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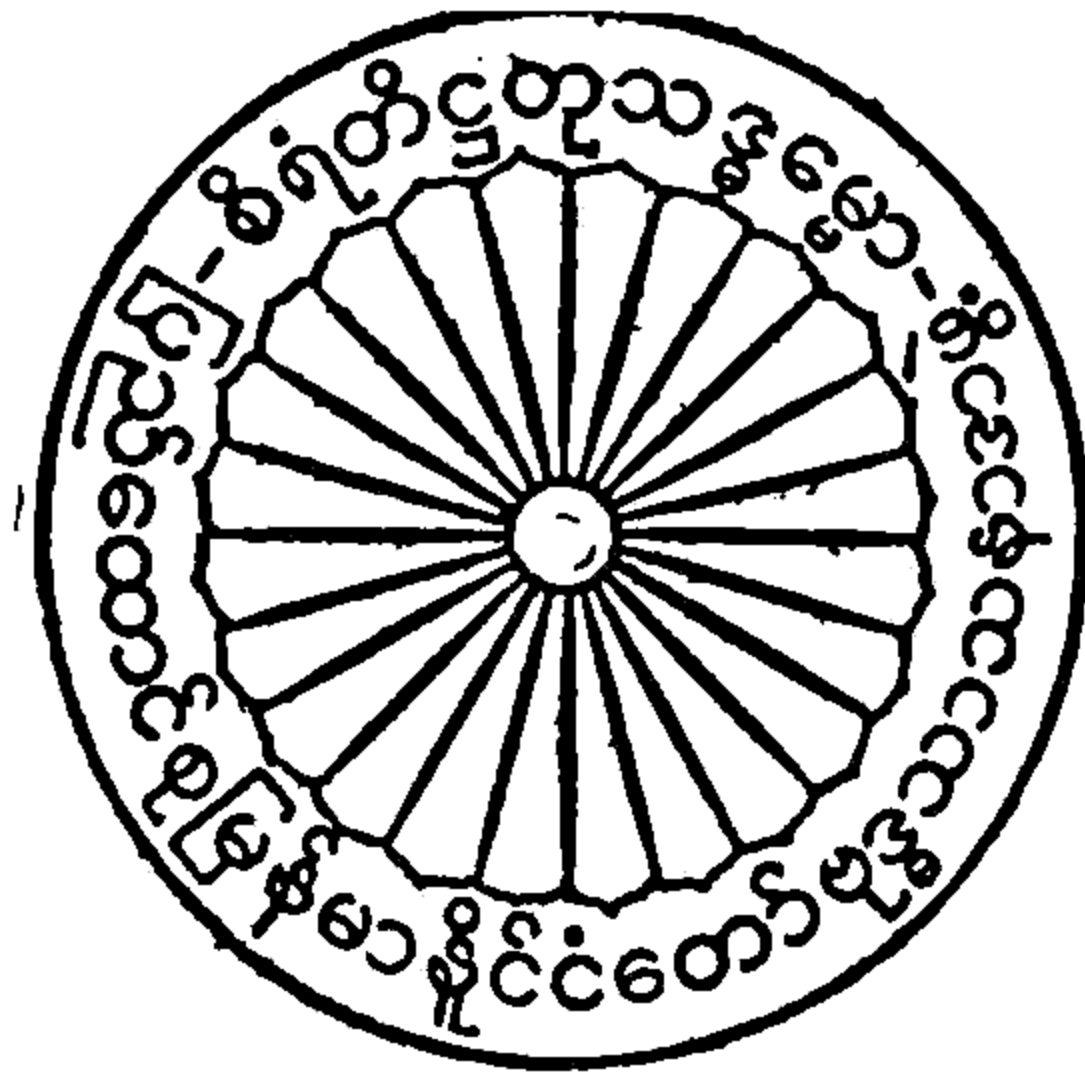
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# *The* LIGHT *of the* DHAMMA

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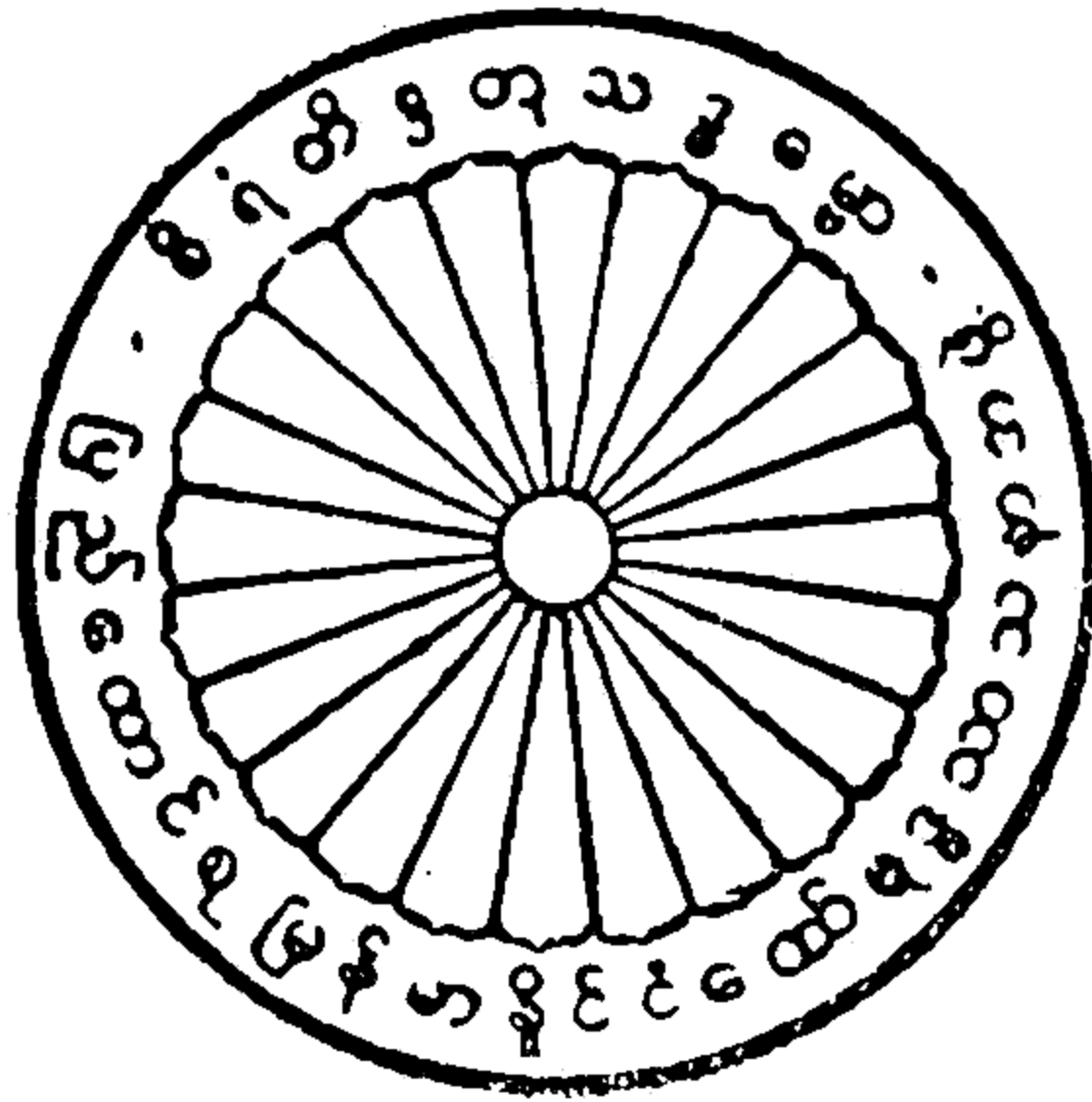
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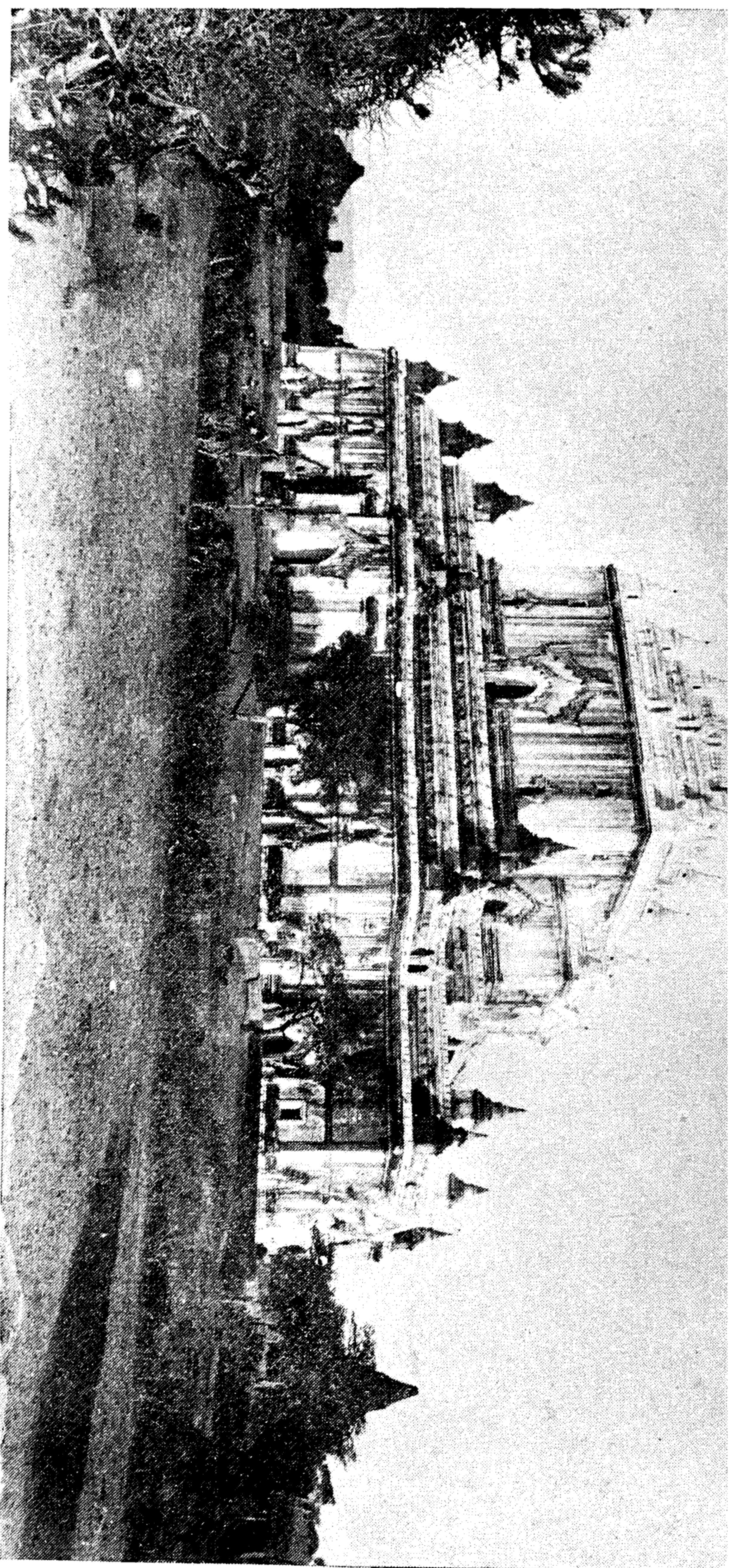
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THE EDITOR,  
"THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA"  
Union Buddha Sāsana Council,  
Kabā Aye P.O.,  
Rangoon, Union of Burma.



The Thatbyinnyu Pagoda.

# SAMMĀDIṬṬHI DĪPANĪ

(The Manual of Right Views)

BY MAHĀTHERA LEDI SAYADAW, AGGAMAHĀPAṆḌITA, D. LITT.

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

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

## PART THREE

### *How Attā makes one vicious*

Beings who are accompanied by soul-belief having inclinations to perform evil actions have to wander through the ceaseless round of rebirths. The moment they are able to extinguish soul-belief, that moment are they established in purity and nobility and they will wander peacefully in the round of rebirths free from all dangers.

One may question: "Why is soul-belief the root-cause of evil views, evil thoughts and evil deeds and why is destruction of this belief the origin of the cessation of these ?

It may be answered in this way: for example, a certain king has a great attachment to his kingship, pomp and grandeur. To preserve his kingly status and glory, he will have to exercise all evil thoughts and evil deeds in his power. Even a king, if he has a great attachment to his kingly power and glory has to protect himself by entertaining all kinds of evil thoughts and performing all kinds of evil actions.

