance and not the outcome of causes and conditions, then there will be no difference between the 'Sphere in which past karmas operate' and the 'Sphere in which present karmas operate.' Also there will be no difference whatsoever whether one commits small offences, or grave offences, or whether one acts wickedly, or cleverly, because all volitional actions are not the outcome of causes and conditions, but they come into existence of their own accord or as a general rule.

(c) *Different characteristics of kamma, ñāṇa and viriya :*

According to this *Ahetuka* View, all Desire-to-do, Energy and Volitional Actions

will be rendered useless and unproductive, because however lofty acts beings might perform, they would not obtain any specific resultant effect. It would be just the same as if they remained idle and did nothing at all. In reality, these Dhammas—Volitional Actions, Knowledge and Energy—are not barren and unproductive. They are the Dhammas that will surely give resultant effects. It is apparent that the greatness or smallness of present karmas depends on the degrees of Desire-to-do, Energy and Wisdom exercised by the people.

Owing to the variety of these karmas there exist a variety or resultant effects.

In regard to this matter, the wise people maintain this Right View in this manner :

'In the sphere where present karmas operate, actions leading to "complacency", "destruction," "richness," or "poverty" experienced by beings in the present life are termed the "root-conditions". This state of affairs is quite evident in the present world, and in the future existence also, Desire-to-do, Energy and Wisdom which cause the richness, poverty complacency and destruction of beings, and good conduct and evil conduct will not remain unproductive. In fact, they will give appropriate resultant effects. As these mental factors are not barren and will surely give results, in the matter of the "Sphere in which past karmas operate," beings, conditioned by their various past karmas will attain the various kinds of resultant effects in their future existences.'

(d) *To determine the root-causes by seeing the results:*

For example, by seeing the various kinds of plants and vegetation we can determine that they have different kinds of seeds. In the same manner by seeing the various positions of beings, such as complacency, destruction, richness and poverty, we should be able to judge the various kinds of karmas committed by them in their past existences.

The Tathāgata knew all these. He had realised and seen face to face the functionings of all karmas in regard to the spheres in which past and present karmas operate, and also the resultant effects, such as richness and poverty—the vicissitudes of life. For these

\* View that all sensations enjoyed by beings in the present existence are caused and conditioned only by the volitional actions done by them in their past existences.



reasons He was able to refute this *Ahetuka* View.

## 12. Further Explanation of *Kammasakā-Vāda*

### (a) *Three causes or conditions:*

The phrase "*Kammasakā*" has been expounded in the chapter on '*Pubbekata-veda-niggaha*' (Refutation of the *Pubbekata* View.) Now, I shall explain those things which have been left unexplained in that chapter. There are people who cultivate the lands. For the fructification or the destruction of their cultivation, there are causes or conditions. They are:—

- (1) *Hetu* (root-condition),
- (2) *Paccaya* (supporting condition) and
- (3) *Sambhāra* (component conditions).

Of these three causes.

- (1) Paddy seeds and cultivators are *Hetu* causes;
- (2) The nutritive essence (*oja*) contained in the soil of the land where cultivation takes place is *Paccaya* condition; and
- (3) The following are *Sambhāra* causes:—  
Rainfall; drainage; rivers and creeks to feed the fields; clouds, moisture-laden wind, sun, moon and constellation; and moral practices exercised by the people residing in the country.

### (b) *Concrete example:*

Here, if the paddy seeds are pure, the cultivation will be successful and the required crop will be obtained. If from the beginning the seeds be impure or inferior, the cultivation will not be successful and a poor crop will result. Even if the seed be pure and full of pith, the cultivation can be complete and successful only when the cultivator knows when to break the clods, till the soil, sow the seeds in the nursery, transplant the young plants and do all that is necessary for cultivation. Although the cultivator does all that is required for the cultivation, a good rainfall brings a good harvest and a bad rainfall brings a bad harvest resulting in the destruction of the cultivation. Even if the rainfall be good, if there be no drainage or water-gates to feed the fields with water when required and to let out the water when the fields are flooded, the cultivation cannot be successful and will be liable to be destroyed. In the case of the fields which are irrigated by river water, the cultivator must know when to irrigate the lands and when not to. Other-

wise the crops will be destroyed. The water in the river has to depend on the amount of rainfall that takes place in the mountains in the up-country. If there be no rainfall in the up-country or at the source of the river, the water in the river cannot rise. Rain can fall only when the necessary causes and conditions are fulfilled; otherwise no rain can fall.

### (c) *Kammas and the above example*

We now notice that even in the matter of cultivation, there are thousands of causes and conditions either for the complete success of cultivation or its destruction.

The above is the brief explanation of what is actually happening in the world.

### (d) *Primary effect and Secondary effect*

Past kammas that cause the pleasures and sufferings of beings in the next existence may have two kinds of effects, primary and secondary effects.

### (e) *Present kammas and two kinds of effects*

In this respect I shall first explain present kammas. For example, a person learns a great art or craft. Until and unless he finishes this course of training, he will have to undergo various kinds of suffering on account of this art or craft. But at times during the course of his training he may come across happiness. When he is successful in his training, he will earn plenty of money, or may be able to enjoy a high position in the Government service. He will then acquire various kinds of happiness and wealth. Depending on this one man who is well learned, his other relatives and friends also will be able to enjoy various kinds of pleasures.

### (f) *Secondary effect*

The amount of suffering which a person experiences before the completion of his training, and the benefits enjoyed by his friends and relatives on account of his art are not the primary effects of his training; but they are secondary effects.

### (g) *Primary effects*

After the completion of his training in any art or craft, if a person succeeds he will be able to acquire great wealth or enjoy a good position in the Government service or enjoy various kinds of pleasures. These are the primary effects of his learning the art.

### (h) *Evil kammas and two kinds of effect*

Similarly there are two kinds of effect in the case of evil kammas also. For example,

a man murders another person. The enemies of the deceased may honour the murderer and esteem him; or they may present him with cash or kind. On the other hand, the relatives of the deceased hate the murderer, and they will kill the murderer in revenge, or set the wheels of justice in motion so that the murderer may receive capital punishment. These resultant effects of the murderer's kamma—the evil action in killing a living person—are called the secondary effects.

This murderer, on the dissolution of his body after death, will be reborn in the Lower Worlds as the resultant effects of his evil kamma in killing a man, and undergo immense suffering. This is his primary effect.

If the murderer, conditioned by his past wholesome kammās, be reborn as a human being, he will, wherever he enters into existence, be of short life, have much sickness and encounter enmity with his rivals. These are the primary effects of his present kamma of killing a man.

Due to his act of murdering a man, his relatives will experience various kinds of suffering. These are the secondary effects.

The same principle holds good in the case of wholesome volitional actions done by beings.

This secondary effect is also subdivided into two kinds.

They are :

- (1) The one that takes effect at the time of the commission of deeds; and
- (2) The one that takes effect when the relevant kamma ripens in a future birth.

Of these the resultant effect which takes place at the time of the commission of an action is not 'regular'. The person who sustains the secondary effect due to wholesome kamma may experience 'Suffering', while the person who sustains the secondary effect due to an evil action may experience 'Happiness'. But when the relevant kamma ripens in a future existence, the secondary effect is 'regular', because evil kamma will give the resultant effect of 'Suffering' and good kamma will give the resultant effect of 'Happiness'.

#### (i) Primary effect

Primary effect takes place surely; because morally good kamma will give a good

resultant effect and not a bad one, and bad kamma will give a bad resultant effect and not a good one. Primary effect takes place in the life-continuum of the doer of a volitional action and not in the life-continuum of any other person. After experiencing the primary effects of his kamma, if a person dies, that primary effect also is exhausted and no reaction of it ever remains.

#### (j) Secondary effect

In the case of the secondary effect, it takes place in the life-continua of other persons. So even when the doer of kamma dies, the reaction of the secondary effect remains either for the good or evil of others.

I shall explain it more clearly. Suppose a virtuous and powerful being who had fulfilled *Pāramitās* in his previous births is conceived in the womb of a woman of a certain family.

Since the conception of that supernormal child, his parents will be successful in all walks of life and find an increase in wealth, attendants and servants. If the family be a royal one, wise counsellors and valiant soldiers or generals will surely exist. The locality in which the child is conceived in his mother's womb will have sufficient rainfall, and the inhabitants of that country will enjoy prosperity. The country in all will become prosperous. This is the reaction of the effect due to that powerful and virtuous being.

In this connection the Dhammapada says:

“Dullabho purisājañño  
na so sabbattha jāyati,  
yattha so jāyatī dhīro  
tam kulam sukham edhati.”

—Verse 193.

The thorough-bred man (Buddha) is rare; he is not born everywhere. Where that wise man is born that family attains happiness.

#### (k) Present kamma and secondary effect

Here, I shall explain this with an example. If an efficient person, by means of his manpower, wealth or technical knowledge, constructs arable lands, gardens, ponds, wells, dams, canals and metal roads, these constructions will remain for a great length of time for the benefit of many other people, and depending on these establishments many people will be able to reap many pleasurable benefits.

### (l) *Past kamma and secondary effect*

Just as we see the secondary effect of present kamma with our own eyes, in the case of the sphere in which past kammās operate, many people can depend on one virtuous supernormal being. Again, due to the reaction of evil kammās done by a being in his past existence, many people will have to undergo hardship and suffering.

Thus wise men believe that every being possesses past and present kammās with their respective primary and secondary effects.

The above is the brief exposition of how past and present kammās give various kinds of resultant effects.

### 13 Exposition of *Attā-Diṭṭhi* (Personality-belief)

#### (a) *How beings have to wander in the Happy and Woeful Courses of existence due to Personality-belief.*

Various kinds of Wrong Views, various kinds of evil things and various kinds of kammās lie latent in and accompany the life-continua of beings who wander in the Round of Rebirths. On account of these unwholesome mental factors, the following conspicuously come into existence :

- (1) Four Lower Worlds, and
- (2) Various kinds of unwholesome volitional actions.

Beings wander in different planes of existence due to these bad mental factors. To say the least, even dogs and pigs etc. of the Four Lower Worlds in the course of the round of rebirths may become Great Brahmās. Sometimes they are reborn in the higher Brahmā planes, such as Ābhasara, Subhakiṇha, Vehapphala and Formless Spheres. Although they have opportunity to be reborn in these higher Brahmā planes, when their span of life comes to an end or when their merit is exhausted they have to be reborn in the Four Lower Worlds. This is the way of the universe.

Vibhanga says : \*

“ Ukkhittā puññatejēna,  
Kāmarūpagatim gatā,  
Bhavaggatampi sampattā,  
Puna gacchanti duggatim.”

Conditioned by their wholesome volitional actions, beings are reborn in Sensuous Sphere, Form Sphere and even in *N’eva-sañña-nāsaññāyatana* (Sphere of Neither-Perception Nor-Non-perception) in the Fine-material spheres. Even then, when their span of life expires or when their merit is exhausted they are reborn in the Woeful Course of existence.

As these Wrong Views, evil mental factors and evil kammās accompany the life-continua of beings, although they become Great Brahmās they are puthujjanas (worldlings); they are the inhabitants of the mundane sphere. Just as stones and spears thrown up into the sky fall down to the ground by the force of gravity, beings are liable to be reborn in the four Lower Worlds. As their life-continua are fully laden with hellish mental factors they are ‘beings bound for (impermanent) Hades’; as the wicked mental factors accompany their life-continua, they are evil-minded beings destined to do evil deeds; as they exist in the sphere where evil kammās abound, they are the inhabitants of that sphere; as they exist in the sphere where most beings have no ‘Eyes of Wisdom’, they are the inhabitants of that sphere.

Which are *kaṇha-bhūmi* (Plane where evil kammās abound) and *andha-bāla-bhūmi* (Plane where beings being blinded by folly have no ‘Eye of Wisdom’)? The above-mentioned *pāpa-diṭṭhi* (Wrong Views), *pāpa-dhamma* (Wickedness; evil habit) and *pāpa-kamma* (Unwholesome deeds) manifest in these two planes (or spheres) *kaṇha-bhūmi* and *andha bāla-bhūmi*. The next question is: Why do even Great Brahmās exist in these two planes? Because they profess the Eternity-belief or Personality-belief—‘I am, I am.’

#### (b) *Force of attā-diṭṭhi*

The root-cause of all Wrong Views, evil mental factors and evil kammās is *attā-diṭṭhi*. So long as these *pāpa-diṭṭhi* exist in the life-continuum of a being, *pāpa-diṭṭhi*, *pāpa-dhamma* and *pāpa-kamma* will exist there also. So long as these *pāpa-diṭṭhi* etc. accompany his life-continuum, he will be termed as ‘One bound for Hell,’ ‘Evil-

\* Vibhanga has been translated as ‘Distinctions’ ‘Classifications’ ‘Distribution’. The late Venerable Nyanatiloka Mahāthera in his ‘Guide through the Abhidhamma Piṭaka’ says: ‘By reason of its first three treatises, Vibhanga, in a certain measure, is supplementary to Dhammasaṅgani and, at the same time, a foundation to the Dhātu-Kathā (two other books of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka). Those three treatises are entirely devoted to an exhaustive investigation of three categories of the highest importance or a real understanding of Buddhist Philosophy.’

doer'. 'Inhabitant of *kanha*-plane' and 'Inhabitant of *andhabāla*-plane'. Once this *attādiṭṭhi* ceases, all these three will be extinguished along with all kinds of evils.

Those beings who cannot eradicate *attādiṭṭhi* will become heirs of *pāpa-diṭṭhi*. In what manner? Because a being who professes *attā-diṭṭhi* (Personality-belief) cannot get rid of these untold and uncountable *pāpa-diṭṭhi*, etc. which he has been holding for many world-cycles and existences in the round of rebirths.

Although beings whose life-continua are accompanied by *attā-diṭṭhi* are reborn in the Sphere of Neither-Perception-Nor-Non-perception, these *pāpa-diṭṭhi* etc. will give them appropriate resultant effects and undoubtedly drag them to the lower worlds.

So long as beings cannot dispel this *attā-diṭṭhi*, they will have to become the victims of these *pāpa-diṭṭhis* etc. in their future existences.

And in whichever future existence they may arise, they will profess all kinds of Wrong Views that may arise, perform all sorts of 'Evil Conduct' they may have opportunity to do, and commit such weighty karmas as matricide etc.

In the present life also, those who profess *attā-diṭṭhi* will generally have a tendency to profess Wrong Views, entertaining evil mental factors and do evil deeds.

#### (c) *How Issaranimmāna View arises due to attā*

It is true that *Issaranimmāna* View comes into existence on account of this *attā-diṭṭhi*. On account of this *attā-diṭṭhi* the Great Brahmā who does not know whence he came from and when he will fall from that Brahmā plane thinks himself to be permanent, immutable, eternal, not subject to change and remain as something eternal. He thinks to himself: "I am Brahmā, the Great Brahmā, the Conqueror, the One who cannot be conquered by others, surely All-Seeing, All-powerful, the Ruler, the Creator, the Excellent, the Almighty, the One who has already practised Calm, the Father of all that are and all that are to be." Occasionally he makes his appearance in the planes of the Brahmās who have shorter spans of life and says: "I am permanent; I am Almighty; I create you all".

When those Brahmās hear him say those words, they believe in him and thus become the holders of this View. Not to say of

those beings who are reborn in the planes of Devas and the world of men.

(Those who maintain this *Issaranimmāna* View regard him as their Creator God. Conditioned on the words spoken by that Great Brahmā, this View came into existence in this world).

#### (d) *No real happiness due to attā*

So long as one is not able to get rid of *attā-diṭṭhi*, although he may become a Great Brahmā who declares himself to be a Creator God, he will not be able to get out of the entanglement of *pāpa-diṭṭhi* etc. that had already arisen in his life-continuum in the past existence, that arise in the present existence and also that will exist in his future births also; and he will surely be reborn in the Lower Worlds in his future births.

They are thus the mere inhabitants of *kanha-plane*, just as fishes and turtles inhabit the great ocean. As they do not possess 'Eyes of Wisdom', they are the inhabitants of *andhabāla* plane.

Those beings who are reborn at present in the lower worlds due to their past unwholesome karmas, anyone amongst them, may, in a future existence, become a Great Brahmā who declares himself as Almighty God, when his past wholesome karmas ripen. Thus it should be borne in mind that, if *attā-diṭṭhi* lies latent in the life-continua of beings, they will not be able to find happiness while wandering in the Round of Rebirths, and will not be able to find an escape from the *samsāra* (Round of Rebirths).

### 14. Benefits Derived from the Total Destruction of Attā-Diṭṭhi

#### (a) *No more rebirth in Hell*

When the beings are able to eradicate *attā-diṭṭhi* which is the root-cause of *pāpa-diṭṭhi* etc., these mental phenomena which had accompanied their life-continua in the past, accompany in the present, and would accompany the life-continua of the beings in future existences, will be totally destroyed.

They then become the heirs of the wholesome volitional actions done by them in the past existence, which are being done in the present existence, and would be done by them in the future existence. Once the beings have expelled *attā-diṭṭhi*, all Wrong Views, evil mental factors and evil karmas which would lead them to the Lower Worlds will disappear along with *attā-diṭṭhi*. They will no more be



reborn in the lower worlds, and will be out of the grip of the lower worlds in their future existences. As they will be doing no more evil actions, they will forever be free from all evil.

(b) *Attainment of Nibbāna*

The Full Extinction of Defilements including *pāpa-diṭṭhi* etc. and the total extinction of Evil karmas with the groups of existence still remaining is called *Sa-upādisesa-nibbāna* or the *Supramundane Sphere* or the Sphere of the Holy Ones.

(c) *No more death*

*Sa-upādisesa-nibbāna*—the state of the Extinction of Defilements such as *pāpa-diṭṭhi* etc., with the groups of existence still remaining, never gets spoiled, destroyed or deteriorates in the world-cycles to come. This state is permanent and eternal; it never changes; it never decays; it does not dissolve; and it does not disappear. This state has no 'dissolving moment', and so it is called *Amata*.

(d) *Unoriginatedness*

Those who have attained such state of Extinction of the Defilements and the root-cause—*attā-diṭṭhi*, will find that this state of Extinction is never destroyed in the future. *Pāpa-diṭṭhi* etc. cannot arise in their minds again. The state of their total abstinence from doing Evil that would lead them to the Lower Worlds will never be destroyed, nor will it decay. They will no more be reborn.

This state of the Extinction of Defilements being *Amata-dhātu* (the state where there is no more death or rebirth), it is called *Asankhāta-dhātu* (the Uncreated; the Unoriginated; *Nibbāna*).

(e) *Planes in which Sotapannas are to arise*

Since the time *attā-diṭṭhi* is extinguished in the minds of those people who have attained *Sa-upādisesa-nibbāna*, they have passed the stage of *puthujjanas* (worldlings) and are no more within the sphere of worldlings. They begin to exist in the plane of Holy Ones

and become the inhabitants of that plane. As they have passed the mundane stage, they are in the Supramundane sphere and become the inhabitants of that sphere.

These people who have eradicated *attā-diṭṭhi* will pass amongst heavenly and human beings only at most seven times more through the Round of Rebirths and finally attain *Nibbāna*.

(Note — This refers to *Sotapannas*)

However, there is no number-limit for some of these people who are reborn or who are to pass amongst the Brahmās, because they have become *uddhāgāmi-puggalā* (beings who will pass through higher stages).

They may pass amongst the Brahmās for hundreds, thousands and hundreds of thousands of existences and world-cycles; but they will never be reborn in the Lower Worlds, nor will they pass amongst *Devas* and men.

Conditioned by their past and present wholesome karmas, these Holy Ones will fare-on in the Happy Course of Existence. In the future also they will only perform wholesome volitional actions and never dream of performing unwholesome volitional actions. *Attā-diṭṭhi* which is the root-cause of *pāpa-diṭṭhi*, *pāpa-dhamma* and *pāpa-kamma* have been totally extinguished by them.

These people who have dispelled *attā-diṭṭhi* become the heirs of their present karmas. They possess wholesome karmas which will lead them to the Happy Course of Existence and are bound for that Course only. As they are endowed with exalted *Dhammas*, they become exalted Ones. As they exist in the sphere where wholesome and pure karmas abound, they become inhabitants of that sphere. As they possess the 'Eye of Wisdom' by means of which they can realize the Four Noble Truths, they are Noble Ones. In whichever existence they may wander in the future, they will be endowed with *ariyapaññā* (Wisdom pertaining to the Holy Ones) they are

*ariyas* (Noble Ones). As they pass the stage of those *puthujjanas* who are not able to dispel *attā-diṭṭhi*, they become *ariyas*, the inhabitants of the Supramundane sphere.

During the lifetime of the Omniscient Buddha, in Sāvātthi, Banares, Vesālī, Rājagaha, there were many householders who, after having dispelled *attā-diṭṭhi* became *Sotapannas*.

It is said that Sanankumāra, King of Brahmas once revealed that there had been a countless number of Holy Ones.

Those people who became *Sotāpannas* during the lifetime of the Buddha are now conspicuously existing in the six Deva planes.

These *Sotāpannas*, being *uddhamsota-puggalā* (persons who are going upwards in the stream of life) will never be reborn in a Lower plane.

In the ten thousand universes within the *Jāti-khetta* (Realm of Rebirth), there are decillions and decillions, an incalculable number, of *Cātumahārājika Devas* who are *Sotāpannas*. There is also an incalculable number of *Sotapannas* in each of the five other planes of *Devas* and in the *Brahmā* planes, such as *Brahmaparisajjā* plane. These *Sotapannas* being *uddhagāmi-puggalā* (persons who are going upwards in the stream of life) will never be reborn in a Lower plane.

(To be Continued.)



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# SATIPATTHĀNA

## THE HEART OF BUDDHIST MEDITATION

*Bhadanta Nyanaponika Mahāthera*

( Continued from previous issue )

### THE THREEFOLD VALUE OF BARE ATTENTION

Bare Attention has the same threefold value as attributed earlier to the Buddha's Mind-Doctrine and to right Mindfulness, in general: it will prove a great and efficient helper in *knowing, shaping and liberating* the mind.

#### 1. The value of Bare Attention for Knowing the Mind

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

'Only things well examined by Mindfulness can be understood by Wisdom, but not confused ones' (Comy. to Sutta Nipāta). A specimen of research that is to be examined with the help of a microscope, has first to be carefully prepared, cleaned, freed from extraneous matter, and firmly kept under the lens. In a similar way, the 'bare object' to be examined by wisdom, is prepared by Bare Attention. It cleans the object of investigation from the impurities of prejudice and passion; it frees it from alien admixtures

and points of view not pertaining to it; it holds it firmly before the Eye of Wisdom, by slowing down the transition from the receptive to the active phase of the perceptual or cognitive process, thus giving a vastly improved chance for close and dispassionate investigation.

This preliminary work of Bare Attention is of importance not only for the analytic, *i.e.* the dissecting and discriminating function of mind by which the elements of the object's make-up are revealed. It is also of great assistance to the equally important synthesis, *i.e.* for finding out the object's connections with, and relations to other things, its interaction with them, its conditioned and conditioning nature. Many of these will escape notice if there is not a sufficiently long period of Bare Attention. As a maxim of great importance and of varied application, also to practical matters, it should always be kept in mind that the relations between things can be reliably ascertained only if first the single members of that relationship have been carefully examined in their various aspects which are pointers to diverse connections. Insufficient analytical preparation is a frequent source of error in the synthetic part of philosophical systems and scientific theories. It is just this preparation that is carefully attended to and remedied, by the method of Bare Attention. Its consequences upon the spiritual practice that concerns us here have been mentioned before and will become still clearer in the following pages.

Bare Attention first allows things to speak for themselves, without interruption by final verdicts pronounced too hastily. Bare Attention gives them a chance to finish their speaking, and one will thus get to learn that, in fact, they have much to say about themselves, which formerly was mostly ignored by rashness or was drowned in the inner and outer noise in which ordinary man normally lives. Because Bare Attention sees things without the narrowing and levelling effect of habitual judgments, it sees them ever anew, as if for the first time; therefore it will happen with progressive frequency that things will

have something new and worth while to reveal. Patient pausing in such an attitude of Bare Attention will open wide horizons to one's understanding, obtaining thus, in a seemingly effortless way, results which were denied to the strained efforts of an impatient intellect. Owing to a rash or habitual limiting, labelling, misjudging and mishandling of things, important sources of knowledge often remain closed. Western humanity, in particular, will have to learn from the East to keep the mind longer and more frequently in a receptive, but keenly observing, state—a mental attitude which is cultivated by the scientist and the research worker, but should increasingly become common property. This attitude of Bare Attention will, by persistent practice, prove to be a rich source of knowledge and inspiration.

What are now, in particular, the results, in terms of knowledge, obtainable through Bare Attention? We shall mention here only a few of them which are of primary importance. It must be left to one's own 'travel experience' on the Way of Mindfulness, to vindicate, elaborate, and supplement what is said here in brief.

It has already been said, and is now repeated on account of its fundamental importance: in the light of Bare Attention, the seemingly uniform act of perception will, with increasing clarity, appear as a sequence of numerous and differentiated single phases, following each other in quick succession. This basic observation will gradually unfold its inherent wealth of single facts and their far-reaching implications. It will prove to be a truly scientific observation, in the literal meaning of the word, *i.e.*, 'knowledge-yielding' (C.J.Ducasse). It will show, *e.g.*, the basic differentiation of the perceptual process: the presentation of the comparatively bare sense data,\* and the subsequent phase of interpreting and evaluating them. This is ancient psychological knowledge to the Buddhist, going back to the Discourses of the Master himself, and elaborated in later books and commentaries of the Abhidhamma. This distinction between the 'bare facts of the case' and the attitude to them, has, apart from its scientific ('knowledge-yielding') import, also a far-reaching practical significance: it locates the earliest, *i.e.*, the most promising point where we can determine the further development of the given situation as far as it depends

on our attitude towards it. The consideration of that aspect, however, belongs to the following chapter on Mind-shaping.