Some time later that king sees shortcomings and blemishes in his kingly duties and glory. From that time his attachment to his kingship diminishes, and he has a great desire to abdicate his throne and become a *samāna*. Then he has a mind to keep aloof from all evil actions that are necessary for the preservation and protection of his kingly power and glory, and henceforth will refrain from performing evil actions.

Still some time later he will go forth from the house-hold life into that of a *samāna*. Although he becomes a *samāna*, he delusively considers his mind and body—the five constituent groups of existence—as his soul, which is full of essence or substance and which belongs to him. Thus he delusively considers the five constituent groups of existence as his soul and clings to it. So long as he is attached to this soul-belief and is not able to put it away, he will undoubtedly have to preserve his soul by entertaining evil

thoughts and performing evil actions as occasion arises.

Some time during his life as a *samāna* he realises the blemishes and miseries in the five constituent groups of existence, he, having rightly viewed through Insight-wisdom that there is no essence or substance in the five constituent groups of existence—that there is no soul—will have no soul-attachment. From that moment he will not entertain any evil thought or commit any evil action, by means of which he has formerly preserved what he has considered as his soul and will preserve himself only by acts of virtue.

He will never deviate from the path of virtue to protect himself. As a matter of fact he will sacrifice himself dauntlessly to preserve the principles of virtue. From the above analogy it should be understood that soul-belief is the root cause of all evil and that destruction of this belief is the origin of the cessation of evil.

### ATTĀ AND ANATTĀ

*Attā* means 'Self, Ego, Personality, Soul-essence'. *Anattā* means 'Non-Ego, Not-Self, Absence of Soul-essence'. The word *anattā* is used to convey the following three interpretations:

- (1) *Asāra-katṭhena anattā*.—On account of being without essence or substance it is called *anattā*.
- (2) *Asāmika-katṭhena anattā*.—On account of not having any owner or overlord it is called *anattā*.
- (3) *Avasavattana-katṭhena anatta*.—On account of its not yielding to another's will it is called *anattā*.

### ASĀRAKATṬHENA ANATTĀ THE FIVE CONSTITUENT GROUPS OF EXISTENCE DELUSIVELY TAKEN AS ATTĀ.

Of the three interpretations as shown in the Text, I shall first expound the phrase "*Asāra-katṭhena anattā*".

*Attā* in the ordinary sense means essence or substance. Those beings who are not able to discern the momentary arisings and dissolutions of the physical and mental phenomena of the five constituent groups of existence and thus are not able to realise the characteristic of *anicca* (Impermanence) maintain: "The Corporeality-group is the essence and therefore *attā* of beings; the Sensation-group is the essence and therefore *attā* of beings; the Perception-group is the essence and therefore *attā* of beings; the Formation-group is the essence and therefore *attā* of beings; and the Consciousness-group is the essence and therefore *attā* of beings." This kind of view is known as soul-belief.

### *Example of a bowl*

I shall explain the above with an example. There are such things as wooden bowl, earthen bowl, iron bowl, brass bowl, silver bowl and gold bowl. A bowl made of wood has wood as its substance and is called a wooden bowl; a bowl made of earth has earth as its substance and is called an earthen bowl; a bowl made of iron has iron as its substance and is called an iron bowl; a bowl made of silver has silver as its substance and is called a silver bowl; and a bowl made of gold has gold as its substance and is called a gold bowl.

Here, the word 'bowl' is merely the name by which is indicated a certain pictorial idea (*saṅṭhāna-paññatti*); and this conventional term of 'bowl' possesses no essence or substance as an ultimate thing. Only the conventional terms of 'wood', 'earth', 'gold' etc. possess essence or substance (at least for this purpose). By simply hearing the sound 'bowl' one is able to understand the pictorial idea of a bowl and not its essence or substance. Only when one hears the conventional terms of 'wood', 'gold' etc. is one able to know the essence or substance of that bowl.

A question may be asked: "Why is 'wood', 'earth' or 'gold' the essence or substance of the bowl?"

I shall explain it clearly. In calling a thing 'wooden', 'wood' is the essence or substance of the pictorial idea of the bowl, and is therefore its *attā*. Without the substance of wood, the conventional term of 'bowl' cannot exist. Only a piece of wood that is made in the form of a bowl is called a wooden bowl. This wooden bowl will last as long as the wood is durable, and it will be valuable according to the class of wood. If it is a bowl made of

teak wood, it will be valuable according to the price of teak; if it be made of aloes wood it will be valuable according to the price of that wood; if it be made of sandalwood it will be valuable according to the value of sandalwood. As regards the utility too, a teak bowl will be used where it is fit to be used; and so too a bowl made of aloes wood or sandalwood. As regards the worthiness too, the teak bowl and the sandalwood bowl will be worthy according to their standards. Thus when we say 'the wooden bowl', the wood is the essence or substance of the bowl. The same principle follows in the cases of earthen bowl, gold bowl etc.

### *Analogy*

Similarly a being is composed of the corporeality-group and has this group as his essence or substance. What has this group as its essence or substance is called a being.

A being is composed of the perception-group and has this group as his essence or substance. What has this group as its essence or substance is called a being.

A being is composed of the mental-formation-group and has this group as his essence or substance. What has this group as its essence or substance is called a being.

A being is composed of the consciousness-group and has this group as his essence or substance. What has this group as its essence or substance is called a being.

In brief, every being is composed of the five constituent groups of existence and has them as his essence or substance.

In this analogy a bowl resembles a being and the substance of a bowl resembles the five constituent groups of existence which form the essence or substance of a being.

### *How attā-diṭṭhi is formed*

Some maintain the following view: "So long as the five constituent groups of existence last, do not decay or dissolve, beings last, do not decay nor dissolve. They live up to 100 or 1000 years without decay, death and dissolution, and for such periods of time the five constituent groups of existence which are their essence or substance do not decay nor dissolve." This view is soul-belief.

Some people understand that the essence or substance of the wooden bowl is wood;

but they cannot penetrate the truth and discern that this piece of wood comprises an immense number of *aṭṭhākalāpa-rūpa*.\* So they can only superficially understand that the essence or substance of the wooden bowl is wood.

Some people penetrate the truth and realise that the essence or substance of the wood is but a collection of corporeal groups and that these are also causally-conditioned arising-and-vanishing physical phenomena.

They realise in the following manner: The state of extension is conspicuous in a piece of wood which assumes the shape of a bowl and these elements of extension are undoubtedly the ultimate truth of *pathavī-dhātu* (the element of extension), and not 'wood' at all. In the same way, the state of cohesion found conspicuously in that form or shape is the characteristic of *āpo-dhātu* (the element of cohesion); the state of heat or cold found in that shape is the characteristic of *tejo-dhātu* (the element of kinetic energy); and the state of support or motion found in that shape is the characteristic of *vāyo-dhātu* (the element of motion). These four elements are known as the four great primaries or the four great essentials (*Mahā-bhūta*).

In like manner, the colour of that piece of wood is *vaṇṇa* (the element of colour); the smell is called *gandha* (the element of smell); the taste is called *rasa* (the element of taste); and the nutriment is called *oja* (the element of nutriment). Thus some wise people penetrate the truth and realise it.

When they have so penetrated the truth, they realise: "Only physical phenomena roll on and no wood exists; and if there be no wood, how can there be the wooden bowl in the ultimate sense?"

When the piece of wood which we conventionally call 'bowl' is affected by cold or warm wind, or struck by a stick, or pierced by a spear, or thrown upward and downward the physical phenomena contained in that wood will change, yielding place to newer ones, and having arisen will also disappear then and there. Some of the phenomena decay, some dissolve and some arise again by conditions, some increase, some decrease and some remain normal.

When they have realised in this manner they clearly understand that there is no wood apart from these physical elements. Now, when the wood itself does not exist in the ultimate sense, how can the wood possess the essence or substance of the bowl? How can momentarily arising-and-passing-away corporeal groups become the essence or substance of the wood? Thus they penetrate to the truth.

Here, the conventional term of 'bowl' resembles the conventional term of 'being'. The corporeal groups contained in the wood resemble the five constituent groups of existence. This is the analogy.

(As regards the Mentality-group it has no form. When an object contacts any part of the body, then consciousness arises and disappears immediately. The *bhavanga-sotā* 'the stream of subconsciousness' incessantly arises and vanishes in the heart. The stream of subconsciousness can be broken only when a new object comes into contact with it.

## PICTORIAL IDEAS AND CONCEPT OF CONTINUITY

The shapes of parts of the body such as face, hands, legs, breast, abdomen, thighs and back are called *saññāna* (pictorial ideas).

Mentality-group has no form but only *santati-paññatti* (concept of continuity).

The continuity of 'seeing' is *dassana-santati*.

The continuity of 'hearing' is called *savana-santati*.

The continuity of 'smelling' is called *ghāyana-santati*.

The continuity of 'tasting' is called *sāyana-santati*.

The continuity of thinking is called *cintana-santati* and so on.\*

*How Pictorial Ideas and Concepts of Continuity are regarded as Attā.*

Some people understand only the various kinds of shapes or forms and various kinds of continuity; but they do not penetratingly discern the physical and mental phenomena which are the essence or substance of these concepts of shape and continuity. Also

\* *Aṭṭhākalāpa-rūpa* means 'pure eightfold group' consisting of (1) the element of extension, (2) the element of liquidity or cohesion, (3) the element of kinetic energy, (4) the element of motion: (5) the element of colour (6) the element of smell, (7) the element of taste, (8) the element of nutriment.

they are not able to realise the momentary decay and death of these physical and mental phenomena. They consider these concepts of shape and continuity as the essence or substance of beings and delusively take them as the *attā* of beings.

When through Insight-wisdom, people penetratingly understand the real nature of *Pathavī* (elements of extension), the phenomena of Eye-consciousness etc. and realise that these five constituent groups of existence are subject to momentary decay, death and rebirth, it will dawn upon them that these five constituent groups of existence have no essence or substance and that they are very far from being the essence or substance of beings.

I shall clarify the matter. People think that beings live for a day, a month, a year, a hundred years of a thousand years, and that during those periods there is no such thing as momentary decay, death and rebirth.

In fact, the physical and mental phenomena contained in the five constituent groups of existence which people take as the essence or substance, arise and dissolve more than one hundred thousand crores \* of times during a wink of the eyelids or the period occupied by a flash of lightning.

If it be alleged that the Corporeality-group has *attā* (essence or substance), the sensation-group has *attā* (essence or substance), the Perception-group has *attā* (essence or substance), the Mental-Formation-group has *attā* (essence or substance), the Consciousness-group has *attā* (essence or substance), it will mean that beings decay, die and are reborn through conditions every moment. Why? Because the essence or substance of beings are the groups of existence which are subject to momentary decay, death and rebirth.

In reality, just as it is not appropriate to rely on the rapidly arising-and-vanishing flashes of lightning and use them as things of substance, it is also not appropriate to rely on the momentarily arising-and-vanishing physical and mental phenomena as things of substance and to regard them as the essence or substance of oneself. So the five constituent groups of existence are purely *anattā* (without essence or substance).

## ASĀMIKAṬṬHENA-ANATTĀ

The meaning of the phrase '*Asāmiṇaṭṭhena anattā*' is as follows:—

As these flashes of lightning which do not last for more than a moment do not possess any essence, there cannot be any lord over them, nor can they be one's own. Just as one can not say that flashes of lightning are owned by him and so they are his, one should not say that the physical and mental phenomena comprising the five constituent groups of existence belong to him and are his own, or that one is the overlord of these phenomena.

So according to the phrase '*Asāmiṇaṭṭhena anattā*', the five constituent groups of existence are *anattā*.

## AVASAVATTANAṬṬHENA-ANATTĀ

I shall expound the phrase '*Avasavattanaṭṭhena anattā*'.

As these flashes of lightning do not last long and do not possess essence, they will not yield to one's wishes. Just as it is not proper for one to say that these flashes of lightning will listen to one's words and that one has control over them, the physical and mental phenomena contained in the five constituent groups of existence being impermanent, will not yield to the wishes of any one. So it is not proper for one to delusively consider that the five constituent groups of existence will obey one's orders or that one has sway over them.

The arising of these flashes of lightning is due to the relevant causes and conditions, and has nothing to do with the desire of any 'person', so these flashes of lightning do not yield to the wishes of anyone. The arising of the five constituent groups of existence is due to the causes and conditions which bring them about and has nothing to do with the desire of anyone, so these five constituent groups of existence do not yield to the wishes of anybody. Just as it is not fit to think that these flashes of lightning will yield to one's wishes, so it is not fit for one to think that the five constituent groups of existence yield to one's wishes and to regard them as one's essence or substance.

So according to the phrase '*Avasavattanaṭṭhena anattā*', the five constituent groups

\* Crore = Ten millions.

of existence are *anaṭṭā* in the sense that they do not yield to the wishes of anyone.

### BRIEF EXPOSITION OF ATTANIYA

“*Attassa idam attaniyam*”

*Attaniyam* means ‘the property of *attā*’.

“*Attanā sambandhanti*” *attaniyam*

*Attaniyam* means ‘objects connected with *attā*’.

#### Attaniya Objects

According to the above interpretation all animate and inanimate objects connected with *attā* are called *attaniya*. But these objects become *attaniya* only when one is attached to and takes delight in them through Craving and accepts them as ‘My own’, ‘These are mine’.

When through Insight-wisdom people are able to discard these animate and inanimate objects freely as they are not attached to and take no delight in them, these objects cease to be *attaniya*.

One is not attached to these objects which naturally have nothing to do with *attā* and are quite apart from it; so they are not *attaniya*.

People are generally concerned with what they consider to be as themselves or their own on account of the concept of *attaniya*; and their bodily, verbal and mental acts are based on and are conditioned by that concern. So the root of all vice for the foolish concern is “Self” and “One’s own”. People mistake what is not *attaniya* to be *attaniya* as they have these hallucinations, namely, that what are not their children are their children, that what is not their son is their son, that what is not their daughter is their daughter, and that what is not their gold, silver or other property is their gold, silver or other property.

#### Delusion of attaniya due to Vipāllasa (Hallucination)

In the ultimate sense there does not exist one’s own *attā*, and that being the case, how then can there be any *attaniya*?

So the *Dhammapada* says:—

“*Puttā m’atthi dhanam m’atthi*”

*iti bālo vihaññati,*

*attā hi attano natthi*

*kuto puttā kuto dhanam?”*

—Verse 62, *Bāla Vagga*, *Dhammapada*.

“Sons have I, wealth have I”

Thus a fool worries himself.

Verily, one’s self does not exist.

Whence sons? Whence wealth?”

Owing to the misconception of *attaniya*, fools are tired and fatigued like a deer which follows a mirage thinking it to be a pool of water; in fact, one’s self does not exist. How then can there be one’s sons and how can there be one’s wealth?

People do not perform bodily, verbal and mental acts, which are conditioned by Craving, on account of things which they do not regard as themselves or their own and they accordingly do not feel any concern. There is no likelihood of their committing any vice or sin on account of such things. This is quite clear from what we see and experience in this world.

Only those people who entertain soul-belief have *attaniya*. Those who have no soul-belief really have no *attaniya*. As regards these, let alone external things, they have no delusive perception of *attaniya* even in respect of the parts of their bodies such as eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind and they don’t have misconception of *attaniya* in respect of visible object, sound etc.

As regards those people who have already eradicated soul-belief, although they procure wealth and maintain their family, they do so not due to *attaniya-saññā* (Perception of *attaniya*), but due to residual Craving.

#### Inhabitants of Arivabhūmi (the plane of noble and sanctified beings)

Those people who have totally extinguished soul-belief will never dream of performing hell-leading deeds on account of their craving for their own persons or external objects, nor will they dream of performing such vile actions as would cause them to arise in the woeful course of existence.

They will attain *Sa-upādisesa Nibbāna* (Nibbāna with the constituent groups of existence still remaining), after passing through the planes of men, devas and brahmās for many world-cycles.

They will not fall back to the level of common men. In reality, they are beings who are bound to attain higher and higher stages of sanctity.

(Note.—This refers to *Sotāpannas*.)

When they desire to attain the knowledge of the ‘Once-Returner’, they will strive and attain *Sakadāgāmi-magga* (the Holy Path of ‘Once-Returner’) and will reach the second stage of sanctity.

Established in that stage they will pass through brahmā-planes for many world-cycles, enjoying themselves as great brahmās.

When they desire to attain *Anāgāmi-magga* (Holy Path of Non-Returner) they will strive and attain that Holy Path and reach the third stage of sanctity.

Established in that stage they will pass through the planes of brahmā for many world-cycles, enjoying themselves as great brahmās.

When they feel that there is nothing to be contented with or attached to even in being great brahmās (when they detest being great brahmās like sputum), they will strive and attain *arahatta-magga*, the fourth and final stage of sanctity and become Arahats. There they need not strive further because they have become *khiṇāsava-dakkhineyya - arahanta* (Arahats who have extinguished all defilements and are worthy of all alms and offerings).

They will remain as Arahats in the fourth stage of sanctity for many world-cycles; on death they will discard the five constituent groups of existence and attain *anupādisesa Nibbāna*.

In this connection, the *asaṅkhata-nibbāna* (Nibbāna—the beyond of all becoming and conditionality) is called *sa-upādisesa Nibbāna*.

The reason why it is called *sa-upādisesa Nibbāna* is that it is attained while the constituent groups of men, devas and brahmās still remain.

‘Nibbāna without the constituent groups of existence remaining’ or the ‘no-more-continuing of this physico-mental process of existence’ is called *anupādisesa Nibbāna*.

These two are not different in principle and both are *asaṅkhata* (the Uncreated, the Unoriginated) and *amata* (deathless). *Animitta-dhamma* which has no beginning nor end, is of one kind only and not two.

## FIVE KINDS OF SAMMĀ-DIṬṬHI

During the present time also, those virtuous people who desire to reach the supramundane sphere should strive to

establish themselves in the following five kinds of *Sammā-diṭṭhi*.

- (1) *Kammassakatā-sammādiṭṭhi* (Right View that beings are the owners of their own kamma),
- (2) *Nāmarūpa - pariggaha - sammādiṭṭhi* (Right View arising from full comprehension of the characteristics of the physical and mental phenomena of existence),
- (3) *Hetu-paccaya-pariggaha - sammādiṭṭhi* (Right View arising from full comprehension of the root cause and other causes of the physical and mental phenomena of existence),
- (4) *Vipassanā-ñāṇa-sammādiṭṭhi* (Right View arising from perception with Insight-wisdom),
- (5) *Lokuttarā-magga-phala - sammādiṭṭhi* (Right View arising from the attainment of Holy Paths and Fruitions thereof).

Of these, *Lokuttarā-sammādiṭṭhi* is subdivided into the following:

- (1) *Sotāpatti-magga - phala - sammādiṭṭhi* (Right View arising from the Path of Stream Winner and the Fruition thereof),
- (2) *Sakadāgāmi-magga - phala-sammādiṭṭhi* (Right View arising from the Path of ‘Once-Returner’ and the Fruition thereof),
- (3) *Anāgāmi-magga - phala - sammādiṭṭhi* (Right View arising from the Path of ‘Non-Returner’ and the Fruition thereof,) and
- (4) *Arahatta - magga - phala - sammādiṭṭhi* (Right View arising from the Path of Arahatta and the Fruition thereof).

In the Buddha’s Sāsana the above four are consolidated into one. So there are five kinds of *sammādiṭṭhi* only.

## Ever-existing kammassakata

The *kammassakatā - sammādiṭṭhi* has already been expounded. It exists in innumerable universes and world-cycles even though an Omniscient Buddha does not arise.

Owing to the conspicuous existence of this *kammassakatā-sammādiṭṭhi* in the world, the

Happy Planes of Existence, namely, the worlds of men, devas and brahmas exist.

Chief-disciples-to-be, *Pacceka-Buddhas*\* to-be and Omniscient Buddhas-to-be also exist on account of this *kammassakatā-sammādiṭṭhi*.

Those who have wisdom arising from this *kammassakatā-sammādiṭṭhi* are free from all kinds of Wrong Views.

It is the 'Great Eye' of the mundane sphere.

However, the soul-belief of those who merely have this *sammādiṭṭhi* remains intact and unaffected.

(Note.—*Attā-diṭṭhi* (Wrong View of Self, Ego, Personality), *Sakkāya-diṭṭhi* (Personality belief), *Attānudiṭṭhi* (Wrong View following Personality-belief) and *Attavādupādāna* (Attachment to the Ego-belief) are the same Dhamma with different names.)

This soul-belief is again subdivided into four kinds:—

- (1) *Ati-olārika-attādiṭṭhi* (Very coarse soul-belief),
- (2) *Olārika-attādiṭṭhi* (Coarse soul-belief),
- (3) *Sukhuma-attādiṭṭhi* (Subtle soul-belief,) and
- (4) *Ati-sukhuma-attādiṭṭhi* (Very subtle soul-belief).

These four degrees of soul-belief should be eradicated by means of *nāmarūpa-pariggaha-sammādiṭṭhi*, *hetu-paccaya-sammādiṭṭhi*, *vipassanā-ñāṇa-sammādiṭṭhi* and *lokuttara-magga-phala-sammādiṭṭhi* respectively.

Of these *sammādiṭṭhis* Right View arising from full comprehension of respective characteristics of the physical and mental phenomena of existence is called *nāmarūpa-pariggaha-sammādiṭṭhi*. Right View arising from full comprehension of the root cause and other causes of the physical and mental phenomena, or the Dependent Origination of these phenomena is called *hetu-paccaya-pariggaha-sammādiṭṭhi*. Right View arising from meditation on Impermanency (*anicca*), Suffering (*dukkha*) and Impersonality (*anattā*) is called *vipassanā-ñāṇa-dassana-sammādiṭṭhi*. Knowledge arising from the attainment of the Holy Paths and the Fruitions thereof is called *lokuttarā-magga-phala-sammādiṭṭhi*.

These four *sammādiṭṭhis* can be attained only during the Buddha's *Sāsana*. They cannot be attained at any other time.

*Ati-olārika-attā-diṭṭhi* and *diṭṭhi-visuddhi-ñāṇa*

(*Very coarse attā-diṭṭhi* versus *Wisdom arising from clearness of view*)

Some beings maintain that the five constituent groups of existence are *attā* or *jīva* (Life, Individual, Soul, or Personality). Some maintain that apart from the five constituent groups of existence there is a soul which has sway over them. All those kinds of delusions are known as *ati-olārika-attā-diṭṭhi*.

Those who have the *nāmarūpa-pariggaha-sammādiṭṭhi* are able to get rid of this false view.

(Note.—*Nāmarūpa-parigga-ñāṇa* (Wisdom arising from full comprehension of the characteristics of the physical and mental phenomena), *nāmarūpa - vavatthāna - ñāṇa* (Wisdom in determining the physical and mental phenomena) and *diṭṭhi-visuddhi* (Wisdom arising from clearness of view) are the same. They are mere synonyms of *nāmarūpa-pariggaha-sammādiṭṭhi*.

With reference to this *Sammādiṭṭhi* it has been stated in *Paramattha-saṅkhepa*: "The self-belief will be dispelled and clearness of view will arise if one can determine Name and Form (*nāma-rūpa*) with reference to their respective nature, function, essence, tendency (or propensity) and basis.)

*Olārika-attā-diṭṭhi* and *paccaya-pariggaha-ñāṇa*.

(*Coarse attā-diṭṭhi* and *Wisdom arising from full comprehension of the root-cause and other causes of the physical and mental phenomena of existence*).

Some people delusively maintain that there is a 'doer of the deeds' and also 'one who takes the consequences'. These delusions of *kāraka-diṭṭhi* (Wrong View that there is a doer of deeds) and *vedaka-diṭṭhi* (there is a sufferer of consequences) are called coarse *olārika-attā-diṭṭhi*.

Those who have *paccaya-pariggaha-sammādiṭṭhi* can dispel *kārakadiṭṭhi* and

\* *Pacceka-buddha*: *Individual* or *Silent Buddha*, is called an *Arahat* who has realised *Nibbāna* without ever in his life having heard from others the Buddha's doctrine. He does not possess the faculty to proclaim the doctrine to the world.

*vedāka-dit̥ṭhi*. They can also dispel *ahetuka-dit̥ṭhi* maintained by those who hold the 'View of the Uncausedness' of existence, and *visama-hetu-dit̥ṭhi* (mistaken view as to causes) held by those who believe that the Supreme Being is the Creator. They are also able to exterminate 8 kinds of Sceptical Doubt and 16 kinds of Intellectual or Ethical Doubt.