When practising Bare Attention, the first powerful impact on the observer's mind will probably be the direct confrontation with the ever-present fact of Change. In terms of the Dhamma, it is the first of the three Characteristics, or Signata, of Life: Impermanence (*anicca*). The incessant sequence of individual births and deaths of the events observed by Bare Attention, will become an experience of growing force, and will have decisive consequences on the meditative progress. From that same experience of momentary change, the direct awareness of the two other Characteristics of Existence will emerge in due course, *i.e.*, of Ill (Suffering, Insufficiency; *dukkha*) and Impersonality (*anicca*).

Though the fact of Change is commonly admitted, at least to a certain extent people in ordinary life will generally become conscious of it only when it challenges them fairly vehemently, in either a pleasant or, mostly, an unpleasant way. The practice of Bare Attention, however, will bring it forcibly home that Change is always with us; that even in a minute fraction of time, the frequency of occurring changes is beyond our ken. Probably for the first time, it will strike us — not only intellectually, but touching our whole being—in what kind of a world we are actually living. Coming face to face with Change, as experienced vividly in our own body and mind, we have now started 'to see things as they really are'. And this refers particularly to the 'things of the mind'. Mind cannot be understood without knowing it as a flux and remaining aware of that fact in all investigations devoted to the knowledge of mind. To show the fact as well as the nature of Change in mental processes is, therefore, a fundamental contribution of the practice of Bare Attention to mind-knowledge. The fact of change will contribute to it in a negative way, by excluding any static view of mind, assuming permanent entities, fixed qualities, etc. The insight into the nature of Change will be a contribution in a positive way, by supplying a wealth of detailed information on the dynamic nature of the mental processes.

In the light of Bare Attention focussed on sense perception, the distinctive character of

\* The reservation 'comparatively bare', has been added because according to the penetrative scrutiny of the Abhidhamma, even the earliest stage of bare presentation of sense data carries a subtle flavour from earlier simlaly impressionsi.



material and mental processes, their interrelation and alternating occurrence as well as the basic 'objectifying' function of mind will gain in clarity.

In speaking here of 'objectifying' (*i.e.*, having as object, taking as object), and of material and mental processes, we do so just for our practical purpose of analysis. These terms are not meant to express our advocating a dualism of subject object and mind matter. Nor do we side with any monism of Mind only or Matter only. The Buddha's Middle Teaching of Dependent Origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*) transcends all these concepts of monism, pluralism, and dualism. In a world of conditionality, relativity and flux, as directly experienced in the practice of Bare Attention, those rigid notions will soon appear as quite incongruous.

These latter casual remarks of ours point to another contribution to mind-knowledge of a more theoretical character concerning those aforementioned age-old philosophical attitudes which arise from false factual premises, with vast theoretical superstructures framed to fit those premises. But we are not directly concerned with these problems here. In our context we need only point out that common experience as well as penetrative scrutiny show us differentiations in the process and the contents of cognition which are sufficiently strong to justify our pragmatic use of the traditional pairs of terms, subject object, and mind matter.

After the practice of Bare Attention has resulted in a certain width and depth of experience in its dealings with mental events, it will become an immediate certainty to the meditator that mind is nothing beyond its cognizing function. Nowhere, behind or within that function, can any individual agent or abiding entity be detected. By way of one's own direct experience, one will thus have arrived at the great truth of No-soul or Impersonality (*anattā*; Skr. *anātma*), showing that all existence is void of an abiding personality (self, soul, over-self, etc.) or an abiding substance of any description. Also to modern psychology that unique and revolutionary teaching of *anattā* may likewise become 'knowledge-yielding' in a high degree, through its strong impact on the root and various branches of the science of the mind. These implications will be evident to the student of that field of knowledge, and cannot be illustrated here. In calling the *anattā* doctrine unique, we wanted to distinguish it

from what is known in the West as a 'psychology without psyche' which is mostly of a materialistic hue, and which, with a deprecatory undertone, is sometimes called 'soul-less'. Buddhist psychology, however, is not materialistic in either the philosophical or in the ethical sense of the word. The true ethical and philosophical significance of the No-self doctrine, and also its 'emotional tone', can be fully understood only in the context of the entire Buddhist doctrine, and not in isolation. We shall have occasion to return to that subject.

Bare Attention will, in addition, supply surprising as well as helpful information about the working of one's own mind: the mechanism of one's passions and emotions, the reliability of one's reasoning power, one's true and pretended motives, etc. Clear light will fall on one's weak and strong points as well, and of some of them one will become aware for the first time.

This method of Bare Attention, so helpful to mind-knowledge and, through it, to world-knowledge, tallies with the procedure and attitude of the true scientist and scholar: clear definition of subject matter and terms; unprejudiced receptivity for the instruction that comes out of the things themselves; exclusion, or at least reduction, of the subject factor in judgment; deferring of judgment until a careful examination of facts has been made. This genuine spirit of the research worker, manifested in the attitude of Bare Attention, will always unite the Buddha-Dhamma with true science, though not necessarily with all the theories of the day. But the purpose of the Buddha-Dhamma is not the same as that of secular science which limits itself to the discovery and explanation of facts. The Buddha's mind-doctrine, however, is not restricted to a theoretical *knowledge* of the mind, but it aims at the *shaping* of mind, and, through it, of life. In that object, however, it meets with that branch of modern psychology which is devoted to the practical application of theoretical mind-knowledge.

## 2. The value of Bare Attention for Shaping the Mind

The greater part of man-made suffering in the world comes, not so much from deliberate wickedness, as from ignorance, heedlessness, thoughtlessness, rashness and lack of self-control. Very often a single moment of mindfulness or wise reflection, would have

prevented a far-reaching sequence of misery or guilt. By *pausing* before action, in a habitual attitude of Bare Attention, one will be able to seize that decisive but brief moment when mind has not yet settled upon a definite course of action or a definite attitude, but is still open to receive skilful directions. The next moment may change the situation fully, giving final supremacy to tainted impulses and misjudgments from within or false influences from without. Bare Attention slows down, or even stops, the transition from thought to action, allowing more time for coming to a mature decision. Such slowing down is of vital importance as long as unprofitable, harmful or evil words and deeds possess an all too strong spontaneity of occurrence, *i.e.*, as long as they appear as immediate reactions to events or thoughts, without giving to the 'inner brakes' of wisdom, self-control and common sense a chance to operate. Acquiring the habit of 'slowing down' will prove an effective weapon against rashness in words and deeds. By learning, through Bare Attention, to pause, to slow down and to stop, the plasticity and receptivity of the mind will grow considerably, because reactions of an undesirable nature will no longer occur automatically, with the frequency as before. When the supremacy of these habitual reactions which are so often left unopposed and unquestioned, is regularly challenged, they will gradually lose their power.

Bare Attention will also allow us time for the reflection whether, in a given situation, activity by deed, word, or mental application is necessary or advisable at all. There is often too great an inclination for unnecessary interference, and this becomes another avoidable cause of much suffering and superfluous entanglement. When acquainted with the peace of mind bestowed by the attitude of Bare Attention, one will be less tempted to rush into action or to interfere in other people's affairs. If, in that way, complications and conflicts of all kinds are lessened, the endeavour to *shape* the mind will meet with less resistance.

In regard to these two points mentioned last ('rashness' and 'interference'), the practical advice is in brief: to look well before leaping, to give the mind a chance to take a longer and larger view of things, to curb the urge for 'action at any cost'.

• Bare Attention is concerned only with the *present*. It teaches what so many have forgotten: *to live with full awareness in the Here*

*and Now*. It teaches us to *face* the present without trying to escape into the past or the future. Past and future are, for average consciousness, not objects of observation, but of reflection. And, in ordinary life, the past and the future are taken but rarely as objects of truly *wise* reflection, but are mostly just objects of day-dreaming and vain imaginings which are main foes of Right Mindfulness, Right Understanding and Right Action as well. Bare Attention, keeping faithfully to its post of observation, watches calmly and without attachment the unceasing march of time: it waits quietly for the things of the future to appear before its eyes, thus to turn into present objects and to vanish again into the past. How much energy has been wasted by useless thoughts of the past: by longing idly for bygone days, by vain regrets and repentance, and by the senseless and garrulous repetition, in word or thought, of all the banalities of the past! Of equal futility is much of the thought given to the future: vain hopes, fantastic plans and empty dreams, ungrounded fears and useless worries. All this is again a cause of avoidable sorrow and disappointment which can be eliminated by Bare Attention.

Right Mindfulness recovers for man the lost pearl of his freedom, snatching it from the jaws of the dragon Time. Right Mindfulness cuts man loose from the fetters of the past which he foolishly tries even to reinforce by looking back to it too frequently, with eyes of longing, resentment or regret. Right Mindfulness stops man from chaining himself even now, through the imaginations of his fears and hopes, to anticipated events of the future. Thus Right Mindfulness restores to man a freedom that is to be found only in the present.

Thoughts of the past and the future are the main material of *day-dreaming* which by its tough and sticky substance of endlessly repetitive character crowds the narrow space of present consciousness, giving no chance for its shaping, and making it, in fact, still more shapeless and slack. These futile day-dreams are chief obstacles to concentration. A sure way to exclude them is to turn the mind resolutely to the bare observation of any object close at hand, whenever there is no necessity or impulse for any particular purposive thought or action, and when, consequently, a mental vacuum is threatening that, other-wise, is quickly invaded by day-dreams. If they have entered already, one need only make these day-dreams themselves

objects of close observation in order to deprive them of their mind-diluting power, and finally disperse them. This is an example of effective method of 'transforming *disturbances* of meditation into *objects* of meditation' which will be treated later.

Bare Attention brings order into the untidy corners of the mind. It shows up the numerous vague and fragmentary perceptions, unfinished lines of thought, confused ideas, stifled emotions, etc., which are daily passing through the mind. Taken singly, these vain consumers of mental activity are weak and powerless, but by their accumulation they will gradually impair the efficiency of mental functions. Since these thought-fragments are mostly allowed to sink into subconsciousness without being properly attended to, they will naturally affect the basic structure of character, dispositions, and tendencies. They will gradually reduce the range and lucidity of consciousness in general, as well as its plasticity, *i.e.* its capacity of being shaped, transformed, and developed.

The unflattering self-knowledge gathered, through introspective Bare Attention, about the squalid and disreputable quarters of our own mind, will rouse an inner resistance to a state of affairs where clarity and order are turned into untidiness, and the precious metal of the mind into dross. By the pressure of that repugnance the earnest application to the practice of the Way of Mindfulness will increase, and the excessive squandering of mental energy will gradually come under control. It is the automatic 'tidying' function of Bare Attention that serves here for Shaping of Mind.

Bare Attention directed toward our own mind will supply that candid information about it which is indispensable for success in its shaping. By turning full attention to our thoughts as they arise, we shall get a better knowledge of our weak and our strong points, *i.e.* of our deficiencies, and our capacities. Self-deception about the former and ignorance of the latter make self-education impossible.

By the skill attained through Bare Attention to call bad or harmful things at once by their true names, one will take the first step toward their elimination. If one is clearly aware, *e.g.* in the Contemplation on the State of Mind. 'There is a lustful thought', or, in the Contemplation on Mental Contents: 'In me is now the Hindrance of Agitation',

this simple habit of making such express statements will produce an inner resistance to those qualities which will make itself felt increasingly. This dispassionate and brief form of mere 'registering' will often prove more effective than a mustering of will, emotion or reason, which frequently only provokes antagonistic forces of the mind to stiffer resistance.

Our positive qualities, too, will of course be focussed more clearly, and those which are either weak or not duly noticed will get their chance, and develop into full bloom and fruition. Untapped resources of energy and knowledge will come into the open, and capacities will be revealed which were hitherto unknown to oneself. All this will strengthen the self-confidence which is so important for inner progress.

In these and other ways the simple and non-coercive method of Bare Attention proves a most efficacious helper in *Shaping the mind*.

### 3. The value of Bare Attention for Liberating the Mind

The suggestion is proffered to the reader that he may try, at first for few test days, to keep as well as he can to an attitude of Bare Attention toward people, inanimate environment, and toward the various happenings of the day. By doing so one will feel at once how much more harmoniously such days are passing compared with those when one gave in to the slightest stimulus for interfering by deed, word, emotion or thought. As if protected by an invisible armour against the banalities and importunities of the outer world, one will walk through such days serenely and content, with an exhilarating feeling of ease and freedom. It is as if, from the unpleasant closeness of a hustling and noisy crowd, one has escaped to the silence and seclusion of a hill top, and, with a sigh of relief, is looking down on the noise and bustle below. It is the peace and happiness of detachment which will thus be experienced. By stepping back, thus, from things and men, one's attitude toward them will even become friendlier, because those tensions will be lacking which so often arise from interfering, desire, aversion, or other forms of self-reference. Life will become a good deal easier, and one's inner and outer world more spacious. In addition, we shall notice that the world goes on quite well without our earlier amount of intervention, and that we



ourselves are all the better for such a restraint. How many entanglements will be avoided, and how many problems will solve themselves without our contribution! Hereby Bare Attention shows visibly the benefit of abstaining from kammic action, be it good or evil, *i.e.* from a world-building, sorrow-creating activity. Bare Attention schools us in the art of letting go, weans us from busyness and from habitual interfering.

The inner distance from things, men, and from ourselves, as obtained temporarily and partially by Bare Attention, shows us, by our own experience, the possibility of finally winning *perfect* detachment and the happiness resulting from it. It bestows upon us the confidence that such temporary stepping *aside* may well become one day a complete stepping *out* of this world of suffering. It gives a kind of foretaste, or at least an idea, of the highest liberty, the 'holiness during life-time' (*diṭṭhadhamma-nibbāna*) that has been alluded to by the words: 'In the world, but not *of* the world'.

For achieving that highest, and final, liberation of mind, Bare Attention forges the principal tool, — that highest penetration of truth which is called, in the Dhamma, *Insight* (*vipassanā*). This, and only this, is the ultimate purpose of the method described here, and it is the highest form of its mind-liberating function.

*Insight* is the direct and penetrative realisation of the Three Characteristics of Existence, *i.e.* Impermanence, Suffering, and Impersonality. It is not a mere intellectual appreciation or conceptual knowledge of these truths, but an indubitable and unshakable personal experience of them, obtained, matured, through repeated meditative confrontation with the facts underlying those truths. Insight belongs to that type of life-transforming knowledge which the French thinker Guyeau had in mind when saying: 'If one knows but does not act accordingly, one knows imperfectly'. It is the intrinsic nature of Insight that it produces a growing detachment and an increasing freedom from craving, culminating in the final deliverance of the mind from all that causes its enslavement to the world of suffering.

That direct confrontation with actuality, which is to mature into Insight, is obtained by the practice of Bare Attention, and of *Satipaṭṭhāna* in general. Its methodical

development will be described in the concluding part of the book. But even its casual application in routine life will show its liberating influence on mind, and, if persistently applied, it will create a mental background helpful to the strict and systematic practice.

It is the nature of Insight to be free from Desire, Aversion and Delusion, and to see clearly all things of the inner and outer world as 'bare phenomena' (*suddha-dhamma*), *i.e.* as impersonal processes. Just that is characteristic also of the attitude of Bare Attention, and therefore the practice of it will make for a gradual acclimatization to the high altitudes of perfect Insight and final Deliverance.

This high goal of perfect detachment and insight may still be very distant to the beginner on the Path, but owing to his own kindred experiences during the practice of Bare Attention it will not be completely foreign to him. To such a disciple the goal will have even now, a certain intimate familiarity and thereby a positive power of attraction which it could not possess if it had remained to him a mere abstract notion without anything corresponding to it in his own inner experience. To him who has entered the Way of Mindfulness, the goal will appear like the contours of a high mountain range at the distant horizon, and these outlines gradually assume a friendly familiarity for the wanderer who gazes at them while plodding his toilsome way that is still so far from these exalted summits. Though the chief attention of the pilgrim must needs be given to the often dull piece of road under his feet, to the various obstacles and confusing turns of his path, it will be of no small importance that, from time to time, his eyes turn to the summits of his goal as they appear on the horizon of his experience. They will keep before the eyes of his mind the true direction of his journey, helping him to retrace his steps when he has gone astray. They will give new vigour to his tired feet, new courage to his mind, and hope which often might fail him were the sight of the mountains always blocked, or if he had only heard or read about them. They will also remind him not to forget, with all the 'little joys on the way', the glory of those summits waiting for him on the horizon.

### Clear Comprehension

The receptive and detached attitude of Bare Attention can and should certainly



occupy far greater room in our mental life than it usually does, and therefore it has received here such a detailed treatment. But this should not make us forget the fact that Bare Attention can generally be maintained only during a limited time of ordinary life, apart from periods expressly given to its practice. Every hour of the day demands some activity by deed, word or thought. First there are the numerous demands for bodily activity or movement, be it only that a change of posture becomes necessary. We have also again and again to abandon the protection and self-sufficiency of silence, and enter into relationship with others through speech. And the mind too cannot avoid defining its position, to itself and to the outer world, and issuing orders for action, innumerable times during the day. Mind has to choose, to decide and to judge.

It is Clear Comprehension (*sampajañña*), the second aspect of Right Mindfulness, which is concerned with that greater part of our life, the active one. It is one of the aims of the practice of Satipaṭṭhāna that Clear Comprehension should gradually become the regulative force of all our activities, bodily, verbal and mental. Its task is to make them purposeful and efficient, accordant with actuality, with our ideals and with the highest level of our understanding. The term 'Clear Comprehension' should be understood to mean that to the *clarity* of bare mindfulness is added the full *comprehension* of purpose and of actuality, internal and external, or, in other words: Clear *Comprehension* is right knowledge (*ñāṇa*) or wisdom (*paññā*) based on right attentiveness (*sati*).

Though the Discourse itself speaks only of clearly comprehending action and speech, and consequently deals with Clear Comprehension in the section on the Contemplation of the Body, it goes without saying that also thinking, the third 'door of action', has to be brought under the control of Clear Comprehension.

#### *The four Kinds of clear Comprehension*

Buddhist tradition as embodied in the commentaries to the Buddha's Discourses, distinguishes four kinds of Clear Comprehension: (1) the Clear Comprehension of Purpose (*sātthaka-sampajañña*), (2) the Clear Comprehension of Suitability (*sappāyasampajañña*), (3) the Clear Comprehension of the Domain of Meditation (*gocara-sampajañña*) (4) the Clear Comprehension of Reality

(lit. of Non-delusion) (*asammoha-sampajañña*).

#### 1. Clear Comprehension of Purpose

This first kind of Clear Comprehension enjoins that, before acting, one should always question oneself whether the intended activity is really in accordance with one's purpose, aims or ideals, *i.e.* whether it is truly purposeful in the narrower practical sense as well as in view of the ideal. The timely pausing for putting that question—if this is not already customary with the practiser—, will have to be learned through the training in Bare Attention.

Some may think that there is no need to make purposeful action a special subject of their study or training, because they believe that, as 'rational beings', they naturally act 'rationally', *i.e.* purposefully. But quite apart from the *ultimate* purpose of the Way of Mindfulness, it will certainly be admitted that man does not always behave rationally at all; not even when the purpose he has in mind is quite narrow and thoroughly selfish and materialistic. Man often forgets about his purposes, programmes and principles, neglecting even his most obvious advantage and all this not only through rashness or passion, but even on account of quite casual whims, childish curiosity or lazy indolence. For these, or other secondary reasons, people are often deflected into directions that are quite other than their proper aims in life and their true interests.

Under the impact of the innumerable impressions crowding upon man from the world of outer and inner multiplicity (*papañca*), an occasional deviation from the general direction of one's life is certainly understandable, and, to a certain extent, even unavoidable for the most of us. All the more does it become necessary to limit such deviations to the very minimum, and to strive for their complete elimination which however is realised only in the perfect Mindness of the Saint (Arahat). But these deviations from the straight path of purposeful living cannot be excluded, or even considerably reduced, by an enforced subordination to the dictatorial commands of dry reasoning or moralizing. The emotional side in man for which such whimsical deviations or escapades are often an outlet or a kind of protest, would soon revolt and even retaliate by some demonstrative irrationality of behaviour. In order to achieve a 'peaceful

penetration' of the irrational regions of mind, and to win them over for willing participation in the realization of clearly comprehended purpose, work has again to 'start at the beginning': on the broad foundation of Bare Attention. By the simple, non-coercive and harmonizing methods of that practice, the tension-creating forces within the mind which obstruct purposeful activity, will gradually be absorbed into the main current of one's aims and ideals. A purposeful co-ordination of the various tendencies and needs of the human mind, and of the numerous human activities, will be achieved only through a systematic, but organic and natural extension of conscious control, or self-mastery. Only in such a way can an increasing balance of the emotions and a general harmony and stability of character result,— to which finally all waywardness, all arbitrariness, down to the 'demonstrative irrationality' of behaviour and self-destructive tendencies, will become fundamentally alien. The safe basis of such a self-mastery, *i.e.* of sense-control and mind-control, is the non-coercive method of Bare Attention. By strengthening the habit 'to stop and think', it gives to Clear Comprehension of Purpose an increased chance of coming into operation, and by its presentation of undistorted facts, it provides for Clear Comprehension the reliable material for making its decisions.

It may happen, and cause deep regrets afterwards, that a high ideal, or an important purpose that was forgotten or temporarily pushed aside for the sake of a passing whim or fancy, becomes, before being taken up again, completely unattainable owing to a changed *external* situation caused by oneself, through just these incidental excursions. The ideal, or purpose, may likewise become unattainable owing to an *inner* change in the individual himself, caused by the same behaviour. If one habitually yields to all whims, or allows oneself too easily to be deflected from one's purpose, then such qualities as energy, endurance, concentration, loyalty etc. will gradually be undermined and weakened to such an extent that they become insufficient for achieving that original purpose, or even for truly appreciating it any longer. In that, unheeded by the person concerned, his ideals, religious convictions and even his ordinary purposes and ambitions, are turned to empty shells which he still carries along with him, solely through habit.

These remarks may suffice to show that urgent necessity for a strengthening of

purpose in action, and for extending its orbit. This is done by the constant presence of Clear Comprehension of Purpose. It has the *negative* function of counteracting the desultoriness, aimlessness and wastefulness of an inordinately great part of human activity, in deeds, words and thoughts. Its *positive* function is to concentrate the dispersed energy of man, to render it a fit tool for the task of winning mastery over life. In this way, Clear Comprehension makes for the formation of a strong inner centre in one's character, powerful enough to co-ordinate gradually all one's activities. Again, Clear Comprehension of Purpose strengthens *mind's leadership* by giving to it skilful and determined *initiative* in cases where mind used to yield passively or react automatically to pressure from within and without. It also takes care of wise *selection* and *limitation* in man's activity, which is necessitated by the confusing multitude of impressions, interests, demands, etc., with which we are faced in life. Strong purposefulness will not easily be diverted by them.

The proper aim of the *initiative*, and the truly befitting governing principle of that *selection*, is *growth in the Dhamma* (*dhammato vuddhi*), *i.e.* increase in the understanding, and progress in the practice, of the liberating doctrine of the Buddha. This is, according to the Teachers of old, the true purpose meant in that first kind of Clear Comprehension. If once the Truth of Suffering has been understood in its full gravity, progress on the Path leading to the Extinction of that Suffering will actually become the most pressing need, the only true and worthy purpose of man's life.

## 2. Clear Comprehension of Suitability

The Clear Comprehension of the Suitability of an action under given circumstances gives due consideration to the fact that it is not always in our power to decide upon that course of action which is the most purposeful and the most desirable one, but that our selection (spoken of before) is often restricted by circumstances or by the limitations of our own capacities. This second kind of Clear Comprehension teaches the Art of the Practicable, the adaptation to the conditions of time, place and individual character. It restrains the blind impetuosity and wilfulness of man's wishes or desires, aims or ideals. It will save many unnecessary failures which man, in his disappointment or discouragement, often blames on the purpose or the

ideal itself, instead of attributing it to his own wrong procedure. Clear Comprehension of Suitability teaches the 'Skilfulness in the choice of the right means' (*upāya-kosalla*), a quality which the Buddha possessed in the highest degree and which he so admirably applied to the instruction and guidance of men.

### 3. Clear Comprehension of the Domain of Meditation

The first two divisions of Clear Comprehension apply also to the purely practical purposes of ordinary life, though conformity to the religious ideal (*dhamma*) is insisted upon with regard to that practical application too. Now we enter the proper domain of the Dhamma as a life-transforming force. By the *third* kind of Clear Comprehension the characteristic *methods* of mind-development used in the Dhamma are incorporated in everyday life itself; and by the *fourth* kind ('Reality') the same is done with the fundamental *tenet* of the Dhamma, *i.e.* the teaching of impersonality, or absolute fluidity of the 'individual'.

The Clear Comprehension of the Domain of Meditation is explained by the old commentators as 'Not abandoning the subject of meditation' during one's daily routine. This has to be understood in a twofold way.

(1) If a particular, *i.e.* single, subject of meditation is practised, one should try to blend it with the work or thought directly required by the day's occupations, or, expressed conversely, — the work at hand should be given a place in the framework of the meditation, as an illustration of its subject. For instance, the function of eating may easily be related to contemplations on the impermanence of the body, the four elements, conditionality, etc. Thus the two domains of meditation and ordinary life will merge, — to the benefit of both. If, as it may be in many cases, no link can be established between one's present work and one's particular meditation, or if such connection would seem too vague or artificial to be of real value, then the subject of meditation should be deliberately 'put down like goods carried in the hand' but one should not forget to take it up again as soon as the work in question has been attended to. That procedure will also count as 'not abandoning the subject of meditation'.

(2) But if one's meditative practice is all-round Mindfulness, as advocated here, there will be no need ever to lay aside the subject of meditation which, in fact, will include everything. Step by step the practice of Right Mindfulness should absorb all activities of body, speech and mind, so that ultimately the subject of meditation will never be abandoned. How far one succeeds in that, will depend on the presence of mind available at the single occasions, and on the habit-forming and growing strength of diligent practice. The aim to be aspired to by the disciple of this method is that *life* becomes one with the spiritual *practice*, and that the *practice* becomes full-blooded *life*.