(Note.—*Paccaya - pariggaha - ñāṇa* and *kankhāvitaraṇa-visuddhi-ñāṇa* (Wisdom arising from full comprehension of the root-cause and other causes of the physical and mental phenomena of existence and wisdom arising from purity due to all doubts having been dispelled are the same. They are mere synonyms of *paccaya-pariggaha-sammā-dit̥ṭhi*).

The Venerable Ledi Sayadaw in his *Paramattha-saṅkhepa* (A short treatise on the Ultimate Truths) says:—

"If one thoroughly understands the Dependent Origination of the physical and mental phenomena of existence, he will attain the knowledge relating to purity rising over all doubt dispelling 16 kinds of doubt, 8 kinds of sceptical doubt and various kinds of wrong views".

The two kinds of *sammā-dit̥ṭhi*—*nāmarūpa pariggaha-sammā-dit̥ṭhi* and *hetu-paccaya-sammā-dit̥ṭhi* are able to root out the coarse *attā-dit̥ṭhi* which are actually or actively arising in beings. But they are not able to root out the subtle soul-beliefs that lie latent in beings, nor are they able to root out the tendency to sceptical doubt.

This proclivity—the subtle soul-belief is the root-cause or the seed of all Wrong Views.

*Sukhuma attā-dit̥ṭhi and Vipassanā-ñāṇa* (Subtle soul-belief and Insight knowledge arising from practice of meditation)

When Insight-knowledge has been gained by contemplating on *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anattā*, the subtle soul-belief and sceptical doubts are extinguished, but the extremely subtle soul-belief and the latent sceptical doubts will remain intact.

*Atisukhuma-attā-dit̥ṭhi and magga-phala-ñāṇa*

(Extremely subtle soul-belief and the Wisdom arising from the attainment of the Holy Path and the Fruition thereof)

When the *sotāpatti-magga-phala-sammā-dit̥ṭhi* (Insight-knowledge arising from the Path

of Stream Winner and the Fruition thereof) which is the first of the four *Lokuttara-sammā-dit̥ṭhi* arises, the extremely subtle *attā-dit̥ṭhi* and latent sceptical doubts are expelled.

When soul-belief and sceptical doubts are dispelled completely the evil and mean deeds that would cause one to arise in the four lower worlds or in the woeful course of existence are also completely extinguished.

From that moment there will permanently and steadfastly arise in them the 'Eye of Wisdom' by means of which they can penetratingly realise the Four Noble Truths; also the 37 'Things pertaining to Enlightenment' will also be permanently established in them. Although they may pass through the planes of men, devas and brahmās in the round of rebirths, they will wander as good and virtuous people who have established themselves in Right View, Morality, Concentration and Wisdom, all of which will be permanent and will never be destroyed. They will always be good and virtuous people who belong to the higher stages, enjoying great wealth, glory and having numerous attendants. They will always be able to penetrate the Four Noble Truths.

(Note.—This is the exposition of the benefits of the Buddha's Sāsana enjoyed by *Sotāpannas* (Stream Winners) who have attained the First Holy Path and the Fruition Thereof.)

### Example of an iron bowl

I shall give an example. Suppose a certain person obtains a substantial iron bowl which is very rusty. He will then strip off the outer rust by means of a chisel and will find the dark-coloured iron. Again for a second time he polishes the dark surface of the iron bowl with powdered rock and brick-dust, when he will find the original colour of the iron bowl. Thirdly, he polishes the remaining impurities on the surface of the iron bowl by means of very fine powdered rock so that the surface of the bowl becomes much brighter. The iron bowl will be free from the coarse impurities on the surface.

Although the iron bowl is devoid of the coarse impurities on the outer surface, the subtle and the extremely subtle impurities that lie latent in the inside of the bowl remain intact, or remain as they were: they do not disappear.

These subtle and extremely subtle impurities which lie latent in the interior of the bowl are the root-causes of the coarse impurities which may be formed on the outer surface of the bowl. Sometimes when the iron bowl is moistened with water and comes in contact with acid or saline water which are the causes of forming impurities, the subtle and extremely subtle impurities contained in the bowl will help the growth of coarse and very coarse impurities on the surface of the bowl, and the iron bowl will once more become completely dark-coloured.

The owner of the bowl which has been previously polished on the outer surface then soaks it in acid or chemical water many times, and places it in a crucible heated to a high temperature. Then the subtle impurities contained in the iron bowl are purified; but the extremely subtle impurities which lie latent in the iron bowl do not disappear and they remain as they were. The bowl is not devoid of all impurities. If it comes in contact with conditions to form new impurities, a new layer of impurities will form on the surface.

Finally the owner of that bowl which has been somewhat purified before, soaks it again in a very powerful acid or chemical water of a special recipe for seven days and nights, and bakes it again in a very great fire for seven days and seven nights. Then all the extremely subtle impurities contained in the iron bowl become absolutely removed. From that moment there is no opportunity for the impurities to form again in the iron bowl. The bowl now becomes a stainless bowl possessing an ever-brilliant lustre. It becomes a bowl which is magnificent and which is as brilliant as a moon or a sun.

The bowl on which rust has accumulated for such a long time resembles the common people who hold the soul-belief in the endless round of rebirths.

The iron bowl, the very thick coarse impurities of which have been stripped off by a chisel, resemble the common people who have eradicated the *pubbekata-hetu-diṭṭhi* (View that all sensations enjoyed by beings in the present existence are caused and conditioned by the volitional actions done by them in their past existences), *issaranimmāna-hetu-diṭṭhi* (View that all sensations in the present existence are created by a Supreme Being or God), and *ahetuka-diṭṭhi* (View of the 'Uncau-

sedness and Unconditionality' of of existence) by means of *kammassakatā-sammādiṭṭhi* (Right View in holding that beings are the owners of their own kamma).

The iron bowl which has its outer surface polished by means of powdered rock and brick-dust, resembles the worldlings who have rooted out the very coarse soul-belief by means of *nāmarūpa-pariggaha-sammādiṭṭhi* (Right View arising from full comprehension of the characteristics of the Physical and Mental phenomena of existence).

The iron bowl which is again highly polished by means of very fine powder or sand resembles a worldling or being who has dispelled the less coarse soul-belief by means of *hetu-paccaya-sammādiṭṭhi* (Right View arising from full comprehension of the root-cause and other causes of the Physical and Mental phenomena of existence).

The iron bowl in which the subtle impurities lie latent and are purified to a certain extent by treating with powerful acid and chemical water of a special recipe and heating to a high temperature in a crucible, resembles one who has eradicated soul-belief by means of *vipas-sanā-ñāṇa-dassana-sammādiṭṭhi* (Right View arising from perception with Insight-wisdom).

The bowl which has been transformed into a stainless bowl by treating it with very powerful acid and chemical water for seven days and seven nights and which has been baked in a very great fire for seven days and seven nights, thus absolutely driving out all impurities from the bowl, resembles a Holy One who belongs to the Supramundane sphere, and who has eradicated the extremely subtle soul-belief by means of *lokuttarā-magga-phala-sammādiṭṭhi* (Right View arising from the attainment of the Holy Paths and the Fruitions thereof).

Those virtuous people who desire to enjoy the benefits of the Buddha's Sāsana should strive their best to realise these five kinds of *sammādiṭṭhis*.

#### How to acquire *nāmarūpa-pariggaha-ñāṇa*

Of the five kinds of Right Views, the method of acquiring *kammassakata-sammādiṭṭhi* has been expounded clearly in a former chapter. Those who desire to strive for *nāmarūpa-pariggaha-sammādiṭṭhi* (Right View arising from full comprehension of the characteristics of the physical and mental phenomena of existence) should very well note and contemplate a mental pheno-

menon, which is prominent amongst the psychic phenomena, which is also a principal phenomenon, and which is inseparably associated with all consciousness.

If one develops his mental faculties by concentrating on a fundamentally important mental factor, which is inseparably associated with all consciousness, the other mental phenomena will be covered by this contemplation, and they need not be separately contemplated.

This statement is true. In the *Nidāna-vagga* of the *samyutta Nikāya*, the Buddha declared that if one is able to fully comprehend *phassa-āhāra* (the condition of sense-contact), he will realise the three kinds of sensation—agreeable, disagreeable, indifferent—and will achieve the Goal.

The Buddha also declared that if one fully comprehends *mano-sancetanāhāra* (the condition of mental volition), he will realise the three kinds of Craving and achieve the Goal; and if one fully comprehends *viññāṇāhāra* (the condition of consciousness), he will realise Mind and Matter and will achieve the Goal.\*

(The exposition of these three kinds of *āhāra* (causes) may be taken from the *Āhāra-dīpanī* by the late Venerable Ledi Sayadaw.)

In the *Mahā-taṇhāsankhaya-sutta\*\** also, the Buddha preached to Sakka, King of Devas that if one is able to comprehend *vedāna* (sensation), he is able to achieve the Goal.

(The exposition of *vedanā* may be taken from *Kammaṭṭhāna-dīpanī* and *Anattā-dīpanī* by the late Venerable Ledi Sayadaw.)

Besides, there are many other Suttas where the Buddha declared the method of contemplation based on just one mental phenomenon.

In the contemplation of physical phenomena too, if one contemplates the Great-Primaries which are conspicuous, the other physical phenomena also come within the scope of this contemplation.

The Four Great Primaries have been dealt with in *Lakkhaṇa-dīpanī*, *Vijjā-magga-dīpanī*, *Somanassupekkhā-dīpanī*, and

*Bhāvanā-dīpanī* by the late Venerable Ledi Sayadaw.)

In the chapter on *Diṭṭhi-visuddhi* in the *Visuddhi-magga Aṭṭhakathā* the process for full comprehension of the characteristics of physical and mental phenomena has been set out at great length and in great detail. But what has been set out there is only for those who are highly intelligent and who have specially grasped the *Abhidhamma*.

It is not for the beginner in the practice of meditation.

This statement is true. The Omniscient Buddha did not teach in the world of men this *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* wherein He fully dealt with such *dhammas* as wholesome volitional actions, the five constituent groups of existence etc. He taught this only to the Devas in the Tāvātimsa Deva-world.

In the world of men, the Omniscient Buddha declared only such physical and mental phenomena as will be suitable to these beings, and as will enable them to attain *lokuttara-sammādiṭṭhi-ñāṇa* by contemplating the same. He did not teach them all the physical and mental phenomena in full.

When one is prosecuting his studies in Buddhist literature, one should understand all the Teachings in the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*. However when one is contemplating mental and physical phenomena for the purpose of acquiring *vipassanā-ñāṇadassana-sammādiṭṭhi* (Right View of *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anattā* through Insight-wisdom), it is not necessary for one to know all that is contained in the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*. One should think out which Suttanta-method among the methods declared in the *Majjhima-nikāya* and *Samyutta-nikāya*, is best suited for one's purpose and should try and attain *nāmarūpa-pariggaha-ñāṇa* by that method.

In doing so he should first get instructions from a competent *kammaṭṭhāna* teacher who has already attained *nāmarūpa-pariggaha-ñāṇa*. Otherwise if he simply depends on his intellectual power and contemplates as he pleases, he may be able to achieve the desired goal only after a very long period, or may not be able to achieve that goal at all.

\* Samyutta Nikāya, Nidāna-samyutta, Mahā-Vagga-Puttamanata Sutta. Chārtha Sangāyanā Edn. 322.

\*\* Majjhima Nikāya, Mūlapannāsa....Mahayamaka-vagga.....Mahātanhāsankhaya-sutta. Chārtha Sangāyana Edn. p. 323.

**How to acquire *paccaya-pariggaha-ñāṇa***  
(Knowledge arising from full comprehension  
of the root cause and other causes of the  
Physical and Mental phenomena of existence).

In trying to attain *hetu-paccaya-pariggaha-sammādiṭṭhi* (Right View arising from full comprehension of the root cause and other causes of the physical and mental phenomena of existence), one should contemplate the following in accordance with such texts as “*āhāra-sammudayā rūpa-samudayo*” etc.

- (1) Because of Nutriment, Material qualities arise;
- (2) Because of Contact, Sensation arises;
- (3) Because of Mind and Matter, Consciousness arises;
- (4) Conditioned by the Eye-Base and the visible object, Eye-consciousness arises;
- (5) Mental and physical phenomena arise according to the principle of Dependent Origination.