The 'domain' (*gocara*) of the practice of Right Mindfulness has no rigid boundaries. It is a kingdom that constantly grows by absorbing ever new territories of life. It was in reference to this all-comprehensive domain of the Satipaṭṭhāna method, that once the Master spoke as follows: 'Which, O monks, is the monk's domain (*gocara*)\*, his very own paternal place? It is just these four Foundations of Mindfulness'.

Therefore the disciple of this method should always ask himself, in the words of Santideva:

*'How can the practice of Mindfulness be performed under these very circumstances?'*

One who does not forget thus to question himself and also to act accordingly, may be said to possess 'Clear Comprehension of the Domain' of Right Mindfulness.

To attain to it is certainly no easy task, but the difficulties will be less if the first two kinds of Clear Comprehension have prepared the ground. By Clear Comprehension of Purpose, the mind will have acquired a certain degree of firmness and 'moulding power', needed for the absorption of ordinary life into the 'domain of practice'. On the other hand, Clear Comprehension of Suitability will have developed the complementary qualities of mental plasticity and adaptability. If in that way an approximation to the level of the meditative mind has been achieved, the entrance into the 'domain of practice' and its gradual extension will be easier.

### 4. Clear Comprehension of Reality

The Clear Comprehension of Reality (lit: Non-delusion) removes, through the clear

\* The name of this third kind of Clear Comprehension '*gocarasampajañña*' may well have been chosen as an express reference to the well-known passage quoted above.



light of an unclouded comprehension of actuality, the deepest and most obstinate delusion in man: his belief in a self, soul, or an eternal substance of any description. This delusion, with its offspring of craving and hatred, is the true motive power of that revolving Wheel of Life and Suffering to which, like to an instrument of torture, beings are bound, and on which they are broken again and again.

'Clear Comprehension of Reality' is the clarity and presence of knowledge that in, or behind, the functions performed by the first three modes of Clear Comprehension, there is no abiding personality, self, Ego, soul, or any such substance. Here the meditator will be confronted with the strongest inner opposition, because against the greatest achievement of human thought, the *anattā* Doctrine of the Buddha, an obstinate resistance will be offered by the world-old habit of thinking and acting in terms of 'I', and 'Mine', as well as by the instinctive and powerful 'Will to live', manifesting itself as self-affirmation. The main difficulty will not be so much the theoretical grasp and approval of the *anattā* doctrine, as the patient, repeated and constant application of it to particular instances of thought and action. To help in that difficulty is the special task of the fourth, the 'undeluded', kind of Clear Comprehension; and in that task it receives the vital help of the three other modes. Only by training oneself again and again in viewing the presently arisen thoughts and feelings as mere impersonal processes, can the power of deep-rooted, ego-centric thought-habits and egotistic instincts be broken up, reduced, and finally eliminated.

Here, as a brief excursion, a few words on the 'emotional tone' of the truth of Impersonality will be appropriate, since it is misjudged so often. The discernment of the fact of Impersonality, by reflection or as the result of the methodical practice of Bare Attention, is, in itself, certainly as unemotional and sober as the attitude of the scientist. But, except in the saint (Arahat) of perfect equipoise, emotional repercussions may well arise, as they also may arise in connection with irrefutable results of scientific research. These emotional repercussions of the insight into Impersonality are, however, not restricted to a single note, and certainly not to the disconsolate and plaintive one implied in the deprecating word 'soulless'. The 'emotional tone' will

vary according to the angle of observation and the stage of the observer's inner development; it will reach its *finale* in the undisturbed rhythm of the saint's serenity. In the actual, and not merely conceptual, confrontation with the fact of Impersonality, as afforded by Bare Attention, its full gravity will certainly make itself felt strongly, in consonance with the gravity of entire existence of which it is the most significant fact. But this will not be the only emotional experience issuing from the awareness of *anattā* (Impersonality). Testimonies of ancient and modern meditators speak of moods of lofty happiness covering a wide range, from rapture and exultation to serene joy. They are expressive of the exhilaration and relief felt when the tight, vice-like grip of 'I' and 'Mine' loosens; when the tension it produces in body and mind is relaxed; when we can lift, for a while, our heads above the fierce current and whirl in which the obsessions of 'I' and 'Mine' engulf us; when there is a growing awareness that the very fact of Impersonality holds open for us the door to Liberation from ill which was sensed so poignantly in, what we called, the grave aspect of Impersonality.

The fourth kind of Clear Comprehension has yet another function to perform that is of great consequence to steady progress on the Path to Ill's extinction.

In taking up the practice of the first three modes of Clear Comprehension, the disciple has left behind the relative security and detachment of Bare Attention, and has returned to the perilous world of purposive action—action that provokes re-action from that which is acted upon. But leaving aside the re-actions, the disciple will first of all be faced by the fact that nearly every action of his drags him further into the labyrinths of the world's diffuseness (*papañca*) to which this action itself is adding its share. Action has the inherent tendency to multiply and to reproduce, to intensify and to expand itself.

The disciple will experience, even in his endeavour to practise the first three modes of Clear Comprehension, that his actions will tend to entangle him in new interests, plans, duties, aims, complications, etc. That means, he will always be exposed to the danger of losing what he has achieved in his earlier practice, or of losing *sight* of it, unless he is extremely watchful. Here, the Realistic, or Undeluded, Clear Comprehension, *i.e.* the vivid awareness of Impersonality, will

come to his assistance. 'Within there is no self that acts, and *outside* there is no self affected by the action. If this is kept before the mind, not only in great undertakings, but also in those no less important minor activities of ordinary life, then a beneficent feeling of inner distance from one's so-called 'own' actions will develop, and a growing detachment as to any success or failure, praise or blame, resulting from such action. The action, after its purpose and suitability have been clearly established, is now performed for its own sake and in its own right. For that very reason, the apparent indifference with which the action is done will not cause any loss of energy in its performance. On the contrary, when sidelong glances at oneself, at others, or at the results, are absent, this exclusive devotion to the work itself will enhance its chances of success.

If one no longer clings to an action with one's whole heart and being, if there is no more hankering after personal success or fame, then there will be less danger of being carried away by the self-created current of one's action to ever new reaches of the *sansaric* ocean. It will also be easier to keep a certain control over the steps resulting from the first action, or when advisable, to 'break up action' and to withdraw into 'non-action', *i.e.* the peace and protection of the attitude of Bare Attention.

Action in pursuit of worldly ends, as performed by an unliberated mind, is mostly mere creation of additional bondage. To preserve, within this world of 'bondage by action' (kamma), the highest possible 'freedom in action' is one of the particular tasks and achievements of the Clear Comprehension of Reality, in co-operation with the other three modes. The complementary 'freedom in non-action' or the 'freedom in letting go' is taught by Bare Attention. We have quoted previously a word of the Master to the effect that the liberated mind of a truly great, *i.e.* holy man is the result of the consummate practice of *Satipaṭṭhāna*. Now after having learned of the two kinds of Freedom bestowed by Mindfulness and clear Comprehension, we shall be in a better position to understand that saying of the liberating effect of the *Satipaṭṭhāna* practice.

In conclusion, another significant feature of the fourth mode of Clear Comprehension deserves mentioning. Through the Clear

Comprehension of Reality the active part of life, too, will be permeated by the truly revolutionary thought of Impersonality (*anattā*), which is the central teaching of the Buddha and the most decisive one for the actual deliverance from suffering. Its influence should therefore not be restricted to the few hours of reflection or meditation granted to men with worldly duties. Our life is short. We cannot afford to regard the greatest part of it, devoted to the practical routine tasks, as mere dead ballast, or to treat it like a pariah caste of necessary, but despised slave labourers who are kept at a low cultural level, either intentionally or out of negligence. We cannot afford to leave that great sector of our life unused and uncontrolled, allowing most of our thoughts, emotions and activities to roam at will, so, often to our greatest harm.

Quite apart from the cardinal principle of the *Satipaṭṭhāna* method, the merging of life and spiritual practice, the brief span of our life alone makes it imperative that every moment of it, according to the opportunities it offers, and *any, even the most ordinary activity in its own way, should be utilized for the work of Liberation*. This penetration of life with liberating knowledge is undertaken by the Clear Comprehension of Reality, with special regard to the immediate experience of Impersonality.

Tibetan wisdom says:

'A system of meditation, which will produce the power of concentrating the mind upon anything whatsoever is indispensable.

An art of living, which will enable one to utilize each activity as an aid on the Path is indispensable.\*

Such a 'system of meditation' and such an art of living' is *Satipaṭṭhāna*.

*Concluding remarks on the two Modes of Practice*

Now, at the end of our treatment of Clear Comprehension, we have come to a feature of it, closely corresponding to that which we mentioned when concluding our exposition of Bare Attention. It is an encouraging fact that even the initial stage of earnest practice shows kinship and correspondence with the highest goal of complete detachment and freedom.

At the stage of Bare Attention, disclosing the freedom in 'non-action', we saw that the

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\* (From *Tibetan Yoga*, by Evans-Wentz)

temporary stepping *aside* to a vantage point of observation corresponds to the Saint's final stepping *out* from this world of suffering. At the stage of Clear Comprehension, particularly its fourth kind, the growing detachment with regard to any action, corresponds to the 'perfect act' of the Saint, which, though purposeful in itself, is completely selfless and free from any clinging. Though the world perceives it as a 'good act', it has no kammic result for the Saint, it does not lead him to any renewed existence\*. An act done with Clear Comprehension is, in the degree of its detachment and in its function of reducing kammic entanglement, a certain approximation to the 'perfect act' of the Saint.

The two modes of practice, Mindfulness (Bare Attention) and Clear Comprehension, help and supplement each other. The high degree of alertness and self-control achieved in the school of Bare Attention, will make it considerably easier to guide one's deeds and words by Clear Comprehension, instead of being taken unawares by situations, carried away by passions or misled by deceptive appearances. On the other hand, Clear Comprehension makes more room, and creates a more suitable atmosphere, for Bare Attention, by the control and the quietening influence it exercises upon the world of endseeking actions and restless thought.

Bare Attention presents those carefully and dispassionately sifted facts upon which clearly comprehending action may safely base its decisions, and clearly comprehending

thought its conclusions. Bare Attention eliminates the wrong concepts and false values which have been blindly tacked to the bare facts. Clear Comprehension replaces these by critically examined concepts and true values as furnished by the Dhamma.

Bare Attention heightens the susceptibility and refines the sensitivity of the human mind; Clear Comprehension guides as well as strengthens the actively shaping and creative energies. Bare Attention makes for the growth, preservation and refinement of intuition — that indispensable source of inspiration and regeneration for the world of action and rational thought. Clear Comprehension, on the other hand, as an active and activating force, works for making the mind a perfect instrument for its hard task of harmonious development and final liberation. It trains one, at the same time, for selfless work in the service of suffering humanity, by bestowing the keen eye of wisdom and the sure hand of skilfulness which are as necessary for that service as a warm heart. Clear Comprehension is capable of giving this training because it provides an excellent school in purposeful, circumspect and selfless action.

Hence *Satipaṭṭhāna*, in the entirety of both its aspects, produces in the human mind a perfect harmony of *receptivity* and *activity*. This is one of the ways in which the Middle Path of the Buddha appears in this method of Right Mindfulness.

( *To be Continued* )

\* The states of consciousness producing the 'perfect act' of the Saint, are called, in Buddhist psychology (Abhidhamma) *kriya-javana*, i.e. the merely functional 'act-impulsions' or 'act-motives' in the mind of the Saint which have no longer the quality of effect-producing Kamma.

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# ĀṄGUTTARA-NIKĀYA, ATTHAKA NIPĀTA, PAṬHAMA-PANṆĀSAKA UPOSATHA-VAGGĀ, SANKHITTŪPOSĀTHA SUTTA.

## (DISCOURSE ON OBSERVING THE PRECEPTS IN BRIEF)

Thus I have heard. On one occasion the Bhagavā\* was staying at Jeta's Grove in the monastery of Anāthapiṇḍika at Sāvātthi. There the Bhagavā addressed the monks, "O monks". "Yes, Lord," answered the monks to the Bhagavā.

'Monks, the observance of the Eight Precepts on Fasting Day is very fruitful, of great merit, of great splendour, and radiantly shining.

'Monks, how are they observed and kept ?

1. 'Herein, monks, a Noble disciple reflects: "All their lives Arahats desist from taking life and refrain therefrom; they lay aside stick and weapon; they are compassionate to all beings; and they look to the welfare of all beings. I, too, now, during this night and day, will desist from taking life and refrain therefrom; I will lay aside stick and weapon; I will be compassionate to all beings; and I will look to the welfare of all beings, and thus in this way, I shall follow the example of Arahats and observe this Precept". This is the first of the Precepts in which he establishes himself.

2. "All their lives Arahats desist from taking what is not given; they take only what is given; they desire to take only what is given; they dwell with a body clean and untainted with the speck of stealing. I, too, now, during this day and night, will desist from taking what is not given; I will take only what is given; I will desire to take only what is given; I will dwell with a body clean and untainted with the speck of stealing, and thus in this way, I shall follow the example of Arahats and observe this Precept". This is the second of the Precepts in which he establishes himself.

3. "All their lives Arahats desist from living unchastely; living the chaste life, abiding apart, they refrain from sexual practices which are indulged in by the village folk. I, too, now during this night and day, will live the chaste life; abiding apart, I will refrain from the practices of the village folk, and thus following the example of Arahats I shall observe this Precept". This is the third of the Precepts in which he establishes himself.

4. "All their lives Arahats desist from telling lies and refrain therefrom; they speak the truth; they are bondsmen to truth; they speak honestly; they speak believable words; they deceive no one in the world. I, too, now, during this day and night, will speak the truth; will be bondsman to truth; will speak honestly; will speak believable words; will deceive no one in the world, and thus in this way, I shall follow the example of Arahats and observe this Precept." This is the fourth of the Precepts in which he establishes himself.

5. "All their lives Arahats desist from sloth-producing intoxicants and refrain therefrom. I, too, this night and day, will desist from intoxicants, and thus in this way, I shall follow the example of Arahats and observe this Precept." This is the fifth of the Precepts in which he establishes himself.

6. "All their lives Arahats take but one meal a day, and refrain from taking food after noon and at night. I, too, now, during this night and day, will act just as Arahats and observe this Precept." This is the sixth of the Precepts in which he establishes himself.

7. "All their lives Arahats refrain from dancing, singing, music, and unseemly shows; from the use of garlands, perfumes and unguents; and from things that tend to beautify and adorn the person. I, too, now, during this night and day, shall follow the example of Arahats and observe this Precept." This is the seventh of the Precepts in which he establishes himself.

8. "All their lives Arahats desist from using high and luxurious seats and refrain therefrom; they lie on low beds, couches or on strewn grass. I, too, now, during this night and day, shall follow the example of Arahats and observe this Precept." This is the eighth of the Precepts in which he establishes himself.

'Monks, the observance of these Eight Precepts on Fasting Day is very fruitful, of great merit, of great splendour, and radiantly shining.'

\* A title of the Buddha: Various translated as "Exalted one," "Fortunate one," "Sublime one" "Illustrious one."



# REBIRTH AND THE WESTERN THINKER

*By Francis Story*

(We have received the following letter from a reader in Australia who is a sincere student of Buddhism. The points it raises are of such general interest and so typical of the queries that must arise in the minds of Western students of Buddhism that we are publishing the letter in full, together with a reply by Mr. Francis Story, who has made Buddhist philosophy *vis-a-vis* Western thought his special subject.

We wish to take this opportunity of reminding our readers all over the world that we welcome such queries as this, since they afford us an opportunity of showing how Buddhism meets the challenge of present-day knowledge.)

40, Richmond Street,  
Kedron, Brisbane, Australia,

*Dated the 28th December 1957.*

Dear Sir,

What puzzles me most concerning Kamma and Rebirth is how one can correlate it with new developments and findings in modern psychology and genetics. I received from Professor F. A. E. Crew, M. D. (Edinburgh) who is a lecturer in genetics the following reply some time ago: (quote) "As to whether or not the doctrine of reincarnation is inconsistent with the findings of the geneticist, I really cannot give you a satisfactory answer. I take it that reincarnation or rebirth means the reappearance of the same individual with the same inborn potentialities and therefore, presumably, with the same genetic constitution. This would mean that the individual in each of his several reappearances would perforce have to belong to the same species and that many of his attributes would be the same in every succeeding generation—*e.g.*, his blood group, the colour of his eyes and skin, his finger-prints and the like. On the other hand, since so much of the characterisation of the individual is due to the interaction of genetic constitution and the circumstances and conditions of the external world, differences in experience in successive appearances would tend to yield different personalities". (end of quote).

A Rationalist writer, J. Bowden, on rebirth writes as follows: (quote) "It seems to me that the science of genetics has definitively disposed of the rebirth theory. It has been

established beyond a shadow of doubt that every person manifests not only the physical but the mental characteristics of both its parents—not in equal proportions, of course; the traits of one parent may predominate. The parents will carry the characteristics of their parents, and so on.

"Ancestral traits comprise the hereditary equipment of every child at birth. Environmental influences then come into play, the personality which results being the product of hereditary and environmental factors.

"On the rebirth theory the child cannot be the offspring of its parents other than in a physical sense, although he or she may be an incarnation of some remote ancestor (*i.e.*, it may be its own great-great-grandparent.)

"But it has been demonstrated that the psychic life of each of us commences from the moment of conception and that this 'soul' develops with the growth of the embryo. What of this 'soul' ?

"True, the mind of the child at birth is a '*tabula rasa*' (except in so far as it may—and this is doubtful—carry impressions of its intra-uterine existence); but of ideas it has none. All that it has is a brain and nervous system (built up of elements derived from both parents) which enable the child to acquire ideas. But what ideas shall be acquired depends upon the nature of its environment. A child born in China of Chinese parents will develop a peculiarly Chinese 'psyche', one which no European can properly understand.

"All these facts are commonplaces of Social Psychology. The Rebirth Theory makes nonsense of it all. On that theory the 'soul' is an intruder; it does not develop from within, it enters from without; it had been waiting for a greater or lesser period in the etherial region for a suitable body to inhabit.

"Several questions present themselves. Is the 'soul' during its sojourn in the etherial region conscious or unconscious? If the former, why is it that we do not recall our experiences in that region? If the latter, then how does it find its way into the embryo or foetus? (If not unconscious before, it certainly becomes unconscious when it enters the embryo: consciousness does not dawn until some time after birth. The first



discovery of the child is of itself, through the sense of touch. Then it begins to 'take notice' of its mother, and gradually takes in other factors of its environment).

"The dictum of the Physiological Psychologist that there can be no mind without a brain completely negates the belief that a 'soul' can exist in the interval that believers in Rebirth necessarily assume between the departure from one body and the entry into another. To the Physiological Psychologist, mind is the activity of the brain and the nervous system (or, to put it the other way, the activity of the brain and nervous system is 'mind').

"It has been demonstrated that injury to a particular brain area, say the centre for sight, will render one blind; injury to or disease of the auditory centre will result in deafness, and so on. What happens when the entire brain is destroyed? Where is the 'mind'— 'the soul' ?

"The brain is an extremely delicate organ. Its functioning can be deranged by alcohol or other drugs. A blow on the head may bring unconsciousness. And yet we are expected to believe that if the brain is completely crushed a functioning mind still persists. One may as well (it is just as logical) contend that a particular current of electricity generated by a primary cell will continue to flow when the cell is destroyed.

"There is no individual, no 'person', until the fusion of male and female germ cells takes place. There can be no psychic life until there is a psyche and I (Bowden) am not able to believe in a psyche existing before there is a completed brain. Those who argue that 'mind' is possible without a brain are invited to explain why a brain is developed at all.

"Ideas are complex mental formulations, and it seems to me to be self-evident that before ideas can exist there must be material for thought. Impressions have to be registered on the brain, and these impressions are derived from the external world via the sensory nervous system. How can impressions be registered before there is a nervous system capable of picking up impressions ? The argument that a personality already equipped with a stock of ideas enters into the developing embryo only puts the problem further back. How did the first 'personality' acquire its ideas ?

"The eyes of the new-born child are expressionless. By watching the child as it grows

one can also see the dawn of intelligence. Its eyes roam; it begins to 'take notice' and gradually builds up a world of mental experiences, a store-house of ideas. But the nature of the ideas thus acquired depends upon the nature of the environment. Of course the quality of the brain has to be taken into account. We can be certain that had Edison been born in Paleolithic times he would, by virtue of his superior brain power, have discovered a new and better way of making fire; but he could not have invented the incandescent lamp.

"It seems to me (Bowden) that the theorists of mind have overlooked that the word 'mind' is merely an abstraction, a convenient term for mental experiences. We speak of mind and brain, but that is for convenience of expression. It is lost sight of that what is separable in thought is not necessarily separable in fact. We should say that brain and mind are two aspects of the same thing. Those who refuse to consider mind in terms of brain function should tell us what is the brain's function if it is not mental. We know that the brain is a living functioning organ. What is its function if it is not mind ? It would perhaps be best to regard 'mind' as the brain at work.

"How does one account for 'identical, twins on the rebirth theory? When such twins are brought up together they not only show many characteristics in common; they often react in a similar manner to environmental influences; their ideas follow a similar pattern. On the rebirth theory we have to suppose that every time identical twins are on their way, two virtually 'identical' souls enter into the developing embryos.

"Identical twins result when an ovum that has been fertilised splits into two separate parts which then develop independently; unlike twins being the outcome of the fertilisation of two different ova. On the Rebirth Theory, there is no reason why if identical souls can enter the embryos in the first case they should not do so in the second and the physically unlike twins possess the same mentality. But it is notorious that unlike twins may differ so widely in their outlook as scarcely to have an idea in common. In such cases one twin has a predominance of maternal characteristics and the other of paternal characteristics. Only in the case of identical twins are the characteristics evenly distributed.

“On the Rebirth Theory we have to suppose an extraordinary series of coincidences. We have to believe that identical ‘souls’ are forever hovering around awaiting their opportunity to enter the bodies of identical twins, and those only; they ‘pass up’ the chance of entering the bodies resulting from two independently fertilised ova. The problem is complicated further when we consider triplets, quadruplets, etc. And what happens when one of the set dies at birth? What happens to this twin ‘soul’? Does it return to the empyrean, there to await another chance for rebirth? But then it will have to enter into an entirely different body—one which may be malformed or have a defective brain.” (End of quotation from J. Bowden).

‘I do not think J. Bowden is correct in his statements on identical twins. Even though they result as he says I do not think they are as completely identical as he says. Minor differences are present. However, I will try to get Professor Crew’s opinion on the matter as he specialises in genetics.

‘I would be much interested as to the views of Buddhists on the above matters. The subject of Kamma and Rebirth is indeed a vast one and I do not expect any details as I know you have much work to do. Kamma and Rebirth is for me and I think most Westerners a very difficult subject to understand. Incidentally, does Rebirth mean *plurality of lives on earth* ?\*’

May the Buddha-Dhamma form a bridge of understanding between East and West !

With best wishes and greetings  
from Australia,

Sincerely,  
Sd/. Alan Gudenswager

P.S.—I suppose my quotations from Mr. J. Bowden all sound academic (for Buddhism is a practical way of life) but it is on such questions that I’m ignorant of Buddhist concepts.

A.G.’

Much misunderstanding of the Buddhist doctrine of rebirth has been caused in the West by the use of the words ‘reincarnation’, ‘transmigration’ and ‘soul’.

The last word in particular presents a stumbling-block to the true understanding

of what happens in the rebirth process. ‘Soul’ is an ambiguous term that has never been clearly defined in Western religious thought; but it is generally taken to mean the sum total of an individual personality, an enduring ego-entity that exists more or less independently of the physical body and survives it after death. The ‘soul’ is considered to be the personality-factor which distinguishes one individual from another, and is supposed to consist of the elements of consciousness, mind, character and all that goes to make up the psychic, immaterial side of a human being. A very good non-religious definition is given by Max Loewenthal who says: ‘The entity which is known by the names of mind, soul, spirit, consciousness, or psyche, may be defined as *the organic whole of an inner world consisting of associated conscious impressions and activities all of which are felt as belonging to a conscious unit or ego.*’ (‘Life and Soul’: Outlines of a Future Theoretical Physiology and of a Critical Philosophy. 1935).

The idea of such a ‘soul’ transmigrating after death into another body, in the Pythagorean sense, is inherently improbable. Theories of a ‘reincarnating soul’ ask us to believe that this complex psychic entity can be transferred from one physical habitation to another of an entirely different order, as when the ‘soul’ of a fully matured man, replete with knowledge and experience, is said to ‘reincarnate’ in the body of a newly-born infant. Obviously there can be no identity between the mind of the man who died and the undeveloped psychic faculties of the infant who is said to be his ‘reincarnation’. When the theory is extended to ‘transmigration’ into animal forms of life it becomes totally unacceptable.

In any case, all the evidence is against the existence of such a ‘soul’ even during the course of one lifetime. The ‘entity’, the ‘conscious unit or ego’ of Max Loewenthal is merely a subjective impression derived from the continuity of successive moments of conscious experience. William James, one of the pioneer psychologists, declared that no such entity could be found, but in its place only an ever-changing process. This process is not only the ordinary process of change of which we can be sensible, in everything around us, but is actually, as Buddhism teaches, an ‘existence’ made up

\* There are 31 ‘planes of existence’ including human, animal and ‘ghost’ (*petas*) and in countless ‘rebirths’ there may be millions of lives as a human in this particular universe (*ed.*)

solely of the arising and passing away of momentary units of consciousness. Those who have difficulty in conceiving a flux of change without a 'thing' that changes will find the idea presented very convincingly in Henri Bergson's "Creative Evolution".

In the journey from cradle to grave the personality alters with the accumulation of experience, the growth of understanding and the changes wrought in it by external circumstances. It is also subject to alterations due to physical degenerations and accidents. Nothing can be found in the psychic side of man's nature that is permanent; very little that is even consistent. All we can distinguish are certain tendencies to think and react in recognisable patterns of behaviour which can remain fairly constant throughout life if they are not affected by any irresistible influences. It is the sum of these tendencies which we call character; but even they are not predictable in all circumstances. To the scientist they appear as partly the results of heredity, and partly of environmental influences, and there can be no doubt whatever that these factors in their interaction account for a great deal of human personality. Whether they account for *all* of it we shall be in a better position to decide at a later stage of this discussion.

The Buddha categorically denied the existence of a 'soul' in the sense defined above. Buddhism recognises the fact that all conditioned and compounded phenomena are impermanent, and this alone makes the existence of such a 'soul' impossible. A being is a compound of five *Khandhas*—Physical Body, Sensation, Perception, Tendencies and Consciousness—all of which are in a continual state of flux. (For a full discussion of these important terms in Buddhist philosophy the reader is referred to articles in the LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA which deal with *Paṭicca Samuppāda*, the Law of Dependent Origination).\*

What then is the 'identity' between a person in one life and the 'same' person in another which justifies the use of the word 'rebirth'? The answer is that it is purely a serial relationship—an 'identity' of a certain kind which can only be described in terms of a causal continuum. Actually, this is the only kind of identity that can be found between the various different stages of life of a being throughout a single life-span. The 'identity' between the newly-born infant and the old man it becomes say eighty years later

is *only* an identity of causal succession. Everything that makes up the individual, both mental and physical, at any particular moment, is the product of a series of antecedent and causally-related personalities, and when we say it is the same person we use the expression merely in a conventional sense; what we really mean is that the infant is the causal antecedent of the old man, and the old man is the effect-product of the infant. Instead of an enduring 'soul' we find a dynamic process of cause and effect to be the only link between the various stages of an individual life.

The relationship between the human being who dies and the human or other being that is born as the result of his *kamma* in the process called 'rebirth' is of precisely the same order as the relationship between the newly-born child and the old man it is destined to become. It is the same as the relationship between the infant, the child, the adolescent, the youth, the adult and the elderly person. It is purely and simply a causal relationship; the one is the result of the other—'not the same, yet not another'. The 'dying and being reborn' process is actually continuous throughout life, for consciousness consists of a succession of thought-moments, or '*Cittavīthi*' (Courses of Cognition) which are like beads strung on the connecting thread of *bhavanga*, or the unconscious life-continuum. Each conscious moment in its arising and passing away is a little birth and a little death. To go into this in detail would involve a discussion of *abhidhamma*, which is not the purpose of this article. It is sufficient to state that what we know as sentient life is the various forms of momentary consciousness that arise from contact between the organs of sense and the objects of sense.

But in addition to the five seats of sense-perception recognised by Western thought, Buddhism adds a sixth, the *manāyatana* or Mind-base, which is the centre of the thought-processes. It is proper that this should be included with the external sense organs because it also produces sensations and awareness, and can do so independently of them, even though these impressions may exist only in imagination or as functions of memory.

'*Manāyatana*' corresponds to 'Mind' in the Western sense, but it is quite different from the idea of 'soul'. It now becomes necessary

\* See page 33.

to ask ourselves what we mean by 'mind'. All we can say from observation is that mind is a function, as the quotation given in the above states. But a function of what? Is it a function of physical organ, the brain, or of something immaterial and transcendental? Until recently, science rejected the latter theory as belonging to the realm of the mystical and fanciful. But before we go into the Buddhist explanation let us take a look at some of the latest hypotheses. The following quotation is from 'Psychical Research' by R.C. Johnson, M.A. (Oxon), Ph.D., D.Sc. (London) English Universities Press, 1955. It summarises the conclusions to be drawn from experiments made by Dr. J.B. Rhine of Duke University (United States of America), Professor Gilbert Murray, G.N.M. Tyrrell and other investigators in the sphere of General Extra Sensory Perception (G.E.S.P.)

'The mind of a person is certainly linked with his brain, and permits both of action of the person and the receipt of impressions at the point of space where his body is. The mind of the person must not, however, be assumed as "in" space at all. A part of its activity, and in particular its relation with other minds, is apparently on a level to which our familiar spatial considerations do not apply.'

Another quotation from the same work :

'That the only modes of communication between minds should be such indirect methods as speech, writing, and signalling would, I think, have always been regarded as an unreasonable supposition *had it not been for the (now obsolete) theories of the causal dependence of mind on brain.*'

Here we have a very significant statement indeed, and one that gives a somewhat different picture of the mind and its nature from that offered by J. Bowden on the basis of orthodox physiology. The brain is still seen to be an instrument of the mind, but the mind itself, as a force, seems to be able to perform certain of its functions independently of a physical medium and without an express location in space. It operates, perhaps, in spatial dimensions other than those familiar to us. The incalculable rapidity of the Courses of Consciousness described in Buddhist

psychology (*abhidhamma*) seems to indicate that this is in fact the case. It is a matter of common knowledge that time as we know it is annihilated in the dreaming state, and that the mind is capable of creating a time-dimension of its own when released from the ratios of the external world.

'The belief that all mental activities are confined to gray matter, more particularly that of the cerebral cortex, is another of those prejudices, jealously adhered to and never given up without a struggle, which act like grit in the machine of human progress. Its inception probably dates back to the time when ganglion cells were first seen in the microscope, and were forthwith, and are still hailed, as the units of consciousness. Berry asks: "If the ideas are not in the brain cells, where are they?" and Dubois-Raymond uttered the blasphemy: "Show me ganglion cells in the universe, and I will believe in a God." But these cells are only found in gray matter. What was more natural than that the largest and phylogenetically latest expanse of gray matter, the cerebral cortex, should be looked upon as the sole abode of the mind? A number of physiological experiments and pathological observations seemed to lend support to this view. Other accumulations of gray matter in the brain-stem, the cerebellum, the spinal cord, and the peripheral nervous system are separated from the cerebral cortex by white matter supposed to be insensible, and a consciousness dwelling only in cells and groups of cells cannot therefore be shared by isolated accumulations of gray matter. But the observations and experiments admit of different interpretations, and the arguments already advanced, and others presently to be submitted, will show that this view which looks upon the cellular constituents of gray matter as the sole carriers of consciousness is quite untenable'. (Max Loewenthal, 'Life and Soul'.)

The same author later sums up his findings as follows:

'Since the mind must derive its information regarding the spatial properties of outer objects from somewhere, it follows that portions of the mesotype other than the cerebral portion supply this information.

In fine, the brain, including the gray cortex, is

a. neither an organ of sensory perception,



b. nor the exclusive seat of consciousness.'

(‘Life and Soul’, Ch.2, 52. pp 217, 218 and 225)

This agrees with the Buddhist concept of mental activity. The ‘*manāyatana*’ of Buddhism has a physical base (it was identified by the classic Buddhist commentators with the ‘*hadaya-vatthu*’ or ‘heart-base’, but this was merely in conformity with the almost universally accepted ideas of the period); yet Buddhism maintains also the possibility of mental activity taking place without a physical organ, or at least by means of an organ of such fine substance as to be, from our point of view, immaterial. This state obtains in the ‘*arupa-loka*’ or Realm of Formless Beings, which is a “Brahma-world” of pure thought. Leaving this aspect of the matter aside, however, there is sufficient evidence available to point to the fact that some form of mental energy, wheresoever it may be generated, has apparently the power of annihilating space, and that it can operate without a material medium over great distances and can to a certain extent overcome temporal barriers. The simplest explanation may be that it does not exist in space as we know it at all. Our own space-time continuum is not necessarily the only one in the cosmos; it is merely the only one that our ordinary senses can cognise.

At this stage of our enquiry it may be useful to resort to an analogy from physical science. Not a perfect analogy, because no analogy can be exact; but one that at least provides a parallel to the case under consideration. Electricity is a form of energy that is generated either artificially or by a combination of natural circumstances in the atmosphere or in material substances. This energy, the precise nature of which is still unknown, is itself invisible and unsubstantial; what we perceive is not the electric current, but its manifestations as heat, light, sound or power. Undoubtedly it consists of particles which can be measured, but these particles are not detectable until they are transformed into one or other of the visible and tangible manifestations. The same current of electricity can be used to produce any or all of these several effects, according to the nature of the substance on which it is made to operate. If we visualise mental energy as something similar to electricity we get perhaps as close an approximation to it as is possible. For the electric generator we

may substitute the brain, remembering always that under certain conditions electricity can be produced without the artificial apparatus we use for the purpose. If mental energy can be generated or stored in the cells of the brain as electricity is stored in the cells of a battery, there is no reason why it should not share some of the other characteristics of an electrical charge. This much at least we can say: as in the case of electricity, we know of the existence of mental energy only when it manifests in some sensible operation. It is now being ascertained that the range of such operations is far greater than has been commonly attributed to it. It is these hitherto uninvestigated aspects of its nature and power that are the subject of the present experiments in Extra Sensory Perception, Telepathy, Telekinesis and allied subjects.

We shall return to the analogy of the electric current again later.

Buddhism teaches that one of the most important, if not *the* most important, functions of the mind is that of *willing*. Under this aspect the mind is called ‘*cetana*’, which denotes its capacity for willed intention. And *cetana*, the Buddha declared, is *kamma* (volitional action). The will to act is followed by the action; action in its turn is followed by result (*vipaka*). Thought is therefore a creative act. It was from this that Schopenhauer derived the central theme of his ‘*Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*’, which makes will the dominating factor in the universe. The creative act of thought may be good or bad, but whichever it may be, it can only produce results of a like nature to the causes it originates. The moral principle of the universe is a scientific law.

But what of the varying degrees of power exhibited by the mind? The experiments in Extra Sensory Perception have indicated that the largely unpredictable nature of the results obtained is caused by the uncertainty as to how much conscious or unconscious willing can be generated. Common observation of psychic phenomena (of telepathy, visions of the dying and so on) shows that the communication of telepathic impressions depends most of all on the amount of emotional stimulus behind them. This means, in effect, that thought is able to operate over great distances without physical means of communication only when its generation is accompanied by a very strong desire, an emotional reaching-out as it

were, towards its object. Only in such circumstances can minds communicate with one another on some extraspatial level. It is this which makes the scientific investigation and measuring of the mind's nature and powers so extremely difficult and inconclusive, for emotion cannot be generated under laboratory conditions. But to know that it is so is highly important when we come to consider the vital part that desire, or Craving (*tanha*) plays in the mind's activities.

Craving and Ignorance (*avijja*) conjointly are the bases of the rebirth process; 'Craving' because it is the 'will-to-live', the desire for continued conscious experience; and 'Ignorance' because without ignorance life would be seen as it is —intrinsically painful and therefore undesirable. The mind, therefore, is the generator of a force of craving. Schopenhauer's 'World as Will and Idea' is a world of desire and thought-projections of desire. The 'will-to-power' and the 'will-to-enjoy' are only facets of the fundamental 'will-to-be' which is common to all forms of life but is most consciously self-aware and complex in man.

We have now reached the stage at which we are able to see the mind as an energy flowing out from the centre of cognition, where it is generated by the impact of sensory apperceptions from the external world. In this form it is able to operate upon matter in direct and indirect ways: indirectly when it is limited by temporal and spatial relationships imposed by the physical body, and directly when it is realised as a force outside of space-time conditions. If, as the E.S.P. experiments seem to prove, it is capable in special circumstances of operating independently of physical media while the conditions of its normal functioning still obtain (*i.e.*, during life) there is no difficulty in conceiving it as a continuing projection of energy after the cessation of the physical functions in death.

This is in fact what happens. The thought-energy, an impersonal force carrying with it only its craving-impulse\* and the potentialities it has generated (its *kamma*) is released at death, the last thought-moment it generates conditioning the rebirth-consciousness. Like any other form of energy, it is attracted to a suitable medium for its new physical manifestation, and the nature of that medium is determined by the quality of the dominant

mental impulse, or in other words, its Kamma-formation (*Sankhara*).\*\* Just as the electric current can manifest under suitable conditions as heat, light, sound or power, so the thought-energy being drawn to a suitable combination of genetic conditions, works upon them to produce a new manifestation according to its peculiar nature. If its past characteristics, revived in the last thought-moment, are of a low order, it finds its new sphere of manifestation in a low order of being; that is to say in the realms of suffering or the animal world. If of a high order, it produces its effect, (the new life) in one of the heavenly or spiritual realms. If it is neither more nor less than human it produces a human rebirth. By a law of attraction it gravitates towards the conditions to which it has been attuned by past volitional activity. Unlike the current of electricity which, as Bowden mentions, cannot continue after the destruction of the primary cell, the thought-energy does not merely expend itself in producing a final effect, but flows out to animate a new cell, which thereafter proceeds to generate new impulses.

I have mentioned higher and lower forms of rebirth, but it is with human rebirth that we are mainly concerned in this discussion. Precisely how is human rebirth accomplished? The answer is that the thought-force is attracted to the physical conditions of human procreation which will enable it to re-manifest and thus give expression to its craving-potential. The released energy in some way operates on and through the combination of male and female generative cells on much the same principle as that of the electric current working on the filaments in the lamp to produce light. The blind creative power of the craving-potential then adapts and develops them, moulding the structure of their growth in such a way as to make it serve its purpose within the limitations, it carries with it in its *kamma*. In this it is also restricted, of course, by the general characteristics of the racial group and other distinctive categories to which the parents belong, but even within this limiting frame-work there are still infinite variations of physical and mental characteristics to be developed by the influence of the past *kamma*. To infer that all Chinamen are alike, only because what is most noticeable to us is the manner in which they differ from ourselves, is as absurd as to

\* bhavanikantikalo-bha-javana

\*\* Avijjānusayaparikkhittena taṇhanusayanūlakena saṅkharena janiyanam. It is brought forth by a mental activity which is rooted in such craving as is dormant, and is wrapt in such ignorance as is latent.

say that all Englishmen or all Russians are alike.

To illustrate the process, let us take an extreme case, that of the genius. Let us say that a man dies who has devoted his life to music. It so happens that music is one of the arts which can so dominate the mind as to become almost an obsession, and it thereby creates a very powerful craving-force—a constantly recurring craving-impulse associated with music. This mental energy on its release at death will be attracted to the conditions that offer it the fullest opportunity of following its bent. It may be drawn to parents who are themselves musical and whose hereditary endowment will thus favour it to the greatest extent. But this does not always happen; sometimes the craving-force is sufficiently developed to be able to dispense with all help from the parents. Mozart was born of parents who were only moderately musical, yet so highly concentrated was the musical tendency in the infant that he was an accomplished musician almost before he could read. It could only be a tendency created by past *kamma*. Cases of children of genius being born of mediocre parents are less common than those of subnormal children born to average parents, but both illustrate the same principle, that while heredity is often an important factor in character and ability, it is not invariably so. In its power to modify the development of growing tissue, the thought-force from the past life is actually capable of setting the pattern of the brain cells. A craving for an instrument of a certain kind has been developed in the past life and so, according to degree of intensity of the craving, a suitable brain-formation is obtained in the new birth. Is it not possible, even in a single lifetime, to develop certain faculties in oneself if one has sufficient will-power to do so? To deny this is to make nonsense of all methods of mind development and character moulding. But whereas a man may make himself a passably competent musician, scientist or architect by hard work, it takes something extra to make him a genius; something that cannot always be found in his heredity or opportunities. Buddhism teaches that this something extra is the *kamma* from the past life, transmitted by natural processes through a series of causal relationships.

In the theory of biological evolution it is assumed that from simple beginnings more and more complex organisms come into being over innumerable generations, and

science is content to explain the process by the allied theory of natural selection. But to give a thing a name is not to explain it. Nobody has yet revealed exactly what is the driving force behind natural selection. It cannot be by mere chance that single cell protoplasm becomes more highly organised, more sensitive and more completely adapted to its environment until it becomes the higher animal and eventually the human being. On the other hand, the evolutionary urge produces too many errors and failures in its progress to be the result of a consciously-directed plan from the mind of a higher intelligence. It exhibits the features of a blind, groping desire towards some incompletely-defined goal. And these are precisely the features we would expect it to show if it were motivated by this craving-force which Buddhism teaches is the generating energy of life. It is illuminating to interpret the selective processes of biological evolution in this light. Dispensing with the obsolete theological trappings of God and soul, Buddhism shows that the whole pattern of evolution is based upon the blind craving-impulse which works through the natural biological processes to achieve the desired result. The force that causes rebirth and the force that propels the evolutionary urge are one and the same: it is thought-force acting upon matter.

Here it should be noted that just as the process of rebirth is beginningless in time, so also is the arising and passing away of universes. The *kamma* which begins to operate at the commencement of every universe is *kamma* from the beings of the previous world-cycle. The *kamma*-force of Buddhism provides the 'X-quality' which science requires to fill the gap between non-living matter and living, sentient organisms. Since it is the scientist's self-defined task to show *how* things happen, not why they happen, he should not object if someone else, working on the material he provides, supplies a *raison d'être* for the natural processes, so long as it does not conflict with the known facts.

From the foregoing it should be clear that what is reborn is not 'soul' but a cause-effect continuum, carrying with it tendencies and potentialities created in the past; it is not a complete set of ego-characteristics. The reader is asked to think back to the cause-effect relationship between the infant and the old man referred to above, and to apply the same principle to the relationship between the person who is 'reborn' as the result of the



dead personality's *kamma*. They are 'not the same (personality), yet not another'. In the conventional sense, as when we say the child has 'become' the old man, they are the 'same'; but in the real sense (*paramattha*) they are only a relationship of cause and effect. The well-known analogy of the leaf which in the course of its 'decay changes in every perceptible feature — colour, shape and texture — yet is said to be the 'same' leaf throughout, provides a good illustration of the Buddhist principle of *anicca* (Impermanence), and therefore also of *anattā* (non-existence of any enduring self-principle). Just as we use the word 'leaf' for what is not a self-existing 'thing' but only a succession of changing conditions, so we use the word 'man' or any other word that denotes an object of composite and impermanent nature. These words are the instruments of communication only; they stand for ideas, not for the reality of the process which we mistake for a 'thing.' The thing-in-itself, the object of the philosopher's quest, can never be found; but much of our habitual confusion of thought is due to an inability to distinguish between what is actual and what is only ideal. The 'thing' is only an idea; the reality is the process of flux and continual arising and passing away of momentary existences.

The arguments against 'reincarnation' and 'transmigration' therefore do not apply to the Buddhist doctrine of rebirth. By discarding the notion of a travelling entity, Buddhism places the entire concept on a rational level. Since there is no 'soul' there is no need to assume any intermediate existence between births in an 'ethereal region'. Rebirth is instantaneous, rebirth arising immediately upon death. But here it is necessary to bear in mind that there are many kinds of rebirth besides that in the human realm. Buddhism does not deny the existence of other dimensions, both above and below the human plane. Many beings are reborn after death in the *peta loka*, in the form of spirits and have a lifespan of varying duration according to their *kamma*. Buddhism rounds off its picture of the visible and invisible universe by taking into account those planes of existence which the psychic investigator calls spirit realms. The 'spirits' which the medium contacts in the seance room are beings who after death have been reborn on planes of existence not too far removed from our own. The higher planes are inaccessible to him, as are also, of course, the beings who have been reborn in

animal forms. This accounts for a fact which has always puzzled spiritualists; namely, that certain departed personalities can be contacted while others cannot. It also explains why it is that departed 'spirits' on the whole show no greater knowledge or wisdom than they possessed in their earth life, but frequently much less. Rebirth in one of these states does not necessarily mean spiritual advancement. In the *peta* realms it is accompanied by degeneration of the faculties.

We are now ready to take up the other points raised in the quotations given by our correspondent. It will be seen that many of Professor F.A.E. Crew's objections based on the assumed necessity for the individual in each of his several reappearances to 'belong to the same species and to exhibit the same attributes in respect of blood-group, colour of eyes and skin, fingerprints and so on' are irrelevant. These attributes may be considered part of a 'soul' personality, but they have no place in the *kamma*-tendency which is what is actually reborn. Genetic constitution and the circumstances and conditions of the external world, together with differences in experience in successive appearances certainly do, as Professor Crew states, tend to yield different personalities; but it has been shown that personality is a flux, and therefore necessarily subject to modification by such influences. They in their turn are largely conditioned by the past *kamma* of the individual concerned which, as I have already said, tends to gravitate towards conditions suitable to its state and itself create the situations in which the new personality begins to function. Here the principle of attraction comes into play; the thought force gravitates naturally towards what is most in affinity with it, and so to some extent creates, and certainly modifies, its circumstances. These also act upon the awakening consciousness, so that heredity and environment both have a share in moulding the new personality. If the past *kamma* was bad, these external conditions will reflect that 'badness', so that it is only by a new effort of will that the mind can rise above their influence and fashion for itself a better destiny. Thus Buddhism takes into account all the factors which the geneticist, the sociologist and the psychologist insist upon as being ingredients of the fully developed personality, while adding the extra element, that of *kamma*, which is necessary to weld them into a logical pattern.



The quotation from the rationalist writer, J. Bowden, where it deals with the genetic principles, is also covered by this explanation. What he does not mention, however, is that very often children of the same parents, subjected to the same environmental influences, show individual characteristics that cannot be traced to either source, and that such children differ also from one another. It is observable that from earliest infancy characteristic traits show themselves which distinguish one child from others of the same family. Science does not attempt to explain this except by referring the cause back to some remote ancestor. If this is in fact the cause of such differences, can it not be conceivable that the child which bears the characteristics of some great-great-grandparent may be the reappearance of that current of causality in a new birth, after an intermediate rebirth of some other kind? This hypothesis involves no greater mystery than does the transmission of hereditary traits through the generative cells of the parents. It is continually necessary to remind scientific thinkers that in being able to describe the method by which a particular effect is brought about they are not always telling us the reason *why* it is brought about. The genetic processes require some life-principle in addition to the purely material chemical combinations in order to make them work, as surely as does the doctrine of rebirth. As Voltaire put it, there is no greater mystery about being born twice than there is about being born once. The only difference is that we accept the second mystery because we have to do so, while the first we can ignore.

The question relating to the 'soul' and its development with the growth of the embryo presents no difficulties when the myth of the 'soul' has been discarded once for all. The Rebirth Theory does not, as Bowden claims, make nonsense of all the commonplaces of scientific knowledge except when rebirth is tied up with belief in a complete psychic entity.

The problem of the existence of mind without a brain has already been dealt with. Regarding injuries to the brain, toxic effects and the results of disease, these only pose a problem when we try to reconcile them with the idea of 'soul'. In periods of unconsciousness the thinking and cognising faculties are suspended but the *bhavanga*, or life continuum, carries on uninterrupted. However, as the quotations I have given from R.C. Johnson show, science has not yet proved

that mental activity needs to be located in any specific place, and the identification of the mind with the brain, or to consider the mind as 'the brain at work', are no longer thought to be necessary assumptions. The reference to Edison and the inherent qualities of his brain has been covered by the description of the rebirth process and the manner in which it works upon the living cell-tissues.

There remains the point concerning the two types of twins. In the first place it should be noted that when J. Bowden says (quite rightly) that 'it is notorious that unlike twins may differ so widely in their mental outlook as scarcely to have an idea in common', he is weakening the force of his earlier argument concerning the importance of heredity and environment in shaping personality. The unlike twins share the same heredity and the same environmental conditions, yet still their minds are totally different. This is evidence for, rather than against, rebirth. It can only be explained by their individual *kammas*.

The case of identical twins presents no difficulty whatever. It simply means that two very closely associated past lives, through sharing the same experiences and reacting to them in the same way, perhaps through several existences have produced a *kamma*-current that is almost identical. Where the same *kamma* is originated, the same circumstances will tend to be produced as the result. But as the writer of the letter comments, the similarity of personality is never so exact as Bowden assumes. If it were, the identical twins would invariably wish to marry the same person. But there is a curious fact regarding identical twins that has been overlooked by the writer. That is that not only are they similar in personality but the events of their lives often correspond and coincide in the most remarkable fashion, and in a way that can be no more attributed to coincidence than it can to heredity or environment. Cases are on record of identical twins having similar experiences befall them at the same period of their lives, even though they may be separated by thousands of miles. They fall ill at the same time, have accidents at the same time and often die within seconds of one another. If this has any meaning, it indicates precisely that similarity of *kamma*—amounting almost to identical *kamma*—shared by them, which in the Buddhist view stands in place of a similarity between twin 'souls'. The same *kamma* which caused them to be born as identical twins reveals itself as *vipaka* in the events of their lives.

It may be objected that rebirth cannot be proved empirically, and so far as most people are concerned this is true. But there are many people to whom it is a fact of actual experience, founded on recollection of their previous lives. Memory does not commonly go along with the impersonal force that links one life to another, but in certain exceptional cases it has been known to do so. When this happens it can only be that the 'will-to-live' includes for some reason a strong 'will-to-remember' also. This 'will-to-remember' can be consciously developed, and there are techniques for acquiring it. But for the most part it is better for unenlightened humanity that the griefs and errors of the past should be obliterated. If this did not happen, the majority of people would be crushed beyond hope of rising by the accumulated horror of past lives, and the 'will-to-live' would not survive in them. At the same time they would be too discouraged to seek for release from *samsara*. In any case, human memory even of the events of the current life is very feeble and fragmentary, and often distorted by the wish to believe that certain events were different from what they really were. It is well known to psychologists that the mind has a protective device for suppressing our most painful memories. There need be no wonder that recollection of past lives is a very rare phenomenon.

All the evidence available to us adds up in support of the doctrine of rebirth as taught by Buddhism. It does not require any

'intruder from without' in the form of a 'soul' or ego-entity, but only the current of *kamma* with its manifold potentialities. In *paṭicca samuppāda*, the Law of Dependent Origination, this is called *sankhāra*, and for further explanation of it I would refer the reader to articles in previous issues of the "THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA" where the subject is dealt with in its *abhidhamma* context.\*

In this discussion I have intentionally omitted all reference to ethical values. It must be apparent, however, that ethical values are intrinsically a part of the law of cause and effect. They are not artificial standards invented by man for his own utilitarian purposes; neither are they arbitrary laws imposed from without. They are part of the cosmos. The science which can find no place for them is an imperfect science; the rationalism that ignores them is a defective rationalism. By trying to grasp in its entirety the process of rebirth we come closer to the focal point of our being, the source from which we draw the knowledge that enables us to rise in the hierarchy of those who control their own destiny. A single life, meaningless in isolation, becomes charged with meaning when seen against the continuing pattern of rebirth. By it we come to know *why* we are what we are, and how we may become what we wish to *be*. The mind that has freed itself of prejudice has taken the first step towards *Nibbāna*.