#### How to attain Insight-Wisdom

In developing one's mental faculties to attain Insight-Wisdom, one should contemplate as follows:—

- By the cessation of Nutriment, Material qualities cease;
- By the cessation of Contact, ceases Sensation;
- By the cessation of Kammaformations ceases Consciousness;
- By the cessation of Consciousness, cease the Mental and Physical phenomena;

By the cessation of the Mental and Physical phenomena, cease the 6 Bases;

By the cessation of the 6 Bases, ceases Contact;

By the cessation of Contact, ceases Sensation;

By the cessation of Sensation, ceases Craving.

Thus whenever the causes cease, the consequences also cease.

According to the Declaration “*Yadaniccā, tam dukkham*” a *dhamma* is really *anicca* (Impermanent), is utterly devoid of *sukha* (pleasure), and in reality it is *dukkha* (Suffering) pure and simple.

According to the Declaration “*Yam dukkham tadanattā*”, a *dhamma* which is Suffering pure and simple should not be relied on as *attā*. This *dhamma* which is Suffering pure and simple should not be relied on as a *dhamma* which can be swayed by one's will. So it really is *anattā*.

(The exposition of *Vipassanā-ñāṇadassana sammādiṭṭhi* appears in many other books written by the Venerable Ledi Sayadaw.)

Here ends the exposition of the five kinds of *sammādiṭṭhi*.

Here “The Manual of Right Views” comes to a close. It was originally written in pāli by the Venerable Ledi Sayadaw and the Burmese translation of it was carried out by Ledi Paṇḍita U Maung Gyi, M.A. at Thaton.



Conquest engenders hate; the conquered lives in misery.....  
The slayer gets a slayer in his turn ;  
The conqueror gets one who conquers him;  
The abuser wins abuse, the annoyer fret.  
Thus by the evolution of the deed,  
A man who spoils is spoiled in his turn.

*Saṃyutta Nikāya i. 83.*

# ĀṄGUTTARA-NIKĀYA, PAÑCAKANIPĀTA, CATUTTHAPANṆĀSAKA UPĀSAKAVAGGA, VERA SUTTA

(DISCOURSE ON THE FIVE THINGS WHICH ARE DANGERS AND ENEMIES)

Now the householder, Anāthapiṇḍika, visited the Buddha, paid homage to Him and sat down at one side; and the Buddha spoke to the householder, thus seated, saying:

‘Householder, he who has not got rid of the five dangers and enemies is called “vicious” and arises in hell. What five?’

Killing living beings, taking what is not given, sexual misconduct, telling lies, partaking of intoxicants.

Householder, in not getting rid of these five dangers and enemies a man is termed “vicious”, and he arises in hell.

Householder, he who has got rid of these five dangers and enemies is called ‘virtuous’ and arises in the happy plane of existence. What five?

Killing living beings, taking what is not given, sexual misconduct, telling lies, partaking of intoxicants.

Householder, in having got rid of these dangerous things, he is called “virtuous” and arises in the happy plane of existence.

When, householder, the killer of a living being, by reason of his killing, breeds hatred in this very life or breeds hatred in the life hereafter, he feels in his mind pain and grief; but he who abstains from killing living beings breeds no hatred in this life, nor in the life hereafter, nor does he feel in his mind pain and grief; thus for one who abstains from killing living beings danger is dispelled.

When, householder, the thief, by reason of his stealing, breeds hatred in this very life and the life hereafter, he feels in his mind pain and grief; but he who abstains from stealing breeds no hatred in this life, nor in the life hereafter, nor does he feel in his mind pain and grief; thus for one who abstains from stealing danger is dispelled.

When, householder, the indulger in sexual misconduct, by reason of his sexual misconduct, breeds hatred in this life and the life hereafter, he feels in his mind pain and grief, but he who abstains from sexual misconduct breeds no hatred in this life, nor in the life hereafter, nor does he feel in his mind pain and grief; thus for one who abstains from sexual misconduct, danger is dispelled.

When, householder, the liar, by reason of his telling lies, breeds hatred in this very life and the life hereafter he feels in his mind pain and grief; but he who abstains from telling lies, breeds no hatred in this life, nor in the life hereafter, nor does he feel in his mind pain and grief; thus for one who abstains from telling lies danger is dispelled.

When, householder, the drinker, by reason of his partaking of intoxicants, breeds hatred in this very life and the life hereafter, he feels in his mind pain and grief; but he who abstains from intoxicants breeds no hatred in this life, nor in the life hereafter, nor does he feel in his mind pain and grief; thus for one who abstains from intoxicants danger is dispelled.

One who kills a living being, takes what is not given, indulges in sexual misconduct, tells lies and partakes of intoxicants, on account of his not having got rid of these five dangers and enemies is said to be “vicious”. On the dissolution of the body after death, that unwise man is reborn in hell.

One who abstains from killing living beings, abstains from taking what is not given, abstains from sexual misconduct, abstains from telling lies and from intoxicants, on account of his abstinence from these five dangerous things, is called “virtuous”. On the dissolution of the body after death he arises in the Happy Course of Existence.

# BUDDHIST MEDITATION AND ITS FORTY SUBJECTS

The Venerable Mahāsi Sayadaw, Sāsana-dhaja-siri-pavara-dhammācariya,  
Agga-mahā-paṇḍita, Chaṭṭha-saṅgīti-pucchaka.

## INTRODUCTION

Throughout the whole world there is now a widespread interest and keen enthusiasm in the practice of Buddhist Meditation, but the proper knowledge of its practice in accordance with the actual teachings of the Buddha is still lacking. The majority of the general intelligent public has only a vague idea of the real purpose of undertaking the practice of Meditation, the correct method of practice, the benefits derived therefrom and other essential features.

For the sake of clear understanding and appreciation, and at the earnest request of the Union Buddha Sāsana Council, the Ven'ble Mahāsi Sayadaw, Bhadanta Sobhana Mahā-thera, Sāsana-dhaja-siri-pavara-dhammācariya, Agga-mahā-paṇḍita, Chaṭṭha-saṅgīti-pucchaka, has been kind enough to write a short treatise "Buddhist Meditation and its forty subjects" giving concise information of the fundamentals.

It is translated into English as desired by the Mahāsi Sayadaw.

U PE THIN, (Translator)

December 1957.

Mahāsi Yogī.

Honour to the Exalted One, Arahant, Buddha Supreme.

## MEDITATION

### *Its purpose*

What is the purpose of carrying out the practice of meditation?

The practice of Meditation is carried out for the purpose of realising Nibbāna and thereby escaping from the ills of life:—old age, ill-health, death and so forth.

All living beings long to live harmlessly, peacefully, happily and prosperously without suffering old-age, ill-health, death and other ills of life; yet they always find these hopes to be vain. For in every life there is still to be found old age, ill-health, sorrow and lamentation due to many dangers and evils, physical sufferings and mental griefs. Then after suffering dire pangs and agonies there follows death. Yet there is no end in death. Again there is birth because of attachment to becoming. In this new life too they are the

victims of old age and the other ills. In this manner they go round the rebirth-cycle from life to life, suffering all kinds of vicissitudes and without any stop.

On searching for the root cause of this state of affairs it becomes evident that 'because there is birth there follows the chain of old age, ill-health, death and the other ills of life'. So it is essential to prevent birth if the ills of life in old age etc. are to be avoided.

Rebirth can only take place because of the attachment inherent in the present life. The new birth is nothing but the rising of a new consciousness which is the result of grasping a sense object in the dying moment of the previous life. Where there is no attachment there can be no new birth; so every endeavour must be made to free oneself from attachment if no new birth is desired.

This attachment to life can persist for two reasons, firstly because of not perceiving the ills of mind and body, and secondly by not realising that Nibbāna is far superior. For example, it is like the case of a person living in a barren and desolate country which abounds with many dangers. He naturally thinks highly of his country and has a great attachment towards it since he has no real knowledge of the defects of his country and of the better condition of another place. If he comes to know the full facts, his country will no longer attract him and he will readily move to the new country. Similarly, it is essential to try to perceive the ill condition of mind and body which constitutes this life and to personally realise the superiority of Nibbāna with a view to removing totally the attachment to life. These knowledges can be acquired through the proper practice of Meditation. Hence, every one who is desirous of escaping from the ills of old age, death etc. and of personally realising Nibbāna should carry out the practice of Meditation.

### *Its divisions*

There are two divisions of Meditation:—

- (1) *Samatha-kammaṭṭhāna*, and
- (2) *Vipassanā-kammaṭṭhāna*.

(1) The practice of *Samatha-kammaṭṭhāna* will develop the mental states of eight *Lokiya-*

*samāpatti* (mundane attainments) consisting of 4 *rūpa-jhānas* and 4 *arūpa-jhānas*. Repeated exercise of these jhānic states will bring forth the following:—

(a) *Iddhi-vidha-abhiññā*.....Power to become manifold from being one and from being manifold to become one again. Power to pass without being obstructed through walls and mountains, just as if through the air. Power to walk on water without sinking, just as if on the earth. Power to dive into earth and rise up again, just as if in the water. Power to float cross-legged through the air, just as a winged bird. Power to touch sun and moon with hand.

(b) *Dibba--sota--abhiññā* ... Celestial ear, power to hear sounds both heavenly and human, far and near.

(c) *Ceto-pariya-abhiññā* ... Power to know the mind of others.

(d) *Pubbe-nivāsa-abhiññā* ... Power to recollect the incidents of one's past existences.

(e) *Dibba-cakkhu-abhiññā* ... Celestial eye, power to see all material forms and colours whether afar off or near, whether great or small.

Yet the possession of these attributes will not bring freedom from the ills of life of old age, death etc. On death with the jhānic states remaining in full, intact, a person may be born in the relative plane of Brahma-world where the life-span lasts for one world-cycle or two, four, eight etc., as the case may be. At the end of his life-span he will die and be reborn either in the deva or human world, where he, just as others, suffers the ills of life of old-age, death etc. Often owing to unfavourable circumstances he may be reborn in one of the four lower worlds and live in utmost suffering and misery. It is therefore evident that the practice of *Samatha-kammaṭṭhāna* alone will not be a guarantee of absolute freedom from the ills of life.

(2) Through the practice of *Vipassanā-kammaṭṭhāna* one is able to realise Nibbāna and thereby win absolute freedom from the ills of life.

*Vipassanā-kammaṭṭhāna* is again subdivided into (a) *Samatha-yānika*, one who takes up the basic exercise of *samatha-kammaṭṭhāna* for realising Nibbāna, and (b) *Sudṭha-vipassanā--yānika*, one who directly carries out the practice of *Vipassanā* without

the basic exercise of *Samatha-kammaṭṭhāna* for realising Nibbāna.

There are forty subjects of Meditation, any one of which may be taken up as a basic Exercise of *Samatha* for carrying out the practice of *Vipassanā*.

They are:—

- (1) 10 *Kasiṇas* (contemplation devices)
- (2) 10 *Asubhas* (impurities)
- (3) 10 *Anussatis* (reflections)
- (4) 4 *Brahma-vihāras* (sublime states)
- (5) 4 *Āruppas* (stages of *arūpa-jhāna*)
- (6) 1 *Āhāre-paṭikūla--saññā* (reflection on the loathsomeness of food)
- (7) 1 *Catu-dhātu-vavatthāna* (analysis of the four elements)

Here the ten *kasiṇas* are:—

- (1) the earth-kasiṇa,
- (2) the water-kasiṇa,
- (3) the fire-kasiṇa,
- (4) the air-kasiṇa,
- (5) the dark-blue kasiṇa,
- (6) the yellow-kasiṇa,
- (7) the blood-red kasiṇa,
- (8) the white-kasiṇa,
- (9) the light-kasiṇa, and
- (10) the bounded space kasiṇa.

The ten *Asubhas*\* are:—

- (1) a bloated corpse,
- (2) a livid corpse,
- (3) a festering corpse,
- (4) a corpse cut in the middle,
- (5) a gnawed corpse,
- (6) a scattered corpse,
- (7) a hacked and scattered corpse,
- (8) a bleeding corpse,
- (9) a worm-infested corpse, and
- (10) a skeleton.

The ten *Anussatis*\*\* are:—

- (1) reflection on the attributes of the Buddha,
- (2) reflection on the attributes of the Dhamma,
- (3) reflection on the attributes of the Sangha,
- (4) reflection on the attributes of one's own *Sīla* (virtue),
- (5) reflection on the attributes of one's own *Cāga* (liberality),
- (6) reflection on one's own possession of *Saddhā* (trustful confidence), *Sīla* (virtue), *Suta* (learning), *Cāga*

\* *Asubha* : Impurity ; loathsomeness ; foulness ; ugliness.