\* Vol., No., Page; of references to LIGHT OF DHAMMA articles are as follows:— 1,4,34; 11,1,44; 11,2,35; 11,3,47; 111,2,8; 111,3,18; 111,4,38; IV,1,23; IV,1,39; IV,2,15; IV,3,44; IV,4,2.

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# EARNESTNESS

*Vappa Thera*

‘Handa dāni bhikkhave āmantayāmi vo :  
Vayadhammā sankhārā, appamādena sampādetthā’ ti.  
Verily, I say unto you now, O monks :  
All things are transient, work out your salvation with earnestness.

—*Dīgha-Nikāya, Mahā Parinibbāna Sutta.*

These were the last words of the Buddha ; for us as a reminder not to give up the struggle against the fetters of greed, hate and ignorance binding us to existence, in order to escape the misery of Saṃsāra.

A great satisfaction is given us by the Master’s solemn assurance that we do possess the power to overcome all evil things in us and to develop all good things. Just as the overcoming of evil, so also the begetting of good things in us, will bring us joy and happiness.

Therefore the Buddha said : ‘The evil and unwholesome things you should abandon, and arouse in you wholesome things.’ If this were impossible, the Buddha never would have advised us to put forth all our energy and effort, and struggle for this object ; and would never have said : ‘I am a teacher of action, of endeavour, of energy.’

Training must be done, will must be exercised, exertion must be made; there must be no turning back, there must be ardour, there must be energy, there must be perseverance, there must be mindfulness, there must be right understanding, there must be earnestness.

Whenever anybody accuses the Buddha of being a denier, a suppressor, a scorner, having no regard, etc. he should be answered thus : ‘Truly, regardless is the Buddha, because all regard to visual objects, sounds, smells, tastes, bodily impressions and mental objects, is utterly abolished in the Blessed One.

‘Without Love is the Buddha, because all love of visual objects, sounds, smells, tastes, bodily impressions and mental objects is utterly destroyed in him.

‘Inactivity, teaches the Buddha, because he teaches not to be active in doing evil by thoughts, words and deeds.

‘Annihilation, teaches the Buddha, namely the annihilation of greed, anger and delusion.

‘A scorner is the Buddha, because he scorns all bad actions in thoughts, words and deeds.

‘A denier is the Buddha, because he denies all greed, hate and ignorance and all other unwholesome things.

‘A suppressor is the Buddha, because he teaches His disciples to suppress all evil and unwholesome things, and to suppress all bad actions thoughts, words and deeds. And one who has completely suppressed all these things, is called a suppressor.

‘An Outcast is the Buddha, because he has been cast out from Saṃsāra and excluded from further rebirth.’

*Vinaya Piṭaka—Pārājika—  
Verañja-kaṇḍa.*

‘Earnestness leads to Deathlessness,  
Heedlessness is the road to Death ;  
The earnest will never die,  
The heedless are as already dead’

—*Dhammapada, 21.*

What many monks and laymen have attained, why should I not attain this ? I am healthy, full of faith, am not a hypocrite, not a pretender or boaster, but I have will-power and understand that all sense objects are transient, subject to pain and suffering, an ulcer, a thorn, a misery, a burden, an enemy, a disturbance, empty and void of an Ego. Why should I not hope for deliverance and Nibbāna?

In the Mahāvaccā Sutta\* the Blessed One said that not only monks and nuns attained Nibbāna, but that even many laymen and laywomen, remaining in the world and living a chaste life free from fetters and hindrances of mind, had attained Anāgāmihip, i.e. the third state of Holiness, the state of the “Non-Returner”, so called as he, after death, never will again return to this world.

\* Majjhima-nikāya, Paribbājaka-vagga, Mahāvaccā-sutta.

Just now, at this present materialistic time, such words of the Buddha should have a stimulating and encouraging effect, because many people labour under the delusion that in this modern time of aeroplane and motor-car the present generation, despite their best intentions, could not find time and leisure to cultivate higher mental faculties.

Over and over again the Buddha assures us : ‘ You can will, you can act, you can improve, you can change your character by certain lines of effort and attain deliverance. ’

He who wills success, is half way to it. Where there is a will, there is a way ; the will is the root of all things, not only of vice and suffering, but also of virtue.

Negation of the will for demeritorious actions is taught by the Exalted One.

‘ *Chanden’eva chandam pajahati* : through desire to do so, the will will be conquered.’ Through will having attained holiness, the will for holiness has been stilled.

In the Samyutta-Nikāya ‘ Uṇṇābha-sutta’ the Brāhmaṇa Uṇṇābha asks the Venerable Ānanda : ‘ What is the purpose of the Holy Life as explained by the ascetic Gotama ? ’

‘ To give up one’s will, therefore one practises the Holy Life under the Exalted One. ’

‘ Is there a way, a path, to give up one’s will ? ’

‘ There is, Brāhmaṇa, a way, a path to give up one’s will. ’

‘ What is now, Venerable Ānanda, the way, the path, to give up this will ? ’

‘ There a monk develops the 4 roads to power: concentration and effort of will, of energy, of mind, and of investigation. This, Brāhmaṇa, is the way, the path, to give up one’s will. ’

‘ This being so, Venerable Ānanda, there will be only an endlessness : but no end (of the actions of willing). That through will the will may be dissolved, such a thing is not possible. ’

‘ So I shall put you a question, Brāhmaṇa, and you may answer it as you please.

What do you think, Brāhmaṇa, did not arise in you first the will to go to the monastery-garden ? And having reached

the monastery-garden, did the will then not come to an end ? ’

‘ Yes, Venerable Ānanda. ’

‘ It is just the same with the monk who is holy, free from greed, perfect, who has accomplished his task, thrown off the burden, attained his goal, cast off all hindrances and fetters and attained deliverance through wisdom. Whatever such a one formerly possessed of the will, energy, mind and investigation with regard to the attainment of holiness, having become holy,—such will, such energy, such mind and such investigation has ceased. ’

‘ What do you think now, Brāhmaṇa, if it is so, is there an end or endlessness of willing ? ’

‘ Certainly, Venerable Ānanda, if it is so, then there is an end of willing and no endlessness. ’ \*

The will (*cetanā*) says the Buddha, I declare as the action (*kamma*) for through the will one does the action in thoughts, words and bodily deed. The will is the action, and nobody can put back the resolution one has taken upon oneself.

Only he who is striving earnestly to develop higher mental faculties can accomplish what the multitude thinks impossible.

You will become truth, if you love the truth ;

You will become earthly, if you love the earthly. ’

The faith of every man comes out of his innermost : what he loves, he is ; and what he is, he loves ; and he believes it too and will be united to it, because every thought attracts its thought-object.

He, who strives as in duty bound, will attain Nibbāna by following the Holy Eightfold Path, consisting in Right Understanding, Right Thinking, Right Speech, Right Living, Right Effort, Right Attention and Right Concentration, be it in this life, be it in the next life, be it in any other future life.

Therein take your refuge, therein see your sovereign remedy, and with all your heart strive for it ; then will peace develop into everlasting bliss.



Not to know the whole truth merely by words—but to know it from inner practical experience, this is the highest necessity of life.

‘To know, is to do’: without realization in practice there is no true knowledge in mind. Take it and make it a guide of your life.

A real Buddhist is always striving for wisdom, to learn, to know, to penetrate the conditional arising of all mental and physical phenomena. He will reach that high and lofty realm of freedom; because of his self-control he gets to know the wholesome and unwholesome influxes of his mind.

Therefore he is always alert and mindful, gets his livelihood by a right way of living, abstains from all alcohol, narcotics and stimulants, fasts on every first quarter and full moon, on the last quarter and the new moon, leads a retired life, avoids harsh language and abstains from quarrelling, suppresses all demeritorious things arising in his mind, remains always even-tempered when despised, gives no judgment about others as he knows that he will hurt himself.

In short, he is always clearly conscious of all his actions in thoughts, words and deeds, utters always the right word at the right time and in the right place.

Thus he lives for his own welfare, for the welfare of others and for the welfare of the whole world.

In spite of all ignorance, of all greed, anger and delusion, mankind is bound by an invisible tie, a tie of goodwill, loving-kindness, compassion and sympathetic joy, a tie which binds us together as the same kind of beings of nature. It is not an empty dream but a truth, which has been proclaimed by all enlightened men: that it is possible for mankind to obtain the highest wisdom, Enlightenment and Nibbāna, and that everyone can reach this goal, if he fulfills the necessary conditions.

Whether one lives the life of a householder, or whether one becomes a monk, when there is wrong living it is impossible to attain deliverance of mind; but if the mode of life is according to the Holy Eightfold Path, one may be sure that he will attain the Goal of Holiness—Nibbāna.

In ascending direction leads the Holy Path, along, from the mundane to the supramundane, and compared with the worldling such a being following the Holy Path, becomes a superman, who in his highest perfection represents the Enlightened One.

To work for enlightenment and deliverance of mind is everywhere possible for one who

has heard and who is practising the teachings of the Buddha.

At what epoch is it possible to attain enlightenment and deliverance of mind? It does not depend on any epoch. As long as there are men willing to develop the Holy Eightfold Path who are absorbed in constant meditation on the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha and are delighted in the growth of moral and mental faculties, so long everlasting Bliss may be realized.

Hence the truth proclaimed by the Exalted One depends on no special epoch. It is the visible truth leading to Nibbāna, but it can be penetrated and realized only by a wise man, through his own experience.

Enraptured with lust, enraged with anger, blinded by delusion, overwhelmed, with mind ensnared, man aims at his own ruin, at the other's ruin, at the ruin of both parties, and he experiences mental pain and grief. But as soon as lust, anger and delusion are given up, then all mental pain, grief and suffering are destroyed, and one has reached “The Everlasting.” Such is the teaching of the Holy One, the timeless and visible truth leading to Nibbāna, which is intelligible only to a wise man through his own experience.

So long as there are monks who are filled with faith in the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha and live together in harmony and feel it their duty to follow the Holy Eightfold Path, and are untiring in developing meritorious actions and detest slothfulness: so long will the Dhamma, the universal Law, continue.

Thus it rests with us to decide whether the Dhamma should continue for the good of many or whether the demon in human shape should gain power.

The “Will” manifested in our good and bad actions decides about our future and our whole destiny. Only he who understands the whole truth and nothing but the truth, furnishes the conditions for a long duration of the Dhamma, whilst those with a wrong understanding will ruin the Dhamma in no time.

The truth has one great obstacle to face, delusion, which constantly opposes it. Not the common denier is the strongest antagonist, but the man with great enthusiasm and little knowledge, and the over-wise hair-splitter who pronounces his system as the only refuge, and the pious man who believes out of veneration, who is afraid to give any opinion of his own but only what he has

learnt in school, and the fanatic with his narrowness : all those are the real enemies of truth.

It seems nearly impossible to carry the torch of truth through the crowd without scorching it.

Now, what may be the cause that there are only so few people in our present time that attain deliverance of mind, though the path to deliverance is clearly shown ?

The cause is that the mass of the people are not walking on the Holy Eightfold Path, and that they do not like to exercise control over their minds. They will perhaps say :

‘ Well, what can the world bestow on me ?

“ To be in want, always in want. ”

That is the constant song that ever in our ears resounds,

And all our life long we hear that irksome song.’

‘Why, Truth, didst thou come to worry us before our time and bring so much affliction ? Thus the ignorant are talking without reason. They feel bored, and at this time they distrust their own minds. It is because politics swallows up all their desire for developing their higher faculties of the mind which would enable them to perceive clearly and distinctly the sphere of hell, earth and heaven in their true light.

The noble disciple of the Buddha, however, considers this world as a labyrinth of errors, as a dreadful desert, as a pool of infamy, as a dwelling place of wild beasts, as a land of ill luck, as a source of sorrow, as an ocean of misery, as a false joy, as an endless suffering, as greed, anger and delusion beyond measure, as thirst never stilled, as a skeleton at the feast, as a laugh on the wrong side of the mouth, as a stink in the nostrils, as a delicious drink mixed with poison, as a place being too hot to hold one, as a *fata morgana*, as a dwelling place of vice, as a harmonious disharmony, as a pitiless war, as a breathing death, as a hell of the living, as an endless funeral, as a deplorable luck, as an apothecary’s shop full of bitter gilded pills.

For that reason the noble disciple has no more desire to build up this world, but to get rid of it. He knows that all things are not worth the trouble. All bodily forms, feelings, perceptions, mental formations, and consciousness he regards as transient, subject

to pain and suffering, and void of an Ego. Having thus attained insight into these 5 groups of existence, the noble disciple will attain deliverance of mind in due course and will reach happiness supreme.

Hence one could not say that observing the Holy Eightfold Path is equal to self-torment and pessimism, as it is the unfolding of inner serenity accompanied by unstemmed moral courage—the only worthy endeavour in life.

That is the solace of the Buddha, in which our heart always delights, and which guides us from worldly illusions into the realm of truth, from the restless struggle for existence to everlasting peace.

It is a delusive idea to regard this world as the best imaginable behind the laughing mask of nature ; there are other things hiding than mere idle laughing and jubilation. Take away the mask, and you will find such things as cannibalism, child-murder, sanctioned murder in many forms, slavery and bondage, theft and robbery, oppressing and torturing old and helpless people and prisoners, disregarding the life of others and massacre, attack from enemies pouring blood out like water, taking delight in ferocious deeds, shamelessness and sexual perversion of every sort, and egotism without limits : such the silent thinker is beholding the world and the life that the majority welcome and love so dearly.

‘ Don’t trouble me with your mother nature ’ said Prof. Naegeli\* to a student, who in his bulletin bestowed great praise upon nature.

He said : ‘ If mother nature has been so kind-hearted as the common run of people say, she should never allow the cat playing with the mice so cruelly, and the redbacked shrike piercing the insect in such a horrid and dreadful way. Who else put such horrid instincts but your glorified mother nature ? ’

‘ She certainly disposes over wonderful instruments and arrangements by which she is of great use to us today, but she will destroy us tomorrow.

‘ Don’t try to find compassion in nature ; Amongst men you may find compassion. We must compel nature to hand over to us her instruments to our interest. ’

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\* Karl Wilhelm von Naegeli, Swiss Botanist (1817-1891). Held, successively, professorships in the Universities of Zurich, Friburgh and Munich. Made important contributions to Botany and the study of living cells.

To value life in a correct way, it is necessary to that end to plunge into deep reflection on all that is alive and astir on this earth. There the "*Ecce vita*" will, as a plastic picture, reveal to our mind's eye that Gorgon's head, whose looks turn the beholder to stone.

Generally most people dislike to see the true facts of life. They like to lull themselves in security by sweet dreaming, imagination, enthusiasm, and take the shadow for the substance ; but whenever they see for one moment things in their true nature, they turn away with a shudder and say: 'My dear Sir, don't think about those things so deeply.'

Such people are deceiving themselves by sophism, hair-splitting and false pretences better than the deepest thinker in trying to solve the problem of "Know thyself."

'*Aññaṃaññaṃ khādikaṃ ettha vattati* : It is the practice here that one being eats up the other, ' says the Buddha.

In the air as on earth, as well as in water, all living beings are in a permanent struggle for existence, in a never ending battle of life. Due to greed, anger and delusion man is always at war with his neighbour, trying through tricks, dodges and devices to live at the expense of others ; like Cain, to kill his brother, rob him or make him his slave.

We see how in rage men are killing each other, ruining each other out of greed and anger : a pitiless war without mercy and compassion. And the more man becomes civilized, the more dreadful is the struggle for existence—sounds of merciless savagery and yelling shrieks of mortal fear and horrible yells of death cry to heaven for vengeance.

In a thousandfold echo we hear the mad cries of pain and despair—the wild howling of the myriad of hecatombs of most unlucky creatures, which the "homo sapiens" daily and hourly drags on to the altar of science and to the slaughtering benches.

The fumes of this ocean of blood are rising heavenwards, calling for revenge. We are breathless—seeing thousands of worlds go to wreck and ruin under pain and torture—worlds like our own.

Our shuddering eyes are beholding many horrible crimes, wars and plagues with their havoc and devastations.

We are reading the oppressive thoughts of guilt, of repentance and accusation. 'Oh, have pity, you gloomy ghosts of guilt;' But they have not. Threatening they are appearing before our minds, pictures

of judgment of conscience are running through our minds, in mortal fear.

Numberless like the stars in the canopy of heaven, so our prayers rise to heaven, but with no response ;

They never will be heard in heaven  
If heaven does not enter us !  
And only there the prayers ripen, . .  
Where love and mercy fill our heart ;  
There will the ever rising sorrows  
Calm down, there in that heart alone,  
That, free from fear and unrest, firmly  
Clings to the Buddha's Holy Law !

Through steadily following the Holy Eightfold Path, and being devoted to exertion and patience, it is possible, even for the worst evil-doer, to bring the liberation of his heart to highest perfection and so partake of happiness sublime.

Thus, one proudly can say that the teaching of the Buddha bestows the highest happiness, even in this present life. It fulfils all our higher aspirations and makes the sun of righteousness shine in our heart. It satisfies all our expectations of life, bestows incomparable security, does not let us fall again into error but frees us from greed, anger and delusion, frees us for ever from all evil and suffering.

Even the many good things one may have sacrificed for the material welfare of other beings, be they ever so great and noble, even they are transient and subject to decay, but the 4 Noble Truths that the Buddha has proclaimed to the world are immutable, indestructible and everlasting.

And that generation is the happiest, where these 4 Holy Truths are well established and known. For that reason one should not miss such golden opportunity, but incite one's will to realize these truths and reach enlightenment, so rarely found in this world.

That is why the Buddha said at the time of his death :

'All things are transient, work out your salvation with earnestness !'  
'*Adhigatam idam bahūhi amatam,  
Ajjāpi ca labhaniyam idam,  
Yo yoniso payuñjati  
Na ca sakkā aghaṭamānena.*' (Therī-Gāthā 513)

'Attained has been this deathlessness by many,  
And still today this state can be attained  
By him who strives in earnestness,  
But none will reach it without strife.'





The Hon. Prime Minister U Nu, delivering a speech on the Five Precepts.  
(Jacket) and a Pasoe.

U Nu is wearing a Gaungbaung (Headress) an Aingyi



# THE FIVE PRECEPTS

## LECTURE BY THE HON'BLE U NU, PRIME MINISTER OF BURMA, AT THE GREAT CAVE ON JANUARY 19, 1958 (TRANSLATION.)

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In November 1956, I went to the Buddha Jayanti celebrations at Delhi and returned to Rangoon from Calcutta by one of our Government steamships. As we were approaching Rangoon, the Buddhist sailors on the ship, about fifty in number, came and paid me respect in the Burmese Buddhist way. After I had given them my benediction, I asked them if they knew the Five Precepts and it came as a shock to me that of the fifty Buddhists there, only two could answer in the affirmative. Since the rest did not know even the Five Precepts, it would have been difficult for them to understand the meaning and significance of the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha. For such people, if they were to grow old and die in this state of ignorance, their lives as human beings, in spite of their having been born during the prevalence of Buddhism in this world, would not have been worthwhile at all. Thinking over this, I become very anxious for their spiritual future.

Again, just before the last Buddhist Lent, some young men, security guards, came and paid me respect in accordance with Burmese Buddhist custom. I asked these young men too, whether any of them knew the Five Precepts. This time also there were only two in the company who could say that they knew the Five Precepts. I was very much upset by this discovery. This time I was upset not merely because of my concern for the spiritual welfare of these young guards, but also because I felt that

1. at least over half of the youth of the country probably did not know what the Five Precepts are ;
2. being ignorant of the Five Precepts, they would not know how to conduct themselves morally and properly; and
3. a country where over half the population did not know how to conduct themselves morally and properly, would be facing a terrifying future.

From that time onwards, I have been thinking of ways and means of spreading the

knowledge of the Five Precepts throughout the country, and I became very glad when on the Full Moon Day of Waso (May), I heard our former Chief Justice of the Union, U Thein Maung, express a desire to propagate the observance of the Five Precepts in the country. I immediately gave a promise that I would help to the utmost of my ability to enable U Thein Maung's idea to be carried out successfully. I am very grateful to U Thein Maung for his invitation to come and speak on the Five Precepts today, and to the Hon'ble Bo Hmu Aung for making this assembly possible.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Every single person must observe at least the Five Precepts. Before I explain why it is essential for everyone to observe the Five Precepts as steadfastly as one would keep a pasoe \* wound firmly round one's body, I would like to make the meaning of *samsāra* clear to the audience.

*Samsāra* means becoming or coming into existence continuously without cessation or intermission. Because of this phenomenon, all beings after death are reborn into one existence after another, becoming either *Brahmas*, or *Devas*, or human beings, or beasts or beings in a state of misery like *petas*, or beings in a state of torment like *asurakas*, or woeful beings in the lowest planes of existence.

To speak in terms of gain or loss, if a human being after his death is reborn as a human being, there may be neither gain nor loss. If he is reborn as a *Deva* or a *Brahma*, there is a gain. But, if he is reborn as a beast, or a *peta*, or as an *asuraka*, or as a woeful denizen of the lowest plane of existence, there is a distinct loss.

For a person who suffers such a loss in his next rebirth, it is extremely difficult to regain his original state as a human being, let alone the possibility of advancing to the higher existences by being reborn as a *Deva* or as a *Brahma*.

In the four lower planes of existence, such as that of beasts, *petas*, *asurakas* or the woeful beings of the lowest plane, it is extremely

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\* A silken garment 4 yards long and 50 inches in breadth worn by Burmese gentlemen.  
See picture facing this page.

difficult ever to have the opportunity to listen to the *Dhamma*. Even if this rare chance should occur, it would be very difficult for such beings in the lower planes to understand the *Dhamma*. Thus, when a being happens to be reborn in one of the four lower planes of existence, it becomes most difficult for him even to hope for escape from these lower planes.

Inasmuch as it is possible even for monks, or those human beings who are normally steadfast in their observance of *sīla* or Moral Practice, to fall headlong to these four lower planes through negligence there can be no doubt at all that

1. those who are entirely ignorant of what the Five Precepts are;
2. those who know what the Five Precepts are, but who are loose and wavering in their observance of these Precepts; and
3. those who habitually disregard and break either one, or some, or all of these Five Precepts.

will on their death fall to the four lower planes.

Therefore, every person who does not wish to lose at least the possibility of being reborn as a human being, must rigorously and steadfastly observe the Five Precepts. What *are* these Five Precepts ?

Observance of a moral Precept means keeping close watch and ward on one's own actions and speech so that one may not commit any evil or speak any evil. Thus, the Five Precepts are none other than exercising vigilance over one's action and speech in relation to five evil things, so as to prevent oneself from doing or speaking evil. These five evil things are :

1. taking another being's life;
2. taking another person's property;
3. committing adultery, or carnally knowing maidens still under the protection of guardians;
4. speaking falsehood; and
5. taking intoxicants.

The above five evil things, except the fourth one, which involves speech, pertain to physical action. Exercising vigilance over one's actions and speech so that one neither does evil nor speaks evil in the five ways indicated above, is observance of the Five Precepts.

## ALTERNATIVE NAMES FOR THE FIVE PRECEPTS

The Five Precepts are variously identified by several different names in the Five *Nikāyas* the Three *Piṭakas* and eighty-four thousand units of the *Dhamma*. Of these, the better known are as follows:

### *Vāritta Sīla*

*Sīla* or Moral Practice is of two kinds, *Cāritta Sīla* and *Vāritta Sīla*. *Cāritta Sīla* is the observance of certain practices which have been prescribed by the Buddha as being worthy of observance. For example, the thirteen Austerities, or *Dhutangas*, are a form of *Cāritta Sīla*. In the case of *Cāritta Sīla*, one acquires merit by its observance, or fails to acquire merit if there is a lack of observance of the *Sīla*. *Vāritta Sīla* is the refraining from certain practices which the Buddha mentioned as practices to be avoided. The Five Precepts are a form of *Vāritta Sīla*. The characteristic of *Vāritta Sīla* is that its observance, involving avoidance of the evil practices, enables one to acquire merit, while its non-observance, indulgence in the evil practices, causes one to acquire demerit. Since the Five Precepts involve the avoidance of certain evil practices, the Precepts are included in and are known as *Vāritta Sīla*.

This is as set forth in the *Sīla Niddesa* Chapter of the *Visuddhi Magga Aṭṭhakathā*.

### *Pañca Sīla* (Five Moral Practices)

The Five Precepts, beginning with *Pāṇātipātā Veramanī* (abstaining from taking life), involve vigilance and control over actions and speech, and are therefore known as *Sīla* or Moral Practice. Since this *Sīla*, when enumerated item by item, totals five items, it is called the Five Precepts, or in Pāli, *Pañca Sīla*.

This is as set forth in the following texts The *Tuṇḍila Jātaka* of the *Chakka Nipāta*, in *Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā*; *Aṭṭhasālinī Aṭṭhakathā* *Sammohavinodanī Aṭṭhakathā*; *Sagāthāvagga Samyutta Aṭṭhakathā*; *Buddhavaṃsa* Pāli Text; *Nandatheri Apadāna*, and the *Pañca Sīla Samādānīyatthera Apadāna*, of the *Apadāna* (Sixth Synod Pāli Text).

### *Pañca Sikkhāpada*\* (Five Moral Rules)

The Five Precepts beginning with *Pāṇātipātā Veramanī*, are worthy of observance as

\* *Sikkhāpada*: Steps of training.

moral rules, and are therefore, called *Sikkhāpada*. Since these moral precepts, when enumerated item by item, amount to five items, they are called Five Moral Rules or in Pāli *Pañca Sikkhāpada*.