\*\* *Anussati* : Reflection ; contemplation.

(liberality), and *Paññā* (knowledge) which are the attributes leading to rebirth as Devas.

- (7) reflection on Nibbāna,
- (8) contemplation on the inevitability of death,
- (9) contemplation on the 32 parts of body, such as, hair, body-hair, nails, teeth, skin, etc, and
- (10) contemplation of in-breathing and out-breathing.

The four *Brahma-vihāras*\* are:—

- (1) *Mettā*: loving-kindness
- (2) *Karuṇā*: compassion,
- (3) *Muditā*: altruistic joy (in the attainments of others),
- (4) *Upekkhā*: perfect equanimity.

‘... resides with a mind full of Loving-kindness pervading first one direction, then a second one, then a third, then the fourth one, just so above, below and all around; and everywhere identifying himself with all, he pervades the whole world with mind full of Loving-kindness, with mind wide, developed, unbounded, free from hate and ill-will..... with a mind full of Compassion ...of altruistic joy (joy in the attainments of others), and of Equanimity...’ (Jīvaka Sutta, Majjhima-Nikāya.)

The four *āruppas* are:—

- (1) *Ākāsānañcāyatana*: dwelling on the contemplation of the realm of the infinity of space,
- (2) *Viññānañcāyatana*: dwelling on the contemplation of the realm of the infinity of consciousness,
- (3) *Ākiñcaññāyatana*: dwelling on the contemplation of the realm of nothingness, and
- (4) *Nevaśaṇṇā-nāsaṇṇāyatana*: dwelling on the contemplation of the realm of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.

#### *Description in brief of Exercise of Samatha-kammaṭṭhāna*

A person who of the forty subjects of Meditation chooses the *Pathavī-kasiṇa* as his subject of contemplation, should look at a spot of earth on the ground or at a round earth-device and contemplate saying mentally “*pathavī, pathavī, pathavī*” or “earth, earth,

earth”. After repeated contemplation for some time the vivid image of the earth-device will appear in the mind as if it were seen by the eye. This appearance of mental image is called ‘*Uggaha-nimitta*’ (acquired image). As soon as this ‘*nimitta*’ becomes fixed and steady in the mind he can go to any place and take up a posture of either sitting, walking, standing, or lying. He should then continue to contemplate on the ‘*Uggaha-nimitta*’ by saying mentally: “*pathavī, pathavī*” or “earth, earth” During the time of this contemplation it may happen that the mind does not remain fixed on its object but often wanders to other objects in the following manner:—

- (1) The mind often thinks of desirable objects. This is “*Kāmacchanda-nīvaraṇa*” (sensual lust).
- (2) The mind often dwells on thoughts of despair and anger. This is “*Vyāpāda-nīvaraṇa*” (Ill-will).
- (3) There is slackness in contemplation and the mind is often dull and foggy. This is “*Thina-middha-nīvaraṇa*” (sloth and torpor).
- (4) The mind is often not steady but restless, and the mind is often worried on recollecting past misdeeds in speech and body. This is “*Uddhacca-kukkucca-nīvaraṇa*” (restlessness and worry).
- (5) The mind often dwells on the thoughts “whether the contemplation which is being undertaken is a right method, whether it is capable of bringing beneficial results, whether there is any chance to achieve any good results”. This is “*Vicikicchā-nīvaraṇa*” (sceptical doubt).

These 5 ‘*Nīvaranas*’ (Hindrances) should be cut off as soon as they occur and the mind should be at once brought back to the object of ‘*Uggaha-Nimitta*’ which should be contemplated as “*pathavī, pathavī*” for instance. If the mind loses its object of *Uggaha-Nimitta* one should go back to the place where the original earth-device is kept and contemplate again: “*pathavī, pathavī*” by looking at the device till ‘*Uggaha-Nimitta*’ is formed again in the mind. Then one should return to the same place and proceed with the contemplation in any posture of sitting, standing, lying and walking.

\* *Brahma-vihāra*: Sublime states; also called the 4 Boundless States—Loving-kindness, Compassion, Altruistic Joy; Equanimity.

Carrying on thus the contemplation of the object of *Uggaha-Nimitta* repeatedly for a long time, the object assumes a very brilliant and crystal-like appearance unlike the original. This is called '*Paṭibhāga-nimitta*' (counterpart-image). At that time the mind is free from all '*Nīvaraṇas*'. It stays as directed on the '*Paṭibhāga-nimitta*'. This state of mind is known as '*Upacāra-samādhi*' (neighbourhood-concentration). Now, by continually fixing the mind with this '*Upacāra-samādhi*' on the '*Paṭibhāga-nimitta*' the mind reaches a state as if it sinks into the object and remains fixed in it. This state of fixedness and steadiness of mind is known as '*Appanā-samādhi*' (Attainment-concentration). There are four kinds of this '*Appanā-samādhi*', viz., (a) the first *jhāna*, (b) the second *jhāna*, (c) the third *jhāna* and (d) the fourth *jhāna*.

(a) In the first *jhāna* five distinct constituents are present; they are:—

- (1) *Vitakka* (initial application),
- (2) *Vicāra* (sustained application),
- (3) *Pīti* (rapture),
- (4) *Sukha* (happiness), and
- (5) *Ekaggatā* (one-pointedness).

(b) One who has already attained the stage of first *jhāna*, seeing unsatisfactoriness in the first two constituents of '*Vitakka*' and '*Vicāra*' again proceeds with the contemplation to overcome them and succeeds in attaining the stage of second *jhāna* where there are present the three distinct constituents of '*Pīti*', '*Sukha*' and '*Ekaggatā*'.

(c) Again seeing unsatisfactoriness in '*Pīti*' he proceeds with the contemplation to overcome it and succeeds in attaining the stage of third *jhāna* where there are present the two distinct constituents of '*Sukha*' and '*Ekaggatā*'.

(d) Again seeing unsatisfactoriness in '*Sukha*' he proceeds with the contemplation to overcome it and succeeds in attaining the stage of fourth *jhāna* where there are present the two distinct constituents of '*Upekkhā*' (equanimity) and '*Ekaggatā*'.

This is the brief description of the manner of the contemplation of the '*Pathavī-kasiṇa*' and the development of the stages of four *jhānas*. The same applies to the remaining *Kasiṇas*.

In the case of a person who, of the 40 subjects of Meditation, chooses '*Asubha*' as

the subject of contemplation, he should look at a bloated corpse, or a livid corpse, etc. and contemplate by saying mentally "bloated corpse, bloated corpse", "livid corpse, livid corpse", etc. He should then carry out the contemplation in the same manner as in the case of '*pathavī-kasiṇa*'. The only difference is that the contemplation of these '*Asubha*' subjects will lead only to the stage of first *jhāna*.

The contemplation of 32 parts of the body (*Kāyagatā-sati*) also will lead to the stage of first *jhāna*. The 8 reflections (*Anussati*) consisting of the subjects from '*Buddhānussati*' to '*Maraṇānussati*', reflection on the loathsomeness of food (*Āhāre-patikkulasāññā*) and analysis of the four elements (*Catu-dhātu-vavatthāna*) will lead to the stage of '*Upacārasamādhi*' (Neighbourhood-concentration).

Three *Brahma-Vihāras* of '*Mettā*, *Karuṇā* and *Muditā*' will lead to the stages of three lower *jhānas*, while those who have, through the contemplation of any of these three, already attained the stage of third *jhāna*, will also attain the stage of fourth *jhāna* by carrying out the contemplation of the fourth *Brahma-vihāra* of '*Upekkhā*'.

Those who have through the contemplation of the ten *Kasiṇas* attained the stage of 4 *rūpa-jhānas*, will attain the respective stages of 4 *arūpa-jhānas* by carrying out in serial order the contemplation of four '*Āruppas*'.

### ĀNĀPĀNA-SATI-KAMMATTHĀNA

One who chooses '*Ānāpāna-sati*' as the subject of contemplation, should retire to a quiet place and seat himself crosslegged or in any convenient manner so as to enable him to sit for a long time, with body erect, and then keep his mind fixed on the aperture of nose. He will then come to know in a distinct manner the feeling of touch at the tip of the nose or at the edge of the upper lip, which is caused by the constant flow in and out of breathing. This flow should be watched at the point of its touching and contemplated by saying mentally: 'coming, going', 'coming, going', on every act of in-breathing and out-breathing respectively. The mind should not go along with the flow either on its inward or outward journey, but it should remain at the point of touching.

During this contemplation there will be many hindrances with which the

mind wanders. These hindrances should not be followed any longer but attention should be brought back to the point of touching and contemplation carried on as 'coming, going'; 'coming, going'.

By this means of continually watching the point of touching and carrying on the contemplation,

(1) the long in-breathing and out-breathing are clearly noticed when they are long.

(2) the short in-breathing and out-breathing are clearly noticed when they are short,

(3) each course of soft in-breathing and out-breathing with its beginning, middle and end is clearly noticed from its touching the tip of the nose to where it leaves the nose, and

(4) the gradual change from the strong to the gentler form of in-breathing and out-breathing is clearly noticed.

As the in-breathing and out-breathing become more and more gentle it appears that they have vanished altogether. In such case time is generally wasted by trying to look for the objects of in-breathing and out-breathing, by trying to investigate the cause of vanishing, and finally by remaining idle without carrying on the contemplation. There is, however, no need to waste time in this manner: if the mind is fixed attentively either on the tip of the nose or upper lip the gentle form of flow in and out of breathing will again appear and will be perceptible distinctly.

By thus proceeding with the continued contemplation of in-and out-breathing it will be visualised in some peculiar forms or shapes. The following are those mentioned in the *Visuddhi-magga* (Way of Purity):

To some the in-breathing and out-breathing appears like a star or a cluster of gems or a cluster of pearls, to others with a rough touch like that of a cotton stalk or a peg made of heart wood, to others like a long braided string or a wreath of flowers or a puff of smoke, to others like a stretched-out cobweb or a film of cloud or a lotus flower or a chariot wheel or the moon's disk or the sun's disk. It is said that the variety in the forms or objects is due to the differences in 'saññā' (perception) of the individuals. This peculiar form of objects is 'Paṭibhāga-nimitta'. The 'samādhi' (concentration) which is then developed with the 'Paṭibhāga-nimitta' is called 'Upacāra-

samādhi. On continuing the contemplation with the aid of 'Upacārasamādhi' then the stage of 'Appanā-samādhi' of 4 *Rūpa-jhānas* is developed.

This is the brief description of the preliminary practice for 'Samatha' by a 'Samathayānika' who chooses 'Samatha-kammaṭṭhāna' as the basis for realising *Nibbāna*.

Those who desire to practise *Vipassanā* should in the first place be equipped with a knowledge, either in brief or *in extenso*, of the facts that living beings consist of the two sole constituents, of body (*rūpa*) and mind (*nāma*), that the body and mind are formed due to cause and effect and that, as they are in a constant state of changing process, they are impermanent, ill and devoid of 'attā'.

*A brief description of the practice of Vipassanā*

A person with the proper knowledge mentioned above should in the first place induce the jhānic state which he has already attained and then contemplate on it. He should then proceed by contemplating continuously the sensations, such as, 'seeing, hearing, smelling, knowing the taste, touching, knowing, etc.' as they occur clearly at any of the six sense-doors. If he feels tired or exhausted by having to carry on continually the contemplation of these varied objects (*pakiṇṇaka-sankhāras*), he should again induce the jhānic state by making strong determination that the jhānic state may remain for 15 or 30 minutes. When the jhānic state passes away he should then immediately contemplate on that jhānic state and afterwards proceed by contemplating continuously the sensations as they occur at any of the six sense-doors. This alternate procedure of inducing jhānic state and then proceeding with the contemplation of sensations at the six sense-doors should be carried out repeatedly. When the *Vipassanāsamādhi* is sufficiently strong he will be able to carry on the contemplation continuously day and night without feeling any strain.

At this stage it is distinctly perceived as a matter of course at every moment of contemplation that the body and mind are two separate things which are joined together. It is also perceived that the object and the mind which directly knows the object rise and pass away at the very moment of the contemplation. It is therefore understood that 'they are clearly proved to be impermanent', that 'they are ill without any pleasant qualities or reliability', and that 'they are

merely a process of arising and passing away of things which do not consist of “*attā*” (enduring entity or soul). With the full development of the factual knowledge of ‘*Anicca, dukkha, anattā*’ there arises the insight of ‘*Magga and Phala*’ and he realises Nibbāna.