This is as set forth in the: *Sangīti Sutta* of the *Dīghanikāya Pāthikavagga* Pāli Text *Sammohavinodanī Aṭṭhakathā*; *Visuddhimagga Aṭṭhakathā*; and *Sikkhāpadavibhanga* of the *Khuddakanikāya Abbhidhamma Vibhanga* Pāli Text.

#### *Cakkavatti Dhammasat*

Every Universal Monarch that has ruled over the whole Universe did not promulgate special laws in governing the universe, other than the Five Precepts which were required to be observed by the denizens of the universe. Thus the Five Precepts formed the *Dhammasat* or Edicts of the Universal Monarchs. Therefore, the Five Precepts may be called the Law of Universal Monarchs, or in Pāli “*Cakkavatti Dhammasat*”.

This is as set forth in the following; *Mahā sudassana Sutta* of the *Dīghanikāya Mahāvagga* (Sixth Synod Pāli Text); and *Cakkavatti Sutta* of the *Dīghanikāya Pāthikavagga* Pāli Text.

#### *Garudhamma*

As the Five Precepts are worthy of being observed with the highest regard and the strictest attention by laymen, the Precepts are known as *Garudhamma*.

This is as set forth in the *Garudhamma Jātaka* of the *Tikanipāta* in the Second Volume of the *Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā*. (In the Sinhalese and the Thai versions this *Garudhamma Jātaka* is known as *Kurudhamma Jātaka*.)

#### *Ariyadhamma*

As the Five Precepts are observed by *Ariyas*, or Men of noble virtue, the Precepts are known as *Ariyadhamma*.

This is as set forth in the *Pañcanguttara Aṭṭhakathā*, being a commentary on the *Gihisutta* of the *Anguttara Nikāya Pañcakanipāta*.

#### *Gahaṭṭha Sīla*

The Five Precepts beginning with *Pāṇātipātā Veramaṇi*, form a course of Moral Practice worthy of observance by worldly men or householders, and are therefore known as *Gahaṭṭha Sīla*.

This is as set forth in the *Sīla Niddesa* of the *Visuddhimagga Aṭṭhakathā*.

#### *Nicca Sīla*

The Five Precepts are worthy of steadfast, continuous observance by lay people as carefully as one would always keep a pasoe wound firmly round one's body, and therefore, the Precepts are called *Nicca Sīla*.

This is as set forth in the *Visuddhimagga Aṭṭhakathā*.

#### *Ariyakanta*

The Five Precepts are worthy of the appreciation and adherence of men of noble virtue, and are therefore called *Ariyakanta*.

This is as set forth in the *Gihisutta* of the *Anguttaranikāya Pañcakanipāta* (Sixth Synod Pāli Text), and *Sotāpatti Samyutta* of the *Samyuttanikāya Mahāvagga Samyutta* (Sixth Synod Pāli Text).

#### **BENEFITS OF THE FIVE PRECEPTS, IN BRIEF.**

*Five Beneficial Results:* A person who steadfastly and continuously observes the Five Precepts can gain the following beneficial results:

1. he can gain great wealth and possessions ;
2. he can gain great fame and reputation;
3. he can appear with courage and confidence in the midst of a public assembly;
4. on the point of death, he can die with calmness and equanimity, without falling into stupor or lethargy;
5. after his death, he will be reborn in the world of *Devas*.

This is as set forth in the: *Sīlasutta* of the *Akkosakavagga* in the *Anguttaranikāya Pañcakanipāta* (Sixth Synod Pāli Text); *Pāṭaligāma Vatthu* of the *Bhesajjakhandhaka* in the *Vinayamahāvagga* (Sixth Synod Pāli Text); and the *Pāṭaligāmiya Sutta* of the *Khuddhakanikāya Udāna* (Sixth Synod Pāli Text).

The *Verasutta* in the *Anguttaranikāya Pañcakanipāta* (Sixth Synod Pāli Text) says:-

The person who steadfastly observes the Five Precepts may be called The Possessor of Moral Practice, or *Sīlavā* in Pāli. Such a person, on his death, is reborn in the good Planes of Existence, such as the six worlds of the *Devas* and the world of human beings.

The *Sikkhāpadapeyyāla* of the *Anguttaranikāya Pañcakanipāta* (Sixth Synod Pāli Text) says:—

The person who steadfastly observes the Five precepts, on his death, is reborn in the world of *Devas*.

### BENEFITS OF THE FIVE PRECEPTS, IN DETAIL.

The following are the beneficial results, in detail, of observing the Five Precepts.

(a) *Pāṇātipātā Veramaṇi*. “The beneficial results of refraining from taking another being’s life:” The person who vigilantly and steadfastly observes the Precept of refraining from taking another being’s life reaches the world of *Devas*, on his death. When he expires in the world of *Devas*, and is reborn in the world of human beings, he is endowed with the following qualities:

1. having no physical defects or deformities ;
2. being proportionate in physical stature and form;
3. being swift in movement;
4. having well proportioned feet;
5. having a pleasant figure;
6. gentleness;
7. cleanliness;
8. courage;
9. strength;
10. ability to speak well and smoothly;
11. being the object of affection and regard by others;
12. having a united following;
13. not having a rough brutal body;
14. being free from harm at the hands of others;
15. not being subject to death by others’ weapons;
16. having a large retinue;
17. having a beautiful golden complexion
18. having a handsome appearance;
19. being free from disease and illness;
20. being free from anxiety and grief;
21. being able to associate with loved ones always; and
22. being long-lived.

(b) *Adinnādānā Veramaṇi*. “The beneficial results of refraining from taking another person’s property:” The person who vigilantly and steadfastly observes the precept of refraining from taking another person’s property reaches the world of *Devas* on his death. When he expires in the world of *Devas*, and is reborn in the world of human beings, he is endowed with the following qualities:

1. having great possessions;
2. having untold wealth and riches;

3. having wealth that does not deteriorate;
4. being able to obtain quickly any possessions desired;
5. having riches that cannot be taken away or destroyed by inimical elements;
6. having noble wealth and position;
7. being chief or leader everywhere;
8. not experiencing any lack or unavailability of anything;
9. having a peaceful, unperturbed life.

(c) *Kāmesu Micchācārā Veramaṇi*. “The beneficial results of refraining from committing adultery, or from carnally knowing maidens still under guardianship”. The person who vigilantly and steadfastly observes this *Kāmesu micchācārā* Precept reaches the world of *Devas* on his death. When he expires in the world of *Devas*, and is reborn in the world of human beings, he is endowed with the following qualities:

1. having no enemies;
2. being the object of affection and regard by all others;
3. being able to obtain food, beverages, clothes and ornaments readily;
4. being able to sleep well and peacefully;
5. being able to wake up in peace and comfort;
6. being free from falling into the four lower planes;
7. being free from the state of a eunuch;
8. being free from gusts of hot anger;
9. being given to just and fair actions;
10. having a fresh and happy face;
11. being able to enjoy comfort and well-being;
12. being free from physical defects and deformities;
13. having a sound and healthy appearance;
14. not being assailed by doubts and suspicions;
15. having no anxiety or worry;
16. being able to live in calm happiness;
17. having no dangers, or threats, or harm;
18. being able to associate with loved ones.

(d) *Musāvādā Veramaṇi*. “The beneficial results of refraining from speaking falsehood:” The person who vigilantly and steadfastly observes this *Musāvādā* Precept reaches the world of *Devas* on his death. When he expires in the world of *Devas*, and is reborn in



the world of human beings, he is endowed with the following qualities:

1. having an open-hearted and radiant appearance;
2. having sweet and faultless speech;
3. having even and white teeth;
4. being not too fat;
5. being not too thin;
6. being not too short;
7. being not too tall;
8. having a body that is pleasant to the touch;
9. having a fragrant mouth like the sweet smell of a lotus;
10. being listened to with regard and esteem by others;
11. having a significant and impressive way of expression;
12. having a soft, thin, red tongue like a lotus petal;
13. being free from disappointment or failure;
14. being free from shocks and alarms.

(e) *Surāmeraya Majjapamādaṭṭhānā Vera-maṇi*. "The beneficial results of refraining from taking intoxicants:" The person who vigilantly and steadfastly observes this *Surāmeraya* Precept reaches the world of *Devas* on his death. When he expires in the world of *Devas*, and is reborn in the world of Human beings, he is endowed with the following qualities:

1. being mindful of anything that is to be done at a given time;
2. being endowed with intelligence and intellectual power;
3. being always alert at all times;
4. having initiative and enterprise to meet all contingencies;
5. being industrious;
6. being free from deafness and dumbness;
7. being free from madness;
8. being free from shocks and alarms;
9. being free from oppression or restriction;
10. being free from a hateful attitude towards others;
11. being free from grudge and envy;
12. having always truthful speech;
13. being free from rough and futile speech and from back-biting;
14. being aware of the gratitude owed to others;
15. being able to make return for the favours of others;
16. being generous and charitable;

17. having Moral Practice;
18. being fair and just;
19. not being given to anger;
20. having a sense of decency and a dread of evil;
21. having true belief;
22. being in a noble or worthy state of life;
23. being wise;
24. having discretion and judgment as to advantages and disadvantages of any situation or question.

The above are as set forth in the Third Part of the Fifth Sutta of the Third *Nipāta* in the *Itivuttaka Aṭṭhakathā*.

### RESULTS OF BREAKING THE FIVE PRECEPTS, IN BRIEF.

The person who breaks the Five Precepts may suffer the following five bad results:

1. he will suffer loss and destruction of much property and many possessions;
2. he will be notorious and have an ill reputation;
3. he will be timid and ashamed in the midst of public assemblies;
4. on the point of death, he will sink into stupor and lethargy;
5. immediately after his death, he will reach one of the four lower planes of existence.

These bad results are set forth in the the Fifth *Nipāta* of the *Anguttaranikāya* (Sixth Synod Pāli Text) and the *Pāṭaligāma Vatthu* in *Bhesajjakkhandhaka* of *Vinayamahāvagga* (Sixth Synod Pāli Text); and *Pāṭaligāmiya-sutta* of *Khuddhakanikāya Udāna* (Sixth Synod Pāli Text).

### RESULTS OF BREAKING THE FIVE PRECEPTS, IN DETAIL.

The following are the bad results, in detail, of breaking the Five Precepts:

(a) *Pāṇātipāta*. "The bad results of taking another being's life:" The person who takes another being's life will be reborn in one of the four lower planes of existence on his death. If he should later be reborn in the human world, after suffering in those lower planes, he will have a short life, and may even die soon after birth.

(b) *Adinnādāna*. "The bad results of taking another person's property:" The person who takes another person's property will, on his death, reach one of the four lower

planes of existence, and after that, if he should be reborn in the human world, he is liable to lose possessions and property, so that even a little wealth may not remain with him.

(c) *Kāmesu Micchācāra*. “The bad results of committing adultery or carnally knowing maidens still under guardianship:” the person who breaks this Precept of *Kāmesu Micchācāra* may, on his death, reach one of the Four lower planes of existence, and after that, if he should be reborn in the human world, he is liable to have many enemies, so that all who meet him regard him with hostility.

(d) *Musāvāda*. “The bad result of speaking falsehood:” The person who utters falsehood is extremely likely on his death, to reach the four lower planes of existence, and after that, if he should be reborn in the human world, he will be subjected to unjust allegations and may be held responsible for others’ misdeeds.

(e) *Surāpāna*. “The bad results of taking intoxicants:” The person who takes intoxicants is extremely likely, on his death to reach one of four lower planes of existence, and after that, if he should be reborn in the human world, he is liable to suffer from madness, or psychopathic complaints, or he may be a deaf and dumb person.

The above is as set forth in the *Dānavagga* of the *Anguttaranikāya Aṭṭhakanipāta* Pāli Text, and the *Dānavagga* of the *Aṭṭhakanipāta* in the *Manorathapūraṇī Aṭṭhakathā* being a commentary on the *Anguttaranikāya*.

After having dealt with the beneficial results accruing from a steadfast observance of the Five Precepts, as well as the bad consequences resulting from breaking the Precepts, as set forth in the Texts, I would like to go on to a description of the proper way in which the Five Precepts should be observed.

I would not like those who keep the Five Precepts to observe them in the way a certain black leopard kept them.

Once upon a time, a black leopard, which lived on an island near the shore of a river, found that he was cut off from all possibility of hunting for food, because of a sudden flood during the night. Then the black leopard said to himself that as he was not going to get any food that day, he might as well keep the Fast Day, and so he resolved to observe the Precepts. The Spirit of the Forest wanted to test the sincerity of the black leopard, and

taking the form of a goat, let the leopard hear its bleating. When the leopard saw the goat, he decided that it would not do as yet to keep the Fast that day, and so he postponed his observance of the Precepts. The leopard chased the goat, but the goat disappeared. Then the leopard said to himself that his observance of the Precepts was quite intact, and decided to continue keeping the Fast Day.

I myself met an acquaintance during the last war, who would pay homage to the Buddha and take the Five Precepts as soon as he got up from bed. But, as soon as he left the shrine room, he would start drinking. I would not wish my listeners, who keep the Five Precepts, to be like that man.

In connection with this question of keeping the Five Precepts in the proper way, I would like to relate to you the *Garudhamma Jātaka*. This *Garudhamma Jātaka* as related by the Buddha is to be found in the *Tikanipāta* of the *Jātaka Pāli* Text. In this *Jātaka* story, the *Bodhisatta* or the Future Buddha was a king named Dhanancayakorabya. He and

1. the King’s Mother;
2. the Chief Queen;
3. the King’s Brother, who was the heir-apparent;
4. the *Purohita* Brahmin who was the King’s Preceptor;
5. the Minister who was Keeper of the royal land records;
6. the King’s Charioteer;
7. a Rich Man;
8. the Minister of Agricultural Revenue;
9. the Keeper of the Palace Gates; and
10. a Courtesan,

are perfect models of how the Five Precepts should be observed, and their example should be followed by all those who keep the Five Precepts.

### HOW A COUNTRY BECAME A HAPPY LAND THROUGH OBSERVANCE OF THE FIVE PRECEPTS.

(From the *Garudhamma Jātaka* of the *Tika Nipāta* in the *Jātaka Pāli* Text.)

In ancient times, a king named Dhanañcaya Korabya ruled in the country of Kuru with his capital at Indapatta Nagara. The *Bodhisatta* or the Future Buddha was then the son of the king. After studying at the University, the prince was named heir-apparent to the throne. After a time, on the king’s death, the prince succeeded to the throne, and took the

same royal title as his father had, Dhanañcaya Korabya. This king, being the *Bodhisatta*, ruled over his country in accordance with the Ten Royal Duties laid upon monarchs, and observed steadfastly and strictly the *Garudhamma* Precepts.

The *Garudhamma* was the name given to the Five Precepts at that time; the name *Garudhamma* meant a group of precepts to which great attention should be paid, and which should be observed carefully.

In that city of Indapatta Nagara, the capital of Kuru State, there were as mentioned the ten other people, besides the king, who steadfastly and strictly observed the *Garudhamma* precepts in the same way as the king did.

King Dhanañcaya Korabya, being the *Bodhisatta*, built six halls of alms-giving, at the four gates of the city, in the centre of the city, and at the palace gate. At these six halls, he gave six lakhs worth of alms daily. The fame of his generosity and his charitable alms-offering spread far and wide throughout the Jambudipa island-continent.

At that time, in the country of Kalinga, which had as its capital Dantapura, there ruled the king Kalinga. The country of Kalinga suffered from drought, which brought on famine and epidemic diseases. Because of this, some of the Kalinga citizens emigrated to other countries with their families. One day, the people of Kalinga gathered outside the palace gates and shouted for succour.

The king made enquiry into the reason for the shouts, and learnt of the trouble and misery his people were experiencing.

The king then asked his ministers what was to be done to end the drought, and what had been done by kings in former times in similar circumstances. The ministers replied that in olden times, when there was a drought, kings would give alms, would observe the moral precepts, and would keep the Fast Day, sleeping meanwhile for seven successive nights on a layer of grass spread on the floor of a decorated chamber. Then the drought would end, the rains would come.

The king took the ministers' advice, and did as they said. But the drought continued, and the king asked the ministers what else was to be done.

The ministers said that King Dhanañcaya Korabya of Kuru State had a royal elephant called "*Añjana Vanna*" which was very auspicious. If this elephant could be brought

to Kalinga, then the drought would end, the ministers said.

The king chose eight Royal Brahmins and sent them to King Dhanañcaya Korabya to ask for the elephant. The request was granted, but even after the arrival of the elephant in Kalinga State, the drought continued. The Kalinga king again consulted the ministers on further steps to take to end the drought. The ministers said that King Dhanañcaya Korabya observed the *Garudhamma* Precepts, and that was why the Kuru State had rain every fortnight or ten days. This abundance of rain in Kuru, the ministers said, must be due to King Dhanancaya Korabya's virtue, and not to the elephant's presence. Then King Kalinga ordered that the elephant should be returned to King Dhanacaya Korabya, and that the *Garudhamma* Precepts observed by that king be written down and brought back to Kalinga.

Accordingly, a mission of royal Brahmins and ministers from Kalinga went to Kuru State and requested King Dhanancaya Korabya to dictate to them the *Garudhamma* Precepts that they might write them down as heard from the king himself. King Dhanancaya Korabya said that though it was true that he observed the *Garudhamma* Precepts, yet he had some doubt about his perfect observance of them. The reason for his doubt was that, at one time, during a festival the king took part in a game of archery, and an arrow from his bow fell into a pond in which there were fish. The king thought that the fish might have been harmed by this stray arrow, and thus he doubted the absolute purity and perfection of his observance of the *Garudhamma* Precepts. He told the Kalinga ministers that his mother observed these Precepts in complete purity, and advised them to go to her as a more fitting person to give them the *Garudhamma* Precepts.

The Kalinga envoys told the king that he had not broken the Precept of *Pāṇātipāta* since he had no intention of causing death to any of the fish in the pond. They asked him to give them the *Garudhamma* Precepts, since he was well qualified to do so.

King Dhanancaya Korabya then complied with their request, dictating the *Garudhamma* Precepts to them; but he insisted on their going to his mother, as he felt that she would have no occasion to doubt her *Sila*.

The Kalinga envoys went then to the king's mother and made the request to be allowed to get the Precepts from her.

The king's mother said :

"It is true that I observe the *Garudhamma* Precepts. But I am unwilling to dictate the Precepts to you as I have some doubt about the purity or perfection of my observance. I am not satisfied on one point. Not long ago, a foreign king sent presents to my son Dhanancaya Korabya, consisting of a piece of the heart-wood of sandal worth a lakh and a golden bouquet worth a thousand. My son gave me both these presents. As I no longer had the desire to adorn myself, I decided to give these two presents to my two daughters-in-law. I thought that my elder daughter-in-law, being the queen, had a high position and was the recipient of more gifts and offerings than the other, and therefore, I should give her the golden bouquet worth a thousand coins. My other daughter-in-law, being the wife of the heir-apparent, did not have as exalted a position as the queen or as many gifts, and therefore she should have the more valuable present, that is the piece of sandal-wood worth a lakh. Reasoning along these lines, I gave them their respective presents. But after a while I doubted the correctness of my decision. I said to myself that the difference in their positions should not have been any concern of mine. I should have given the more valuable present to the one who was older and of greater rank. Thus I doubted whether or not I had broken the *Garudhamma* Precepts, having been responsible for this error. Therefore, I am not willing to dictate the Precepts to you. My daughter-in-law, the queen, observes these Precepts steadfastly and in perfection. Please go and get the Precepts from her."

The Kalinga envoys assured the king's mother that she had a perfect right to dispose of her own possessions in any way she wished to. They said that if she was in doubt even about a little thing like that, there would be no possibility of her doing any kind of evil ever. Therefore, they insisted on her giving them the *Garudhamma* Precepts.

The king's mother complied with their request, but directed them to go also to the queen.

The Kalinga envoys approached the queen and repeated their request for the *Garudhamma* Precepts. The queen said that she did observe the *Garudhamma* Precepts, but she was not satisfied with the purity of her observance. She told the envoys that one day the king and his brother, the heir-apparent, were going round inspecting the city, on an

elephant. The queen saw them from a window, and thought that it would be a good thing if the prince were to be her husband. She thought that she would be happy if the prince on ascending the throne were to take her as his queen. But she at once remembered that she should not have such a thought about another man when she was married already, since she was observing the *Garudhamma* Precepts. Therefore, she doubted whether she had not broken the observance of the Precepts. Thus she was unwilling for the envoys to take the Precepts from her. She directed them to her brother-in-law, the heir-apparent, who, she said, observed the Precepts in purity and perfection.

The Kalinga envoys assured the queen that the Precept of *Micchācāra* could not be broken by a mere thought. If the queen felt a doubt about her observance of the Precepts through merely having an improper thought, they said, she was not likely to commit any kind of evil. Therefore, they insisted on her giving them the Precepts.

The queen complied with their request, but directed them to go also to the prince, the heir-apparent.

The envoys approached the heir-apparent and repeated the request for the *Garudhamma* Precepts.

The prince said: "I do observe the *Garudhamma* Precepts, but now I have some doubt about the purity of my observance, and therefore I am not willing to let you have the Precepts from me. My doubt arose like this. When I go to the palace to attend the evening audience of the king, I usually go in my chariot. When I intend to dine at the palace and spend the night there I always leave my whip and the reins at the front of the chariot. Seeing this sign, my retinue go home, and come and wait for me at the palace gate the next morning. The charioteer also takes the chariot away, and brings it back for me the next morning. But if I intend to leave the palace the same evening without dining or spending the night there, I leave the reins and the whip inside the chariot. This sign tells my retinue that I will not stay long in the palace, and they wait for me at the palace gate. One day, intending to leave the palace immediately after the evening audience, I left my whip and the reins inside the chariot, as the usual sign. But a great storm came when I had got inside the palace and the king asked me to dine and spend the night in the palace, because of the storm. I did so.



But when I came out in the morning, I found that my retinue and all the officers of my household had been waiting for me at the palace gate the whole night through, in the storm. Thus I had caused trouble and discomfort to a lot of other people, even though I was observing the *Garudhamma* Precepts. Therefore I doubt the purity of my observance and am not willing to let you have the Precepts at my hands."

The Kalinga envoys assured the prince that as he had no intention whatever of bringing trouble and discomfort to others on that occasion he could not possibly be held responsible for the results. They said that if he felt a doubt even for such a little thing, there would be no likelihood of his breaking any of the Precepts. They insisted on the prince giving them the Precepts.

The prince reluctantly complied with their request, but directed them to go also to the *Purohita*, the royal preceptor, who, he said, observed the *Garudhamma* Precepts in purity and perfection.

The Kalinga envoys approached the *Purohita* brahmin, and repeated the request for the *Garudhamma* Precepts. The *Purohita* brahmin said: "It is true that I observe the *Garudhamma* Precepts, but now I am not satisfied with the purity of my observance because of a certain doubt. At one time, on my way to an audience at the palace, I saw a wonderful chariot, as radiant as the newly risen sun, being brought along by a foreign diplomatic mission. On enquiry, I found that this chariot was a present for the king, Dhanancaya Korabya. I felt in my mind that as I was advanced in age it would be a very good thing if the king were to make a present of the chariot to me. I would then be able to go about in comfort and splendour. When I got to the palace and was ushered into the audience room, the foreign ambassadors arrived and made their presentation of the chariot to the king. The king then said that the chariot was very beautiful, and that it would be fitting for the royal preceptor to have it. So he offered it to me as a present. But I refused the chariot, even though the offer was made more than once. I felt that it was very improper of me, as one who was keeping the *Garudhamma* Precepts to covet another man's property. Thus, I have a doubt about the purity of my observance of the Precepts, and I am unwilling for you to have the Precepts at my hands. But the minister of the royal land records is a

person who observes the Precepts in purity and perfection. Please go and get the Precepts from him."

The Kalinga envoys assured the *Purohita* brahmin that a mere feeling of desire for something could not spoil the observance of the Precepts. They said that if the *Purohita* felt doubt through such a little thing, he would not be likely to commit any evil, and they insisted on his dictating the Precepts to them.

The *Purohita* complied with their request, but directed them to go also to the keeper of the royal land records.

The Kalinga envoys approached the minister of the royal land records, and repeated their request for the *Garudhamma* Precepts.

The minister of the royal land records said: "It is true that I keep the *Garudhamma* Precepts. But now, I have a doubt about the purity of my observance. Once I went to a large village and surveyed the paddy-land of a well-to-do person. The way in which the survey was done was to measure the land by means of a rope, one end of which was held by the land owner, and the other end of which was wound round a spear held by me. When I rested the point of the spear on the ground, I found that the point was just over the mouth of a field-crab hole. That happened to be the exact place where the point of the spear should go in. But if the spear was put in there, the field-crab inside the hole would be killed. If, however, the spear were moved to either side of the hole, the king or the land owner would be bound to be the loser, since it would make a difference by that much bit of ground in the extent of demarcation. In this dilemma, I thought that it was not likely that a crab was in the hole, since I had seen no sign of it. Then, I put the spear into the hole, and I heard the noise made by a crab. I felt then that the spear's point probably fell on the back of the crab, and might have killed the crab. I felt very sad about this, and I have a doubt about the purity or soundness of my observance of the *Garudhamma* Precepts. Therefore, I do not wish you to have these Precepts at my hands. You should go to the charioteer for these, as his observance of the Precepts is both steadfast and sound."

The Kalinga envoys assured the minister that he could not be held responsible for the crab's death, since he had no intention of killing it. They said that if the minister had a doubt about such a little thing, he was not

likely to do any evil, and they pressed him to let them have the *Garudhamma* Precepts.

The minister complied with their request, but directed them to go also to the royal charioteer.