This is the description in brief of the practice by way of ‘*Samatha-yānika*’ for the purpose of realising Nibbāna.

Here is the description of the practice by way of “*Suddha-vipassanā-yānika*”.

With the proper knowledge mentioned above one who desires to practise “*Vipassanā*” should retire to a quiet place and seat himself cross-legged or in any convenient manner so as to enable him to sit for a long time, with body erect, and then contemplate by fixing his attention on the physical and mental phenomena which are known as “*Upādānakkhandhas*” and which are distinctly arising in his body. These phenomena should be continuously contemplated on every occasion of their arising.

“*Upādānakkhandhas*” are those which are distinctly perceived at every moment of seeing, hearing, smelling, knowing the taste, feeling the bodily-contacts and thinking of ideas, etc.

At the moment of seeing, both the visual object and the eye where seeing takes place, are perceived. These two things are of the material group. They are neither pleasant nor “*attā*” nor “person”. Yet those who do not contemplate the very moment of their occurrence do not understand that “they pass away immediately and are not permanent”, that “they are origination and passing away without any stop and are therefore ill”; that “they are neither *attā* nor living entity but are *anattā* in that they are subject to cause and effect in arising and passing away.” Because the material group forms the objects of wrong attitude and attachment they are called “*Upādānakkhandhas*”.

Eye-consciousness (*cakkhu-viññāṇa*), feeling (*vedanā*), perception (*saññā*) of visual object, and exertion to see visual object, mental activities (*sankhāra*) are also distinctly perceived at the moment of seeing. They are merely of the mental group. They are neither pleasant nor “*attā*” nor “person”. Yet those, who do not notice each and every arising of these phenomena (or each and every one of their arising), do not understand

that “they are impermanent, ill and *anattā*”. They, therefore, consider these mental elements to be pleasant and are attached to them. They egotistically consider “I am seeing; I am feeling; I am perceiving; I am looking intently”; and are attached to them. These are the very reasons why those mental groups are respectively called “*Viññāna-upādāna - kkhandha*”, “*Vedanā - upādānakkhandha*” “*Saññā - upādānakkhandha*” and “*Sankhāra-upādānakkhandha*”. This is how the five “*Upādānakkhandhas*” are distinctly perceived at the very moment of seeing the visual object through the eye.

Similarly the five “*Upādānakkhandhas*” are perceived distinctly at the very moment of hearing the sound through the ear, smelling the odour through the nose, knowing the taste through the tongue, feeling of the tactile sensations through the body and knowing the mental objects through the mind-base. However in the case of mental objects, there may be both material and mental elements.

Though the material and mental phenomena are arising distinctly at each of the moments of seeing, hearing, etc., in their six spheres, it is not possible for a beginner from the very start of the practice of *Vipassanā* to contemplate them in the serial order of their arising. In *Vipassanā* the practice is started with the contemplation, in particular, of the most outstanding objects present in the body. It is just as in schools where lessons easy to learn, are, as a rule, taught at the beginning of the studies.

Of the two phenomena of matter and mind, the material phenomena being more outstanding should be chosen as the preliminary or prime object of contemplation in *Vipassanā-kammaṭṭhāna*. Again, of the various classes of material phenomena, the bodily contact (*bhūta-rūpa*) which is more outstanding than the objects of sense-doors (*upādā-rūpas*) of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, should be taken up as the preliminary and prime object of the contemplation at the beginning of the practice.

Therefore, with a view to notice the particular outstanding bodily-contact, attention should be fixed on the sitting posture of the body and the continuous contemplation, carried out by making a mental note as ‘sitting, sitting’. While thus engaged in the contemplation the distinct feeling of bodily contact on the haunch or leg or any part of

the body will be noticed. This particular feeling of bodily contact should be taken up as an additional object jointly with 'sitting' and continually contemplated as 'contacting' 'sitting, contacting'. If this manner of contemplation as 'sitting, contacting,' is, however, found to be difficult to begin with, then the attention should be fixed at the contact of the flow-in and flow-out of breathing and the contemplation carried out as 'contacting, contacting'. If it is still found to be difficult to carry out this contemplation of 'contacting' then the contemplation should be carried out by fixing the attention on the bodily motion of the abdomen caused by rising (expanding) and falling (contracting) due to the flow-in and flow-out of breathing.

This is an illustration to show the manner of contemplation. Firstly, 'attention should be fixed on the abdomen. Then it will be felt that the abdomen is expanding and contracting and there are always present bodily motions in the abdomen. If at the beginning of practice the movement of rising and falling is not clear by the mere act of fixing the attention on the abdomen, one or both hands should be placed on the abdomen. Suspension of breath, and quick or deep breathing should not be done. The natural course of normal breathing should be maintained. As the abdomen is felt rising it should be contemplated by saying mentally 'rising'. Attention should be fixed on the gradual rising step by step of the abdomen from start to finish. As the abdomen is felt falling, it should be contemplated as 'falling'. Attention should be fixed on the gradual falling step by step of the abdomen from start to finish.

For **particular attention** it may be mentioned here that the words 'rising' and 'falling' should not be repeated by mouth, but they should be repeated mentally. In fact, words are not of real importance. To know the actual movements of the abdomen and the bodily motion present therein is of real importance. However, if the contemplation is carried on by the simple act of mental observation without the act of repeating the words mentally, the contemplation will be casual and ineffective and with many drawbacks such as that the attention fails to reach closely enough to the object to which it is directed, that the objects are not clearly distinguished and perceived separately and that the necessary energy deteriorates. Hence it is directed that

contemplation should be carried out by repeating mentally the necessary words on the respective objects.

While being occupied with the contemplation as 'rising, falling' there may be many occasions when the mind is found wandering to other objects. These wandering mental states should be contemplated as they arise.

**For illustration:** If it is found that the mind wanders to the objects other than those to which it is directed, it should be contemplated as 'wandering', if the mind intends to do something it should be contemplated as 'intending', if it is reflecting it should be contemplated as 'reflecting', in the case of wanting something it should be contemplated as 'wanting'; in the case of being pleased or angry or disappointed, it should be contemplated as 'pleased', 'angry', 'disappointed', respectively, and in the case of feeling lazy or happy it should be contemplated as 'lazy' or 'happy' as the case may be. The contemplation should be carried out repeatedly until these wavering mental states cease. Then, the contemplation should be reverted to 'rising, falling' of the original objects and carried on continually.

If any disagreeable sensations (*dukkha-vedanā*), such as, being tired in limbs or feeling hot or feeling painful, etc., arise in the body, attention should be fixed on the spot of the sensation and contemplation carried on as 'tired, tired', 'hot, hot'; or 'painful, painful' as the case may be. On the ceasing of the disagreeable sensations the contemplation of 'rising, falling' of the original objects should be reverted to.

But when the painful sensations are so acute that they are unbearable, then the posture of the body and the position of hands and legs have to be changed to ease the situation. In this case of changing, also, attention should be fixed on the outstanding major movements of the body and limbs and contemplation carried on as 'bending', 'stretching', 'swaying', 'moving', 'raising', 'putting down', etc., in the successive order of the changing process. When the change is completed then the contemplation of 'rising, falling' of the original objects should be reverted to.

At times when anything is being looked at, it should be contemplated as 'looking, seeing'. If anything is seen without being looked at, it should be contemplated as 'seeing, seeing'.

When one happens to be listening to something it should be contemplated as 'listening, hearing'. If anything is heard without being listened to, it should be contemplated as 'hearing, hearing'. If a reflecting thought follows then it should be contemplated as 'reflecting, reflecting'. Then the contemplation of 'rising, falling' of the original objects should be reverted to.

In the case of changing from the sitting posture to that of standing and of changing to the lying posture, contemplation should be carried out by fixing the attention on every outstanding major movement of the body and limbs in the successive order of the changing process.

In the case of walking, contemplation should be carried out by fixing the attention on the moving of each step from the moment of lifting the foot up to the moment of putting it down and by making a mental note as 'walking, walking' or 'moving forward, moving forward' or 'lifting, moving forward, putting down'.

In summary, it may be mentioned that the contemplation should be carried out on all actions of body and limbs such as bending stretching, raising, moving, etc.' so as to perceive them in their true form as they occur. The contemplation should be carried out on all physical sensations and mental feelings (*vedanā*) so as to know their true nature as they arise. The contemplation should be carried out on all thoughts, ideas, reflections, etc. so as to know their true nature as they arise. If there are no outstanding objects of specific nature to be contemplated while remaining quietly in the sitting or lying posture, contemplation should be carried out by always fixing the attention on any of the bodily contacts. Instructions are, therefore, given here to treat or keep the rising and falling movements of the abdomen, which are easy to explain and easy to contemplate, as the primary and main objects in contemplation.

But there are two other cases of contemplation already mentioned above, namely, (i) the contemplation of sitting and contacting and (ii) the contemplation of the impressions of contact in in-breathing and out-breathing, either of which may be chosen, if so desired, as the primary and main objects in the contemplation.

On achieving the high state of contemplation where it is possible to contemplate on

any objects as they arise there is no need at all to go back to the primary and main objects. Contemplation should be carried out on every moment of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, knowing the bodily contacts, thinking, ideas, etc. in the order of their arising.

The disciple who has developed, by this means of continuous contemplation, strong enough '*samādhi*' (concentration) and *ñāṇa* (insight) will personally perceive a rising and passing away of the mind for many times in a second. But a disciple who has just begun the practice of contemplation will not be able to perceive such a quick succession. It is just like the case of a person, who at the beginning of his study, cannot read so fast and so well as the one who has already advanced in studies. Nevertheless, a disciple should endeavour to perceive the rising and passing away of the mental states not less than once in every second in the beginning of his practice. (This is the basic summary of the practice of *Vipassanā*).

### The development of *Vipassanā Samādhi* and *Vipassanā Ñāṇa*.

In spite of his endeavour to carry on the contemplation as mentioned above, the disciple will either fail or forget to observe many of the bodily actions and mental activities at the beginning of the practice. As pointed out in the section on '*Samatha-kammaṭṭhāna*' there will be many '*Nīvaraṇas*' which cause the mind to wander to other objects. In the case of '*Samatha-kammaṭṭhāna*' there is no particular need to contemplate on the wandering mental states but they should be cut off and the original object contemplated on continuously, while in the case of '*Vipassanā-kammaṭṭhāna*' the contemplation should be carried out on these wandering mental states also. After the contemplation in this manner, the contemplation should revert to the original objects of 'rising, falling'. This is one of the points on which the procedure for *samatha-bhāvanā* differs from that for *Vipassanā-bhāvanā* so far as dispelling of *nīvaraṇas* is concerned.

In the case of *Samatha-bhāvanā* one has to contemplate continuously on the original object of *samatha* so as to make one's mind fixed on that object only. It is not necessary to observe any other mental or physical phenomenon. So it is not necessary to contemplate on such hindrances as

wandering mental states which arise occasionally. It is only necessary to dispel them as they arise.

In *Vipassanā-bhāvanā*, however, all physical and mental phenomena that occur at the six sense-doors have to be observed. So if and when such hindrances as the mind contemplating something other than the original object of contemplation or the mind entertaining greed, covetousness etc., they also have to be contemplated upon. If they are not contemplated upon the wrong view and attachment that they are permanent, pleasant and *attā* (self) will arise so merely disregarding them is not enough as in the case of *Samatha*. The objects of *Vipassanā* will be accomplished only if one contemplates on them so as to know their real nature and characteristics and to be detached from them.

When the wandering mental state is contemplated on repeatedly in this manner for many times there will hardly be any wandering. As soon as it wanders to other objects the mental state is immediately noticed and contemplated on and then it ceases to wander any longer. In some cases it will be found that the contemplation is being carried on without interruption because the mental state is recognised as soon as it begins to arise.

At this level of the contemplation it is found that the mind which is contemplating, and its object always come together closely and fixedly. This fixedness of the mind on its object is '*Vipassanā-khaṇika-samādhī*' (momentary concentration of insight).

The mind is now free from '*Kāmacchanda*', (sensuous lust) and other '*Nīvaraṇas*' and it is therefore on the same level as '*Upacāra-samādhī*' (neighbourhood-concentration) mentioned in the section of '*Samatha-kammaṭṭhāna*'. As the mind is no longer mixed up with any hindrances, that cause the mind to wander, but is purely composed of contemplation it is called *Citta visuddhi* (Purity of mind).