The Kalinga envoys approached the royal charioteer, and made the same request as they had done to the others. The charioteer said: "It is true I observe the *Garudhamma* Precepts, but I am not satisfied with the purity or soundness of my observance. The horses drawing the royal chariot are very well trained, and respond to the slightest sign from me. At one time I was driving the king to the royal garden. In the evening, on our way back to the palace, a storm came up and darkened the sky. It was about sunset then. I was afraid that the king would get wet in the rain if we could not get back to the palace in time. Therefore, I touched the horses with my whip, to make them gallop. From that time onwards whenever I drive the king to the garden, on passing this spot, the horses always break into a gallop, thinking that there must be some danger at that spot since I had touched them with the whip there. I am upset in my mind about this. I would not have been held responsible if the king had got wet in the rain. In my over-anxiety I had caused the well-trained horses to gallop without sufficient cause, and thus they exert themselves every time they pass this spot now. Therefore, I have a doubt about the soundness of my observance of the Precepts. I am unwilling to give you the Precepts. You should go to the richest man in the country, who observes the Precepts in purity and soundness."

The Kalinga envoys assured the royal charioteer that he could not have broken any of the Precepts, since he had no intention of causing the horses to strain themselves unduly. They insisted that he was well qualified to dictate the Precepts to them, since he would not commit evil. The charioteer complied with their request, but directed them to go also to the rich man to get the Precepts.

The Kalinga envoys approached the rich man with the request for the *Garudhamma* Precepts. The rich man said that though he observed the Precepts, he had a doubt about the purity or soundness of his observance. He said that at one time on his way home from his paddy fields, he thoughtlessly plucked a handful of the paddy sprays and put them in his hair as an adorn-

ment. Only after that, he remembered that he had not paid the revenue in kind for the paddy in that particular field, and that his taking of a handful of paddy lessened the revenue he should pay by that much of an amount. So he doubted whether or not he had broken his observance of the Precepts. He directed the Kalinga envoys to the minister of agricultural revenue, who, he said, was a more fitting person than himself to give the *Garudhamma* Precepts.

The Kalinga envoys assured the rich man that he could not have broken any Precepts as he had no intention of stealing. They pressed him to dictate the Precepts to them. He complied with their request, but directed them to go also to the minister of agricultural revenue.

In those days, the minister of agricultural revenue was known literally as "Controller of the measuring basket".

The Kalinga envoys approached the minister of agricultural revenue with the same request as they had made to the others. The minister admitted that he did observe the *Garudhamma* Precepts, but was unwilling to let them have the Precepts, because he doubted the purity or soundness of his observance. His doubt was due to the following circumstances. One day, he was sitting at the door of the royal granary, collecting as revenue that portion of the citizens' paddy which was due to the king. For purposes of counting the baskets of paddy that were being put in the granary, he was using as tallies the paddy stalks from the as yet unmeasured heap of paddy. It suddenly rained then. He hurriedly put the paddy stalks used as tallies into the measured heap of paddy which was being taken as the king's revenue. Then he sought shelter from the rain. And then he could not remember whether he had put the tally stalks into the revenue heap of paddy, or into the as yet undetermined heap of paddy. He thought that he might have done the former, and thus unjustly increased the king's revenue at the expense of the subjects. Therefore he had a doubt about the purity or perfection of his observance of the *Garudhamma* Precepts and was unwilling to let the Kalinga envoys have the Precepts from him, but directed them to the keeper of the palace gates, who observed the Precepts without blemish.

The Kalinga envoys prevailed upon the minister to give them the Precepts, because they said that he could not have broken the

precept against stealing, since he had no intention to steal. They said that if he had such a doubt about a little thing, he would not be likely to take another's property ever. The minister gave them the Precepts, but at the same time urged them to go to the keeper of the palace gates for the Precepts.

The Kalinga envoys approached the keeper of the palace gates with the same request for the *Garudhamma* Precepts. The keeper of the palace gates said that he was not satisfied with the purity or perfection of his observance of the Precepts. At one time, just as he was about to shut the gates of the city for the night, after proclaiming aloud a warning thrice, a poor man hurriedly approached the gates with a young woman in his company. Then the keeper of the gates harshly scolded the man, saying: "Don't you know that this is a land of law and order, and that gates have to be closed on time? You are doing wrong by enjoying yourself the whole day with a woman, and forgetting the time." The poor man replied that the woman with him was actually his sister. Thus the keeper of the gates felt that having made an unjust allegation, his observance of the Precepts had been endangered. Having this doubt in his mind, he was unwilling to give the Kalinga envoys the Precepts, but directed them to go to the courtesan, who observed the Precepts in purity and soundness.

The Kalinga envoys assured the royal keeper of gates that he could not be held as having broken any Precepts, since he had not deliberately made a false allegation, but had been under a mistaken impression. They said that he would never be guilty of speaking falsehood, if he had this doubt over such a little matter. They urged him to dictate to them the *Garudhamma* Precepts. The keeper of the gates complied with their request, but directed them to go also to the courtesan.

The Kalinga envoys approached the courtesan, with the request that they might get the *Garudhamma* Precepts from her. The courtesan said: "It is true I observe the *Garudhamma* Precepts. But I am not satisfied with the purity of my observance. The reason is this. At one time, a young man came and gave me a thousand coins as a fee to enjoy himself with me, and said that he would come later. After taking this fee, I waited for him every day until three years had passed. During those three years, I did

not accept any fees from anybody else, but waited for him, so as not to break my promise.

During this wait of three years, as I had no income I became very poor and found it difficult to find the wherewithal for the expenses of living. I went to a judge to get a decision on my problem. The judge, after due examination, gave the decision that from that time onwards I could seek an income by my way of living. As soon as I came out of the court, a man came and gave me a thousand coins as fee for enjoyment with me. As I stretched out my hand to take the money, the young man who had given me my fee three years before appeared suddenly. Then I told the second man that the person who had previously given me my fee three years ago had come back, and that I could not accept the fee of the second man. After this refusal, something wonderful happened. The young man who had given me my fee previously became suddenly transformed into a *Deva*, and with a splendour and a radiant, golden appearance like the bright shining light of the rising sun, he addressed us from the sky. The news of this spread throughout the whole city. This *Deva* said, as he stood in the sky, that he was the *Sakya* or ruler of the world of *Devas* and that he had assumed the form of a young man to test the observance of the Precepts by a courtesan, myself. He said that the Precepts must be observed in the way I had observed them, and he showered down a rain of jewels and gems on my house. But, still, I do not feel satisfied with the purity of my observance of the Precepts, as I had stretched out a hand to accept the fee of a second person, before I had discharged my obligations for the fee of a first person. Thus I have a doubt about my observance, and I am unwilling to give you the *Garudhamma* Precepts."

The Kalinga envoys replied that the courtesan's observance of the Precepts had not been broken at all by the mere intention to accept a second fee, and that her observance of the Precepts was absolutely pure and sound.

The courtesan then agreed to dictate the Precepts to the envoys. They took the Precepts back to Kalinga and gave them to the king. The king of Kalinga, his ministers, his courtiers, and all the subjects of the king, from that time onwards observed the *Garudhamma* or Five Precepts, and the result was a sudden end to the drought, with heavy rain all over the country. Thus, they escaped



famine and epidemics and the country became a happy land.

### THE FIVE PRECEPTS: ONE OF FOUR SOTĀPANNA CHARACTERISTICS.

The Buddha said :

‘O Monks, a noble disciple who is endowed with four characteristics is a *Sotāpanna*. From this state, there will be no headlong fall or recession. It is an enduring state. From this state, there will only be progress upwards to *Magga* and *Phala*, the noble Path and Fruition.

‘O Monks, what are these characteristics?

1. The characteristics of steadfast, unshakable, complete belief in the attributes of the Buddha and the religion.
2. The characteristic of steadfast, unshakable, complete belief in the attributes of the Dhamma.
3. The characteristic of steadfast, unshakable, complete belief in the attributes of the Sangha.
4. The characteristic of steadfast and complete observance of Moral Practice, which is absolutely sound and pure, which is valued by wise men, which is unaccompanied by attachment and wrong belief, which can lead to *Samādhi*, and which is termed “*Ariyakanta*”, because it is valued by noble disciples.

‘O Monks, a disciple who is endowed with these four characteristics, is a *Sotāpanna*. This is as set forth by the Buddha in the *Brahmacariyogadha Sutta*, in the *Sotāpattisamyutta* of the *Mahāvagga* in the *Samyutta Nikāya*, (Sixth Synod Pāli Text).

*Ariyakanta Sīla* means the Five Precepts themselves. In the commentary on the above Pāli Text, *Sāratthapakāsinī*, it is stated that the Buddha termed the Five Precepts *Ariyakanta*, (the Moral Practice valued by Noble Disciples), because all noble and virtuous persons love and value the Five Precepts, and observe them even to the point of death.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I believe I have sufficiently dealt with the following four points:

1. What are the Five Precepts ?
2. What are the benefits of observing the Five Precepts ?

3. What are the bad results of breaking the Five Precepts ?

4. How should the Five Precepts be kept ?

Most people have intelligence enough to choose between gain and loss. Therefore, I would wish everybody to consider deeply before doing anything, whether it will lead to gain or to loss. It is not a difficult task to observe the Five Precepts. The person who observes the Five Precepts will gain great benefit both in the present life and in the future existences. Those who break the Five Precepts will suffer the consequences surely and certainly both in the present life and in future existences. Therefore, all the citizens of our country should deeply consider which of the two paths, one leading to gain and the other leading to definite loss, they should follow.

Those people who are continually uttering falsehood, or who are continually doing evil, probably think very well of themselves, only because they have not pondered deeply and sombrely on the consequences. Evil speech and evil actions and evil thoughts do not disappear after their utterance, or commission, or entertainment in the mind. All this evil speech, evil deeds, and evil thoughts carry with them demeritorious or evil consequences, and will work to the detriment of the person responsible for such evil both in this life and in future existences.

Have we not seen with our very eyes all kinds of differences in the lot of human beings? Some people are poor, some are rich, some have a retinue and following, some are without any following, some are wise and intelligent, some have no wisdom or education, some are very well-formed physically, some are defective and deformed in body, some are manly, some are unmanly to the point of being eunuchs, some are healthy, some are sickly, some are short-lived, some are long-lived, some are exalted in position, some are lowly and humble, some command respect, some compel contempt, some are regarded with affection by everybody, and some are regarded with hatred.

All these states and conditions are not without cause. These different results are the consequences of the speech, the actions, and the thoughts which have been uttered, done, and entertained in the mind both in the present life and in previous existences.

These differences in the conditions and states of all persons and beings that are



continually and daily before our eyes, should serve as very valuable lessons to us. Those of us who now enjoy a better lot in life as a consequence of meritorious deeds, both in past existences, and in the present existence, should take great care in speech, action, and thought to avoid evil so that we should not lose this good status in the coming existences. Moreover, we should endeavour to improve on our present lot and station in life, in existence after existence until the cessation of existence in Nibbāna, by always adhering to pure speech, pure actions, and pure thoughts.

In the same way, those of us who happen to be in an undesirable condition of life as a consequence of previous bad deeds, should try to prevent this condition becoming worse in future existences, and to improve our lot more and more in the existences to come, by avoiding evil speech, evil actions, and evil thoughts, and by endeavouring to adhere as much as possible to pure speech, pure actions, and pure thoughts.

If, instead of such virtuous endeavour, people should give rein to ignoble impulses

in speech, in action, and in thought, they may be able to enjoy transitory and illusory advantages in this present life, whose short span is just like a bubble on the surface of the ocean. But, just as this watery bubble disappears in a moment, this life of ours will also come to its end quickly, and at its end there is a long stretch of existence after existence, where the evil consequences of the speech, action, and thought of these foolish people, will dominate and form their lot in life.

Therefore, while it is not too late, while there is still time and opportunity, let us put behind us our previous mistakes, and take good care not to commit any errors in the future. To do this, we must at least observe Moral Practice, in the form of the Five Precepts. Therefore, I urge all of my listeners to endeavour with all their might, while there is still time, to practise steadfastly the observance of the Five Precepts, and to adhere to such observance as securely as we gird our pasoes round our bodies.



### **FIVE FORBIDDEN TRADES.**

‘These trades ought not to be plied by a lay-disciple.

What five ?

Trade in weapons, trade in human beings, trade in flesh, trade in intoxicants and trade in poison.

Verily, these five trades ought not to be plied by a lay-disciple.’

*Anguttara nikāya 5, XV111, 176.*

## DĀNA-VAGGA, DUCCARITA-VIPĀKA SUTTA

(1) 'Monks, killing a living being, when practised, developed, and repeatedly performed, causes one to arise in hell, in the world of animals, and in the world of *Petas*;\* the very least result of taking life is the shortening of one's life when reborn as a man.

(2) ‘Monks, stealing, when practised, developed, and repeatedly performed, causes one to arise in hell, in the world of animals, and in the world of *Petas*; the very least result of stealing is loss of one’s wealth when reborn as a man.

(3) 'Monks, sexual misconduct, when practised, developed, and frequently performed, causes one to arise in hell, in the world of animals, and in the world of *Petas*; the very least result of practising sexual misconduct is that one will breed rivalry and hatred when reborn as a man.

(4) 'Monks, telling lies, when practised, developed, and repeatedly performed, causes one to arise in hell, in the world of animals, and in the world of *Petas*; the very least result of telling lies is that one will be falsely accused when reborn as a man.

(5) 'Monks, backbiting, when practised, developed, and repeatedly performed, causes one to arise in hell, in the world of animals, and in the world of *Petas*; the very least result of backbiting is the breaking up of one's friendship when reborn as a man.

(6) ‘Monks, harsh speech, when practised, developed, and repeatedly performed, causes one to arise in hell, in the world of animals, and in the world of *Petas*; the very least result of harsh speech is that one will possess an unpleasing voice when reborn as a man.

(7) 'Monks, frivolous talk, when practised, developed, and repeatedly performed, causes one to arise in hell, in the world of animals, and in the world of *Petas*; the very least result of frivolous talk is that one's words will be not accepted by others, when reborn as a man.

(8) 'Monks, partaking of intoxicants, when practised, developed, and repeatedly performed, causes one to arise in hell, in the world of animals, and in the world of *Petas*; the very least result of partaking of intoxicants is that one will be afflicted with insanity when reborn as a man.

**\* Ghosts.**



# THE DHAMMAPADA COMMENTARY

## THE STORY OF SUMANĀDEVI

( Sumanādeviyā Vatthu )

( Translated by the Department of Pāli, University of Rangoon )

Idha nandati, pecca nandati,  
katapuñño ubhayattha nandati  
“puññaṃ me katan” ti nandati  
bhiyyo nandati suggaṭṭha gato.

—Dhammapada, V 18.

(One who has done good deeds rejoices here and rejoices afterwards too; he rejoices in both places. Thinking ‘I have done good deeds’ he rejoices, he rejoices all the more having gone to a happy existence.)

The Master while residing at Jetavana delivered this religious discourse beginning with “Here (in this world) one who has done good deeds rejoices” in connection with Sumanādevī.

At Sāvattī, two thousand monks used to take their meals daily in the house of Anāthapiṇḍika and a similar number in the house of the eminent female-devotee Visākhā. Whosoever wished to give alms in Sāvattī, they used to do so after getting permission of these two. What was the reason for this? Even though a sum of a hundred thousand was spent in charity, the monks used to ask: “Has Anāthapiṇḍika or Visākhā come to our alms-hall?” If told, “They have not”, they used to express words of disapproval saying “What sort of a charity is this?” The fact was that both of them (Anāthapiṇḍika and Visākhā) knew exceedingly well what the congregation of monks liked, as also what ought to be done befitting the occasion. When they supervised, the monks could take food according to their liking, and so all those who wished to give alms used to take those two with them. As a result, they (Anāthapiṇḍika and Visākhā) could not get the opportunity to serve the monks in their own homes.

Thereupon, pondering as to who could take her place and entertain the congregation of monks with food, and finding her son’s daughter, Visākhā made her take the place. She started serving food to the congregation of monks in Visākhā’s house. Anāthapiṇḍika too made his eldest daughter, Mahāsubhaddā by name, officiate in his stead. While attending to the monks, she used to listen

to the Dhamma. She became a sotāpanna and went to the house of her husband. Then he (Anāthapiṇḍika) put Cullasubhaddā in her place. She too acting likewise became a sotāpanna and went to her husband’s house. Then his youngest daughter Sumanādevī was assigned the place. She, however, attained the fruition of sakadāgāmi. Though she was only a young maiden, she became afflicted with so severe a disease that she stopped taking her food and wishing to see her father sent for him.

Anāthapiṇḍika received the message while in an almshouse. At once he returned and asked her what the matter was. She said to him, ‘Brother, what is it?’ He said ‘Dear, are you talking in delirium?’ Replied she, ‘Brother, I am not delirious.’ He asked, ‘Dear, are you in fear?’ and she replied, ‘No, I am not, brother.’ Saying only these words she passed away. Though a Sotāpanna, the banker was unable to bear the grief that arose in him for his daughter and after having had the funeral rites of his daughter performed, approached the Master weeping. Being asked: ‘Householder, what makes you come sad and depressed, weeping with a tearful face?’, he replied ‘Lord, my daughter Sumanādevī has passed away.’ ‘But, why do you lament? Isn’t death common to all beings?’ ‘Lord, this I am aware of, but the fact that my daughter, who was so conscious of a sense of shame and fear of evil, was not able to maintain her self-possession at the time of her death and passed away talking in delirium, has made me very depressed.’ ‘But, noble banker, what was it that she said?’

‘When I addressed her as “Dear Sumanā”, she said “What is it, dear brother?”’\*

‘Then when I asked her “Dear, are you talking in delirium?”, she replied “I am not talking in delirium, brother”.

‘When I asked her “Are you in fear, dear?”, she replied “Brother, I am not”. Saying this much she passed away.’

Thereupon the Master told him, ‘Noble banker, your daughter was not talking in

\* ..“younger brother” “Kaṇiṭṭhabhātikā.” It would have been terribly rude, shocking, for a daughter to address her father as ‘younger brother’ in ordinary circumstances.

delirium.' When asked why she spoke like that, the Master replied, 'It is because of your lower spiritual position; indeed your daughter held a higher position than you did in the attainment of the path (*magga*) and fruition (*phala*); you are only a *sotāpanna* but your daughter was a *sakadāgāmin*; it was because of her higher position in the attainment of path and fruition that she spoke to you in that way'. The banker asked, 'Is that so Lord?', and the Master affirmed saying 'It is so'. When asked 'Where is she reborn at present?' the Master said, 'In the Tusitā heaven, O householder'. Then the banker made this remark, 'Lord, having rejoiced here in this world in the midst of kinsmen, now again, after passing away, my daughter has been reborn in a place of joy'. Thereupon the Master told him, 'Yes banker, the diligent, whether they are householders or *samaṇas*, surely rejoice in this world as well as in the next', and uttered this stanza.

Idha nandati, pecca nandati,  
katapuñño ubhayattha nandati,  
"puññaṃ me katan" ti nandati  
bhiyyo nandati sugatim gato ti.

Dhammapada, s. 18.

'One who has done good deeds rejoices here and rejoices afterwards too; he rejoices in both places. Thinking "I have done good

deeds" he rejoices, he rejoices all the more having gone to a happy existence.'

Therein, *idha* implies in this world, where one rejoices on account of the joy derived from one's own deeds.

*Pecca* implies that in the next world one rejoices on account of the resultant joy.

*Katapuñño* means the performer of merit of various kinds.

*Ubhayattha* implies that in this world one rejoices at the thought "I have done good and have not done evil" and in the next he rejoices enjoying the result.

"*Puññaṃ me*" means while rejoicing here at the thought "I have performed a meritorious deed", one rejoices with mere happiness arising from the satisfaction in his own good deed.

*Bhiyyo* implies that having gone to a happy existence (*sugatim gato*) one rejoices exceedingly on account of the resultant joy, enjoying the celestial glory for fifty-seven crores and sixty lakhs\* years in the Tusitā Heaven.

At the end of the verse, many people became *sotāpannas* and so on, and the discourse became beneficial to the multitude.

The story of Sumanādevī, the thirteenth one.

\* A crore is 10,000,000: a lakh is 100,000.

ဗုဒ္ဓ ဓမ္မ လောက

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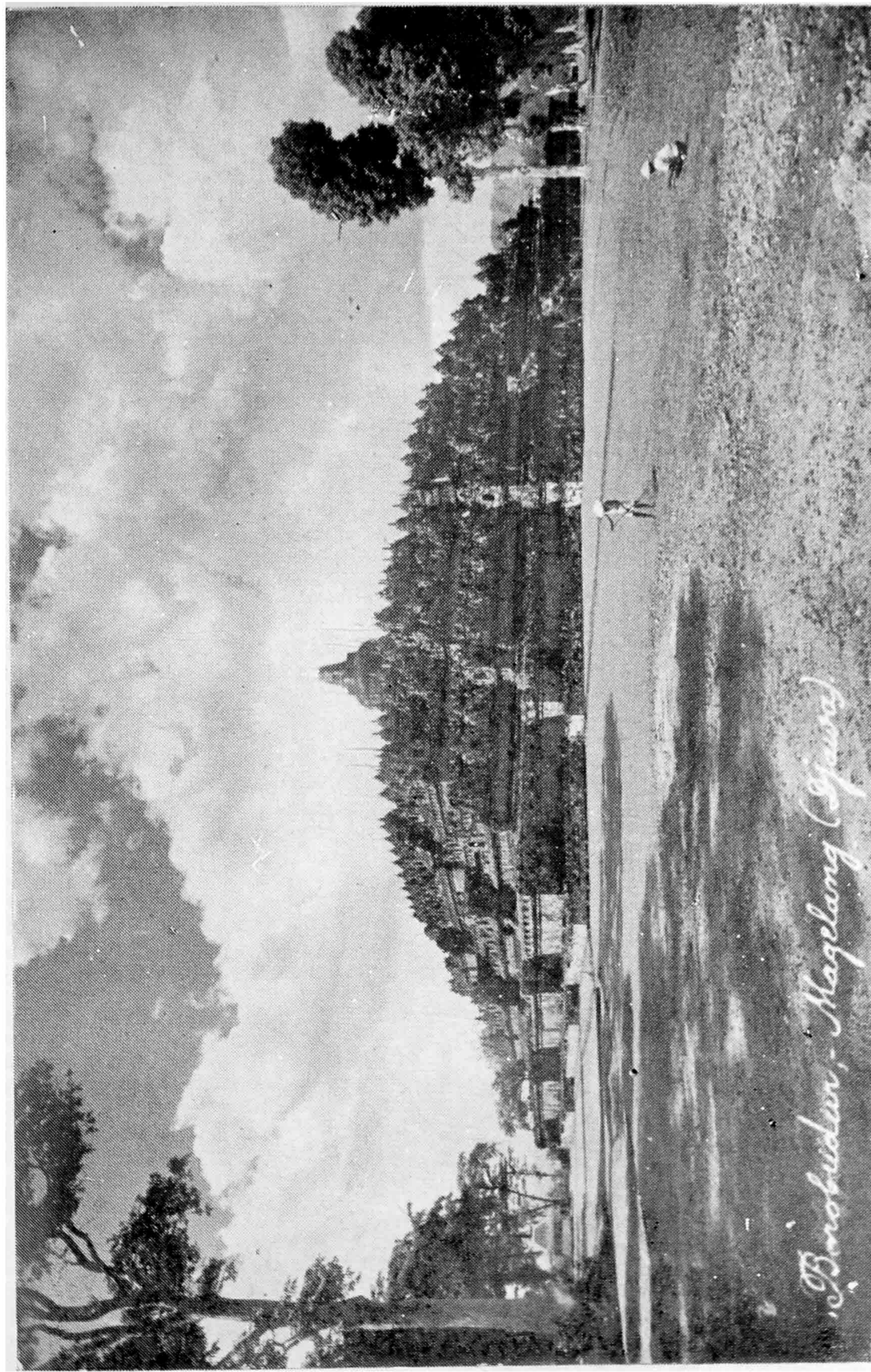
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The ancient great Buddhist Temple of Borobudur in Indonesia.



# BOOK REVIEWS

## HOW TO BE LUCKY.

*Life's Highest Blessings (The Highroad of Success and Happiness) Dr. R. L. Soni; World Institute of Buddhist Culture, Soni Building, Mandalay, Price K. 10/—post free.*

About a hundred years before a certain Mr. Davis advertised himself as the first citizen of the world, the Burmese King Mindon, at his court at Amarapura, told the Englishman Sir Arthur Phayre that the MANGALA SUTTA could well be the textbook of a world state.

The good and pious King Mindon extolled the Sutta to Sir Arthur and emphasised its great value.

The book under review gives the Sutta in romanised Pāli, followed by a word for word translation in English and then a rather free translation in stanzas modelled on the original Pāli stanzas, followed by several explanatory chapters.

In these the author has done a workman-like job in explaining in detail this famous Sutta, one of the earliest of the Buddha's Sermons.

However it is the first chapter of the book that is outstandingly good and that deserves to live, for its good writing, its simple style and its succinct explanation of what MANGALA really is.

It is a pity that the learned author did not then base his translation on his first chapter but stuck to the old and not very suitable translation of '*Mangala*' as '*Blessing*'.

The word '*Blessing*' should be eschewed if only for its horrible origin. It meant, originally, 'to mark with blood' and is a relic of a vindictive, savage and sadistic 'God' who could be fooled into thinking a man had suffered by seeing him 'marked with blood' and who demanded that innocent animals be brutally slaughtered since the savour of their flesh was sweet in his nostrils.

As the scholarly author shows in his first chapter, the Sutta was given to combat foolish superstition. The Buddha had pointed out that attachment to rite and ritual is a fetter to hold men down, and in the Dhammapada the first two verses set the tone of the Buddhaddhamma, 'Mind precedes all things; they are all mind-made.'

As Dr. Soni points out 'He (the Buddha) denounced "Luck" or "fortune" or "auspiciousness" as chance events, and proclaimed instead the human behaviour, associations and activities as the real begetters of "fortune" or "misfortune". Thus the emphasis was shifted from unhealthy fears and the fettering superstitions to free enterprise, rational thinking, social obligations and self-confidence.'

The Buddha thus took the common feeling, stronger even in those days than in modern times, of 'a lucky thing to do' and put it on a far higher plane. Still 'a lucky thing to do' but with far-reaching social and moral and spiritual effects for all sentient beings as well as for the more immediate selfish benefits.

He took the word '*Mangala*', lucky or fortunate and put it, and all of the thinking of the world, on a higher ethical plane.

We can do the same even in our lower degree, our infinitely lower degree. We can put the 'lucky thing to do' as the moral, the ethical the RIGHT thing to do, for our own benefit and that of others; thus following the Buddha.

So for *Mangalam Uttamam* the best translation is still: 'The luckiest thing to do!'

If we wish to be lucky, for ourselves and others, we must follow the basic moral and spiritual advice of the Mahāmangala Sutta.

### THE WHEEL: A NEW SERIES AT LOW COST.

*Buddhist Publication Society: The Wheel, A series of Buddhist Publications.*

It is indeed a pleasure to have something really good to recommend. Here is a new series at very low cost and quite well got up. Booklets that can be put in the pocket and carried about for reading and for reference.

We have received the first two titles: 'The Seven Factors of Enlightenment' by Venerable Piyadassi Thera and 'Vedanta and Buddhism' a good translation of the scholarly yet eminently readable work of Prof. Dr. H. von Glasenapp.

Single numbers are only Ceylon Cents 25 each and double numbers (number one above is a double number) double that price.

Further titles are expected shortly and we would recommend readers abroad to send ten shillings or a pound (just as easy to send from the point of view of exchange as larger amounts) in order to get the titles as they come out from time to time.

Publishers are: The Buddhist Publication Society, Forest Hermitage, Kandy, Ceylon, Secretary Venerable Nyanaponika Mahāthera. Remittances, they ask to be sent to the Treasurer: Mr. A. S. Karunaratne, J. P. U. M., Crown Proctor, Kandy, Ceylon.

### THERE, IT'S IN AGAIN!

*Zen Buddhism: Christmas Humphreys, George Allen & Unwin, 16/—nett.*

Here is the thousandth book to explain the unexplainable. 'Zen Buddhism' (the author carefully explains on Page 221 that it 'is neither Buddhism nor any other "ism"') is here resolved to 'Zen', which as the author also explains, is not Meditation (P. 119).

Certainly if by 'Meditation' is meant 'Insight-Meditation' (*Vipassanā-bhāvanā*) then Zen is something of a 'half-way house' to it. Or perhaps the analogy could be improved by putting the half-way house at the foot of the mountains which the followers of Zen have no need to climb as they are sure of what lies above and so can afford to 'sit and play games at the foot of the hill'.

The 'tweaks of the nose' and 'biffs on the jaw' and 'kicks and blows' and the 'slapped faces' and the 'new delight in a bottle of beer' have nothing in common with the Noble Teaching handed down so carefully and with such provenance from the days of the Buddha Himself.

That all sounds very much like 'the flow of normal life' and as the author says:

'The moment, therefore, that the student has gained some measure of mental control he begins to destroy the fetters created by thought. Thereafter meditation becomes a hindrance not a help. It is "unnatural", in that it hinders the normal flow of life'.

We can agree with the first sentence in the above, but have the Buddha's word for it that Meditation can never be dispensed with until final Nibbāna is reached. Let us quote from the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya* wherein is the following description of the Passing Away of the Buddha :—

'And passing out of the third *Jhāna*, He entered the fourth. And passing out of the last *Jhāna* he immediately expired'.

One thing that is explained in this book is that the experience of 'Satori' made so much of by Zen (and which is, as the author shows, confined neither to East nor West, to Buddhism nor to any other religion) is far short of the 'One Way' (*Ekāyano*) of the Buddha. Indeed it is so far short, and it is so easy to be entranced by this, that the Buddha warned against attachment to it; and it is termed 'the ten obstacles in the way of Nibbāna'

To quote from the *Abhidhammatthasangaha* :

'The *Yogāvacara* (Disciple : cultivating mental concentration) meditates on the states of mind and matter—that have been grasped in the above manner with their causal relations ... He meditates that they are impermanent, being in a state of continuous change, a source of unease or suffering, 'substanceless' being devoid of any soul or ego. He meditates on their threefold characteristics, in the period of time, in their continuity and moments of existence. Thus meditating on them in their causal relation in their moments of existence, as rising and passing away, he gets the following :—

- |                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| 1. <i>Obhāsa</i>       | a supernatural light, by which he is able to see most clearly every corner of the universe. |
| 2. <i>Pīti</i> :       | a surpassing thrill of pleasure unlimited.  |
| 3. <i>Passaddhi</i> :  | composure, tranquillity.  |
| 4. <i>Adhimōkkha</i> : | a firm resolve, strong faith...   |
| 5. <i>Paggaho</i> :    | great energy.   |
| 6. <i>Sukha</i> :      | ease.   |
| 7. <i>Ñāna</i> :       | comprehension, insight  |
| 8. <i>Upatthāna</i> :  | worship of this state.  |
| 9. <i>Upekkhā</i> :    | equanimity.   |
| 10. <i>Nikkanti</i> :  | a light desire for this state.  |

These ten obstacles seem to be "Satori" or perhaps 'Satori' without Sadism : but even without the sadism are dangers if one takes them for the goal.

The Buddha taught that one should be perfectly sober and know where one is going before one accepts the advice to 'Walk on'.





A Buddhist Group in Indonesia: the Indonesian Bhikkhu, the Venerable Jinnarakkhita, is seated on the left and The Venerable Bhikkhu Guneratna Thera from Ceylon on the right. They are surrounded by devout Buddhist Upasakas.



# NOTES AND NEWS

## THE ORGANIZATION OF THE SANGHA IN CAMBODIA

Bhikkhu Preah Krou Viriyamunī (Thach-Prang) Indappañño.

It is not generally realised outside Cambodia that the strength and purity of the Sangha of this country owes much to the hierarchical organization of the Sangha.

The Royal Government of Cambodia is promoting the sublime Sāsana of the Omniscient Buddha by conferring the titles and positions here mentioned on suitable Bhikkhus. Due to this noble practice the Buddha Sāsana in Cambodia is prospering day by day.

All the recipients of these titles, which carry with them definite duties and responsibilities, are performing their functions under the leadership of His Holiness the Sangharājā Samdach Preah Mahā-Sumedhādhipati(C.N.) Jotañño.

There are four grades of ecclesiastical titles (Jagana) of the Mahānikāya Sect in Cambodia. These titles, each of which denotes a special position in the Sangha of Cambodia, can each be held only by one Mahāthera, and unless and until that Mahāthera goes to a higher rank there can be no other holder of the title during his lifetime since each signifies a definite position in the hierarchy. From the highest grade is selected the Sangharājā.

In this grade there are three titles :—

1. Preah Dhammalikkhita.
2. Preah Bodhivaṃsa.
3. Preah Vanarata.

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### ORDINATION AS BUDDHIST BHIKKHUS

Sixteen Japanese Buddhists, who had formerly followed different 'schools' of Buddhism, came to Burma in 1956, as the result of talks between the Japanese Buddhist Association and the Union of Burma Buddha Sāsana Council, to study pristine Buddhism and on the 4th. August last received Ordination as Theravādin Samaneras (novices) after some study and the realisation that the Pāli Canon has well preserved the 'Word of the Buddha'.

They have been continuing their studies and on 9th. March this year received full ordination as Buddhist Bhikkhus.

With them received full ordination, Samanera Anuruddha, now Bhikkhu Anuruddha, who had come from America in 1957, and received ordination shortly thereafter as a Samanera.

The conferment of the Yellow Robe either as a Samanera or a Bhikkhu has no analogy with the ordination of a Catholic Priest or Presbyterian Minister, for instance. In such cases a deep knowledge of their doctrine is required usually and a period at a Theological Seminary or its equivalent. In the case of a Samanera the wish, and no evidence of bad character or of any hindrances, is sufficient for novitiation and Full Ordination may follow shortly thereafter if the Samanera seems in earnest.

Study and a full knowledge of the Doctrine follow, or should follow.

So in the present cases, the newly-ordained Bhikkhus are to study for periods of from two to three years when after sufficient knowledge and attainment they will go forth to spread the Doctrine of the Buddha.

The Union Buddha Sāsana Council took responsibility for the Ordination and leading citizens, acted as donors for the Bhikkhus' requisites.

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### RENAISSANCE OF BUDDHISM IN INDONESIA.

Built by a Buddhist king in the 8th. century, the great shrine of Borobudur was a place of pilgrimage from all Indonesia and from far-flung places in Asia, but then for about a thousand years saw no activity. Buddhism, though it never died out, was practised by a very small minority in what was once a predominantly Buddhist country.

Then five years ago, for the first time in ten centuries, a Buddhist Society of Indonesia, the Gabungan Sam Kauw, took the initiative and there were Wesak celebrations at Borobudur.

Burma's *Charge d'affaires* in Indonesia at the time, attended and remarked on the extraordinary experience and on the great renaissance that was taking place.

That renaissance has continued. Now in Indonesia there is much Buddhist activity, and a Theravādin Buddhist Bhikkhu, the Venerable Jinarakkhita, who was ordained and studied *Vipassanā-bhāvanā* in Burma under the Venerable Mahasī Sayadaw at one of Burma's leading Meditation Monasteries, is teaching in his homeland.

There have also been visits from Bhikkhus from Ceylon and quite a band of devout lay-followers keep the wheel of the Dhamma rolling.

### BUDDHIST CALENDAR:

The Calendar opposite this page shows the UPOSATHA DAYS, the Buddhist Fast Days, marked in yellow. For an understanding of the Burmese numbers, please see the month of July wherein the numbers from one to fifteen run together.

In this month (July) the 8th. is of the Waning and the 15th is the dark of the moon while the 23rd. is the 8th. of the Waxing and the 30th. is the full Moon.



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ကြာသပတေး THURS	၃	၁၀	၁၇	၂၄	၃၁
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စနေ SATUR	၅	၁၂	၁၉	၂၆	*

၁၃၁၉-ခုနှစ်၊  
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**AUGUST 1958**

တနင်္ဂနွေ SUN	၃၁	၃	၁၀	၁၇	၂၄
တနင်္လာ MON	*	၄	၁၁	၁၈	၂၅
အင်္ဂါ TUES	*	၅	၁၂	၁၉	၂၆
ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး WEDNES	*	၆	၁၃	၂၀	၂၇
ကြာသပတေး THURS	*	၇	၁၄	၂၁	၂၈
သောကြာ FRI	၁	၈	၁၅	၂၂	၂၉
စနေ SATUR	၂	၉	၁၆	၂၃	၃၀

၁၃၁၉-ခုနှစ်၊  
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**SEPTEMBER 1958**

တနင်္ဂနွေ SUN	*	၇	၁၄	၂၁	၂၈
တနင်္လာ MON	၁	၈	၁၅	၂၂	၂၉
အင်္ဂါ TUES	၂	၉	၁၆	၂၃	၃၀
ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး WEDNES	၃	၁၀	၁၇	၂၄	*
ကြာသပတေး THURS	၄	၁၁	၁၈	၂၅	*
သောကြာ FRI	၅	၁၂	၁၉	၂၆	*
စနေ SATUR	၆	၁၃	၂၀	၂၇	*

၁၃၁၉-ခုနှစ်၊  
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**OCTOBER 1958**

တနင်္ဂနွေ SUN	*	၅	၁၂	၁၉	၂၆
တနင်္လာ MON	*	၆	၁၃	၂၀	၂၇
အင်္ဂါ TUES	*	၇	၁၄	၂၁	၂၈
ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး WEDNES	၁	၈	၁၅	၂၂	၂၉
ကြာသပတေး THURS	၂	၉	၁၆	၂၃	၃၀
သောကြာ FRI	၃	၁၀	၁၇	၂၄	၃၁
စနေ SATUR	၄	၁၁	၁၈	၂၅	*

၁၃၁၉-ခုနှစ်၊  
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**NOVEMBER 1958**

တနင်္ဂနွေ SUN	၃၀	၂	၉	၁၆	၂၃
တနင်္လာ MON	*	၃	၁၀	၁၇	၂၄
အင်္ဂါ TUES	*	၄	၁၁	၁၈	၂၅
ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး WEDNES	*	၅	၁၂	၁၉	၂၆
ကြာသပတေး THURS	*	၆	၁၃	၂၀	၂၇
သောကြာ FRI	*	၇	၁၄	၂၁	၂၈
စနေ SATUR	၁	၈	၁၅	၂၂	၂၉

၁၃၁၉-ခုနှစ်၊  
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**DECEMBER 1958**

တနင်္ဂနွေ SUN	*	၇	၁၄	၂၁	၂၈
တနင်္လာ MON	၁	၈	၁၅	၂၂	၂၉
အင်္ဂါ TUES	၂	၉	၁၆	၂၃	၃၀
ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး WEDNES	၃	၁၀	၁၇	၂၄	၃၁
ကြာသပတေး THURS	၄	၁၁	၁၈	၂၅	*
သောကြာ FRI	၅	၁၂	၁၉	၂၆	*
စနေ SATUR	၆	၁၃	၂၀	၂၇	*



# THE THINGS THEY SAY

## AUSTRALIA:

"THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA has interested me greatly ... As a scientifically trained person, Buddhist thought seems to fit into that type of thinking more logically than the philosophies of other religions ... I am enclosing a Money Order for two years' subscription."

... ..

"Leisure hours not often available in one uninterrupted stretch—for which I bring THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA in quantity, for reading and *re-reading* so good do I find the quality of the contents ...".

... ..

"I must congratulate you and the Editorial staff for such a beautifully intelligent well turned out magazine. The articles are example of instruction that would be hard to beat. I wish you future success."

... ..

"I continue to think the "Light of the Dhamma" excellent in every way. Personally I prefer the simple expositions like the ones you write to the more technical translation of suttas and commentaries but of course I realise that those who are studying deeply need these more technical articles. I thought your article in Vol. IV, No. 2, "The Greatest Adventure" really excellent, it helped me a lot and I am sure would be of much value to others also. The succeeding article on "The Contribution of Buddhism to Philosophy" interested me greatly too.

... ..

'I am richer in wisdom since I read THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA'

... ..

'..... You can see then why THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA comes as such a real light and a real help to me. I am so grateful that I would like you, if it is possible, to tell the contributors of my thanfulness.'

## BURMA:

'I find that "The Light of the Dhamma" clears many points which were puzzling to me before and I now realise that there are many points which are very delicate and cannot be explained in a short way easily, particularly to persons who are brought up with "God" ideas which have taken a firm root in their heart.'

"I always enjoy reading your issues of the Light of the Dhamma and look forward to receiving them eagerly."

## BELGIUM :

'..... du LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA pour pouvoir vous remercier pour cette belle revue dont tous les articles m'ont beaucoup interesse et certains meme encore instruit.'

## CANADA :

'Theravāda Buddhism is many centuries old in Ceylon and in some other countries, but nowhere is it more thoroughly alive and active than I found it in Rangoon. The journal, THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA is one instance of this'.

... ..

"Would ask you to renew this subscription year by year without further instructions from us."

## CEYLON:

"I am very grateful to you for THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA as my fellow-bhikkhus, disciples and myself learn greatly from this magazine. As a citizen of the Union of Burma I am proud of this publication from my country. I am very happy to have the opportunity to discuss the contents of the magazine and the affairs of the Buddha Sāsana Council with Buddhist devotees of Ceylon."

... ..

'Which I read with greatest interest. It is my fervent hope that your excellent magazine will render an invaluable service to all mankind by disseminating the Dhamma in every nook and corner of the world'.

... ..

'It is a great pleasure to receive the "Light of the Dhamma" Everyone of us feels that you are sparing no effort in your endeavour to spread the Buddha-dhamma'.

## DENMARK :

'It is a choice enjoyment to read your eminent magazine which has introduced to me a great happiness, and I shall be pleased to recommend to my friends 'The Light of the Dhamma'.



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"We like your quarterly magazine THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA, very much, and we can suggest no improvements. We always pass this magazine on to our friends."

... ..

"I notice that in the last few issues the layout and printing of this most interesting booklet has greatly improved. Well done and here's to the success your efforts deserve."

... ..

"I have found THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA very helpful in my studies. I am enclosing herewith P.O. value 9/—shillings for a further year's supply."

... ..

'I am very sure of my opinion of "THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA". as the most scholarly and the best conceived for its purpose in attracting and satisfying scholarly and intelligent enquirers. As you will find my name in the "Authors' and Writers' Who's Who" you will realise my opinion on your excellent quarterly is a considered one.'

... ..

"With grateful thanks to you and all concerned in the publication of this wonderful magazine."

... ..

"I enclose British Postal Order for two years' subscription to THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA which I have found most helpful, and have read the articles over many times."

... ..

'Congratulations once again on the very high standard of the articles in your publication. I consider it to be without equal anywhere so far as English language periodicals are concerned.'

... ..

"I have organized a small group in Leeds for study of the Dhamma and your magazine is a most valuable source of information."

'It was a great pleasure to receive the magazine, and to read its high quality contents, and I trust that its future issues.. will be as good as the first. (I have since received a copy of the second issue, which seems to bear out its first promise.)'

... ..

"I saw a copy of the "Light of the Dhamma" yesterday for the first time and I am so delighted with it that I have lost no time in writing to you".

... ..

'Please accept my sincere congratulations on having given us a first-rate journal.'

**ETHIOPIA:**

"Yesterday I received THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA (vol. IV, No.1) which had been on its way so long that I really nearly had given up hope. The greater is my joy and gratefulness now, since this enlightening journal finally reached Addis Abeba ... The Shwe Dagon Pagoda contribution brings back to my mind more lively the unforgettable hours I spent there."

**FINLAND :**

'It is an excellent presentation of Theravāda Buddhism and I am convinced that coming numbers will come up to the standard of this one.'

**FRANCE:**

"I find this Periodical very interesting and would like to have volumes I & II."

... ..

'We are lost in admiration of your wonderful magazine and of the fact that the noble people of Burma are spreading light to the West.'

**GERMANY:**

"The "Light of the Dhamma" is an excellent and well edited journal, the articles reveal thorough learning and a most earnest mind to expound the Dhamma."

... ..

'Allow me please to congratulate you to this most excellent magazine. Not only printing is exceedingly good and makes a good impression, but also the contents are most interesting and stand on a very high level. It is a pity that most journals have not such a high standing.'

**HOLLAND:**

"Your LIGHT gives very much information about the religion which is rather poorly known in the Western countries. That is one thing we appreciate."

**INDIA:**

"I am regularly getting your valuable publication THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA and you will be glad to know that I am taking all the help for my Dhammaduta work from that valuable magazine. I may safely say that every word therein bears its significance. The volume of this magazine occupies the supreme place in this office. All my Buddhist work is full of Burmese Buddhism which is most important and essential for the world. I get a very great inspiration from this magazine."

... ..

This is giving us a good service as Shillong is the capital of Assam which is a cosmopolitan town. The people of different communities are mostly interested to read this magazine. It is quite necessary to us as well as the non-Buddhist people of this place."

... ..

"You are doing excellent work for Buddhism. It is very useful to spread Buddhism. Please send me your magazine regularly."

... ..

"May I avail myself of this opportunity to convey to you my great appreciation of your magazine."

... ..

Many international tourists as well as pilgrims coming from Burma were shown your magazine and these dāyakas not only read them but took them away from me, saying that they would like to become annual subscribers to THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA."

... ..

"I have immensely liked the magazine and am definitely one with others who feel that THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA has a mission and is making rapid strides towards the fulfilment of the noble cause of spreading the Dhamma. We have, however, to try further that it reaches the largest number of people."

... ..

There are friends who would indeed be glad to go in for the magazine but then there is the difficulty of remitting the money. If

somehow or the other this difficulty could be solved, I feel, I could secure quite a few subscribers."

'I am exceedingly glad to receive the "Light of the Dhamma". It is very heartening to see that the Government of Free Burma have been taking very keen interest in protecting and spreading of the "Saddhamma" in the world which is more in need of it now than ever and really this is an excellent medium to make this chaotic world acquainted with the Buddha.'

**INDONESIA:**

"THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA in which I find very much to learn."

... ..

"From THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA I learn much more of our Lord Buddha's Dhamma, and I endeavour to try my best to follow. If I can succeed to the Determination, great or small, this is your gift."

... ..

'The Light of the Dhamma we appreciate very much and we are trying to translate parts of them for our monthly. They give us a feeling of our unity in our religion'.

**ITALY :**

'As for your English language magazine, THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA, I wish to express my deep appreciation of it : it shines as a truly spiritual light, carrying on an extremely useful and commendable work, whose need is deeply felt in our troubled and restless times.'

**JAPAN:**

"Articles in the issues of THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA are full of interest and benefit in my reading. This interest and benefit, I am sure, is shared by all the readers. THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA is leading them to Enlightenment, by its illumination."

**MALAYA:**

"This excellent journal is very well written and serves as a very good medium for the propagation of the Dhamma ..... read every day and derived great happiness".

... ..

"I enclose herewith Kyats 24/—to cover 4 years subscription to THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA. I shall be glad if you will continue forwarding the valuable Dhamma to my address in Penang as follows:—

... ..

“The Light of the Dhamma” for which I thank you. It is most instructive and interesting. I must congratulate your Council for such a splendid and noble effort.’

... ..

‘THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA is most enlightening and instructive.’

#### NEPAL:

“Your esteemed LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA always receives my best attention and I go through it with interest. Then I pass on the same to my library section where very many enthusiastic people from the market visiting the library read it and there is always a response for its richness. The subjects and topics dealt with in the magazine are indeed of tremendous influence.”

... ..

‘Your magazine is indeed very useful. I am sure every Buddhist will feel proud of it.’

#### PAKISTAN:

‘I beg to acknowledge with thanks receipt of your highly esteemed magazine. These are really full of gems of purest high thoughts and precious potential materials. The honest service for the propagation of the Dhamma rendered by the valued articles of the top-ranking and authoritative authors published therein, is unique and highly appreciable. May I take this opportunity to wish that your sincere endeavour for THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA may meet with ultimate success.’

... ..

May I suggest that a separate column be maintained under the head “News & Views” wherein the criticisms of the readers as well as the news of Buddhist activities can be published for wide circulation. The philosophy of the Lord Buddha is of a very high thought and spirit and therefore it may, at the first instance, appear to be disinteresting, rather difficult to understand, particularly to the new readers. To my opinion, if you deem it necessary, you may have some articles of a more simple nature together with the high ones.”

... ..

‘I went through the articles of your publication and it gave me much pleasure throughout. Such a magazine is immense help to the present distressed people of the world. In all matters of Buddhism the matters had been so nicely, accurately and lucidly placed

and explained that they are easily comprehensible by all people of common sense.’

#### PERU:

“The high level of THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA should not be changed too much even if it is too high for some readers, because in my opinion that is one of the main reasons which makes THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA interesting *internationally* and I know that this is the opinion of all my friends.”

#### POLAND:

“To my mind, your periodical THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA is the only one which can satisfy men of science who are serious students of Buddhism.”

... ..

Your splendid review (THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA) is excellent and has given me light and knowledge on the great subjects of Buddhism and I thank you with all my heart. Please accept my respectful homage.

#### SCOTLAND:

“My personal opinion is that it is the finest magazine and is suitable for all conditions of students of Buddhism.”

#### THAILAND:

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... ..

“Your excellent magazine THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA”.

... ..

Please continue to send “THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA” to me in England. I am taking all my numbers with me—it is invaluable.

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‘The Light of the Dhamma has proved very valuable for me. I am not the first foreigner who has become fascinated by Theravāda Buddhism in Burma’.

... ..

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... ..

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... ..

"We both feel greatly enriched through the study of the various articles in **THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA**".

... ..

"**THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA** is not the first Buddhist journal I have read. For choice of subject and treatment, it is the best I have been able to find in the English language."

.... ..

"There is a growing interest in this country, particularly in Southern California, in Buddhism and books and periodicals in this field have a wide use."

... ..

"I have seen and read a number of Buddhist periodicals within the last decade or so, and I think I have never seen any other magazine on Buddhism which attains such a high standard of excellence and scholarship. I presume also, from the issue vol. III, No. 2, 2499 B.E. that **THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA** will continue to feature translations—or perhaps re-translations—of the basic Theravada suttas and Abhidhamma works. This is indeed a valuable service to the Western Buddhists, since many of the suttas have become almost unavailable except in the largest libraries."

... ..

"Before closing I would like to tell you how very much we are enjoying the first issue received of "The Light of the Dhamma", which is for January 1956. The following articles particularly proved to be splendid nourishment: The Buddhist Doctrine of Kamma and Rebirth; Satipatthana, The Simple Way (of Mindfulness); and the article on The Relation of Sufficing Condition. It is the "revealing" quality of the writings which strike us particularly; by that I mean, they are imbued with the ability to enlighten through the words, to let the reader see the higher octaves of meaning which the words contain within them. We shall look forward through

the year to the future editions of the magazine.

... ..

"It is a most instructive magazine and greatly appreciated. I have passed on the two subscription forms to friends and I know that they will be sending you their subscriptions."

... ..

"We particularly liked your 'Greatest Adventure' and we are enclosing two names and addresses to receive sample copies of this wonderful magazine as per the generous offer on the back cover—if possible we'd like them to have the issue Vol. IV, No. 2 because of that article, if not any will be welcome. Both are incipient Buddhists."

... ..

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.... ..

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... ..

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... ..

"**THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA**..... this valuable publication".

... ..

"**THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA** has already been of inestimable value to me, especially because direct translations of the Suttas are so frequently given in their entirety. Also the articles in serial form by the Ven'ble Ledi Sayadaw I found very helpful."

... ..

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You can help in this Dhammaduta work (Propagation of the Dhamma) by buying copies for your friends here and by sending copies abroad.

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May we also enrol you as a friend of "The Light of the Dhamma", a friend who will gain us more and more subscribers? We hope to be able eventually to publish a list of such friends.

**THE UNION OF BURMA BUDDHA SĀSANA COUNCIL**  
KABA AYE P. O., RANGOON.

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Vol. V.

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