Then the physical phenomena, such as rising, falling, bending, stretching, etc. which are being contemplated, are perceived at every moment of contemplation in separate forms without being mixed up with the mind contemplating on them or with other material phenomena. The mental phenomena, such as contemplating, thinking, seeing, hearing etc. also are perceived at every moment of

contemplating in separate states without being mixed up with either material phenomena or other mental phenomena. At every moment of breathing, the body and the mind which knows the body are perceived distinctly and separately as two. The distinguishing knowledge of physical and mental phenomena as to separate processes is '*Nāma-rūpa-pariccheda-ñāṇa*' (Insight into twofold division of mind and corporeality).

On having developed this '*Ñāṇa*' (insight) for a good number of times in the course of continuous contemplation, there arises a clear understanding that 'there are only mind and corporeality. The body has no faculty of knowing rising, falling, bending, moving, etc. whereas the mind has the faculty of contemplating, thinking, seeing, hearing, etc. Apart from these two factors there is no *attā* or self'. This understanding is called '*Diṭṭhi-visuddhi*' (Purity of View).

On proceeding further with the contemplation it is perceived that the material and mental phenomena are arising in the body as effects of their respective causes.

For illustration: The disciple perceives the fact that, because of the mind intending to bend or stretch or move or change the posture, there arise the actions of bending, stretching, moving or changing; because of the fluctuation in temperature there are always changes in the physical condition either by being cold or hot; and because of the partaking of food there always arises new physical energy. Again, he perceives the fact that, because there are present eye and visual object, ear and sound, etc. there arise seeing, hearing, etc. and because of attention being directed, the mind reaches its object. Again, he perceives the fact that, because of the presence of '*Avijjā*' (ignorance or delusion), which views life as beautiful and happy and of '*Taṇhā*' (craving), all kinds of deeds are thought of and done, and because of the attachment to those deeds that have been done, there arise, in successive series, the new '*Viññāṇas*' (consciousnesses). Again, he perceives the fact that death is nothing but the passing away of the last one in the successive series of this kind of consciousness, and birth is the arising of a new consciousness in the successive series of this kind, dependent on a new corporeal formation. This distinguishing knowledge of Dependent Origination of cause and effect is '*Paccaya-pariggaha-ñāṇa*' (Insight arising from full comprehension of causes).

On understanding the fact of the Dependent Origination he will come to the conclusion that "life in the past was a formation of corporeality and mind which were dependent on their respective causes and that there will be a similar process of life in the future." This purity of view is called *Kankhā-vitarāṇa visuddhi* (Purity arising from having overcome doubts.)

Before developing the right knowledge of the fact that 'life consists of corporeality and mind dependent on their respective causes' there were many sceptical doubts whether there was I in the past, whether I come into existence only in the present or whether I will continue to exist in the future" by holding the view that the formation of corporeality and mind are "*attā*" or "self". Now these sceptical doubts cannot arise as they have been overcome.

On proceeding further with the contemplation it is perceived that the physical and mental phenomena are arising and passing away at every moment of contemplation. This is "*Anicca-sammasana-ñāṇa*" (Insight into impermanent nature of phenomena).

On perceiving the fact that the physical and mental phenomena are constantly arising and passing away—that they are constantly afflicted by "arising and passing away" they are considered to be neither pleasant nor reliable, but terrible ills. This is "*Dukkha-sammasana-ñāṇa*" (Insight into ill condition).

On perceiving the fact that the physical and mental phenomena do not, as a rule, follow the dictates of one's will but are arising and passing away in accordance with their own nature and relative conditioning, it is realised that they are not '*attā*' or 'self'. This is "*Anattā-sammasana-ñāṇa*" (Insight into non-*attā* or non-self).

After having reflected on these facts as long as he wishes, the disciple proceeds with the contemplation without any further reflection. He then perceives clearly the beginning of every object of his contemplation. He also perceives clearly the coming to an end of each object of his contemplation as if it were cut off clearly. At this juncture there generally arise many strange experiences, such as—

- (1) mental visions of brilliant lights,
- (2) rapturous feelings,
- (3) calm feelings,

- (4) devotional feelings towards the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha,
- (5) great energy in carrying out the contemplation,
- (6) happiness,
- (7) the quick and clear perceiving of objects,
- (8) the capability in carrying out mindfulness without missing any object,
- (9) automatic contemplation without particular effort,
- (10) feeling of subtle pleasure in the contemplation.

The disciple therefore, is so much elated that he can no longer keep his silence but generally speaks out his experiences. He often considers that he has already attained enlightenment. This is the initial or early stage of "*Udayabbaya-ñāṇa*" (Insight into rising and passing away of phenomena.); However it is a wrong "*Magga*" (Path).

Then the disciple decides that the experiences of seeing mental visions and other feelings are not the actual attainment of enlightenment, and that the correct method of contemplation to attain enlightenment is only constant observation of whatever arises. He comes to this decision in accordance with what he has learnt from the text or in accordance with the instructions of his teachers.

This decision is "*Maggāmagga-ñāṇa-dassana-visuddhi*" (Purity of insight into right and wrong paths).

Having come to this decision and proceeding further with the contemplation, those experiences of seeing mental visions and of other feelings gradually decrease and the perceiving of the objects becomes clearer and clearer. The arising and passing away of material phenomena at each movement in the course of a single bending or stretching of the arm or the leg or in the course of a single step, fragment by fragment, without reaching from one stage of the movement to another stage thereof, will then be clearly perceived. This is final or mature "*Udayabbaya-ñāṇa*". It is flawless as it is free from "*Upakkilesas*" (Impurities).

When this "*ñāṇa*" has gained enough strength, the perceiving of the objects is found to be faster. The ending or vanishing of the objects is more clearly perceived than their beginning or arising. The objects of contemplation appear to be vanishing. Forms

and shapes of hand, leg, head, body etc. are no longer perceived. Only vanishing of body and mind is perceived at every moment of contemplation. Even the contemplating mind is perceived to be vanishing along with the object of its contemplation at every moment. This knowledge of the process of vanishing, in pairs, of the mind and its object is "*Bhaṅga-ñāṇa*" (Insight into passing away).

On perceiving the process of ever vanishing in pairs of mind and its object there arises the knowledge realising the dreadful nature of things. This is "*Bhaya-ñāṇa*" (Insight into fearful condition).

Then there arises the knowledge realising the faults and defects of material and mental phenomena. This is "*Ādīnavañāṇa*" (Insight into unsatisfactory condition).

Then there arises the knowledge realising the unattractive and boring nature of things. This is "*Nibbidā-ñāṇa*" (Insight into wearisome condition).

When it is realised that it would be well only if there were no physical and mental phenomena which are constantly coming into being and passing away in this manner, there arises the knowledge looking for an escape from suffering on account of these phenomena. This is "*Muccitu-kamyatā-ñāṇa*" (Insight arising from desire to escape).

On further contemplation with special anxiety for an escape there arises a clear perception of the characteristics of "*Anicca*, *Dukkha*, and *Anattā*," with special emphasis on that of "*Dukkha*". This is "*Paṭisaṅkhā-ñāṇa*" (Insight arising out of further contemplation).

When the "*Paṭisaṅkhā-ñāṇa*" is mature-contemplation proceeds automatically like a clock without special effort for perception and knowledge. It proceeds contemplating on objects with equanimity—just to take notice of them without digressing into the pleasantness or unpleasantness. This contemplation is so peaceful and effortless and it proceeds knowing its objects so automatically that it may extend over one hour, two hours or three hours; and even though it may last so long, there will not be tiredness or exhaustion. This perception which arises for a long time realising the real nature of the objects of contemplation automatically and without going into the pleasantness and unpleasantness thereof is "*Sankhārupekkhā-ñāṇa*" (Insight arising from equanimity).

Out of this contemplation which proceeds automatically and by its own momentum realising its objects, there arises knowledge which is specially quick and active. This knowledge which rises straightway towards a noble path which is also known as "*Vutthāna*" (elevation) is "*Vutthāna gāminī-vipassanā-ñāṇa*" (Insight leading to elevation).

That special knowledge arises realising that physical and mental phenomena which appear at the six sense-doors at that very moment are impermanent, suffering and not-self. The last of such knowledge is "*Anuloma-ñāṇa*" (Adaptation-knowledge) which consists of the three "*Jāvanas*" (Impulse moments) called '*Parikamma*' (Preparation) "*Upacāra*" (Approach) and "*Anuloma*" (Adaptation). This is the '*Ñāṇa*' which fits in both with the preceding eight "*Vipassanā-ñāṇa*" and subsequent "*Magga-ñāṇa*" (Path-knowledge).

Insights from the mature '*Udayabhaya-ñāṇa*' to the '*Anuloma-ñāṇa*' are collectively known as '*Patipadā-ñāṇa-dassana-visuddhi*' (Purity by knowledge and insight arising from having followed the course of practice).

After *Anuloma-ñāṇa*, there arises *Gotrabhu-ñāṇa* (Knowledge overmastering kinship) which has Nibbāna as its object where the ills and miseries connected with the physical and mental phenomena cease entirely. This is knowledge which cuts the lineage of "*puṭhujjanas*" (worldlings) and enters the lineage of "*Ariyas*" (Noble Ones).

Then there arise the '*Sotāpatti Magga* and *Phala ṇāṇa*' (Insight arising from the Noble Path of stream-winning and its fruition) which realise Nibbāna. The '*Magga-ñāṇa*' is called '*Ñāṇa-dassana-visuddhi*' (Purity of insight).

The moment of arising of the '*Magga* and *Phala ṇāṇa*' does not last even for a second. Then there arises reflection of the particular experiences of the '*Magga*, *Phala* and *Nibbāna*'. This is '*Paccavakkhana-ñāṇa*' (Insight of retrospection).

One who has acquired this '*Paccavakkhanā-ñāṇa*', according to this procedure, is a '*Sotāpanna*' (Stream Winner).

The *Sotāpanna* is free from the following three '*Samyojanas*' (fettors),

(1) The wrong view that the aggregates of physical and mental phenomena are ego or self. *Sakkāya-diṭṭhi*-Personality-belief).

(2) Any doubt about the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Sangha and the discipline (*vicikicchā*).

(3) Belief that methods other than that of cultivating the qualities of the eight-fold 'Ariya-Magga' (Noble Path) and developing insight into the four Noble Truths will bring eternal peace. (*Silabbata-parāmāsa*-Belief in mere rite and ritual).

Furthermore his observation of the five precepts remains pure and absolute, as a matter of course. For these reasons, a "Sotāpanna" is well secured from being re-born in the unhappy existence of four lower worlds. He will lead the happy life in the world of human beings and devas for seven existences at the most and during this period he will attain Arahatsip and Nibbāna.

When a *Sotāpanna* carries out the practice of *Vipassanā* with a view to getting to the state of 'Phala-sammāpatti' (Attainment of Fruition), he will then reach that state and remain in it for the duration of five or ten minutes, or half an hour or an hour. When he is well trained in the practice of getting to the state of 'Phala-sammāpatti' he will reach it quickly and remain in it for a whole day or a whole night or longer.

If he carries out the contemplation of the 'Upādānakkhandhas' in the same manner as already mentioned with a view to realising the higher states of 'Magga and Phala' the *Vipassanā-ñāṇa*s will be developed from the stage of "*Udayabbaya-ñāṇa*" in the same serial order as before and on full maturity he will realise *Nibbāna* with the insight of 'Sakadāgāmi Magga and Phala' (Path of once-returning and its Fruition) and become a *Sakadāgāmi* (once-returner). He is then free from coarse *Kāma-rāga* (sensual craving) and coarse 'Paṭigha' (ill will). He will lead the happy life in the world of human beings and devas for two existences at the most and will attain Arahatsip and Nibbāna during this period.

When a *Sakadāgāmi* carries out the practice of *Vipassanā* with a view to getting to the state of 'Sakadāgāmi Phala-sammāpatti' he will reach that state.

When he carries out the practice with a view to realising the higher state of 'Magga and Phala' the *Vipassanā-ñāṇa* will be developed in the same serial order as before and on full maturity he will realise *Nibbāna* with the insight of 'Anāgāmi magga and Phala'

(Path of Never returning and its Fruition) and become an *Anāgāmi* (never-returner). He is then totally free from two more *samyojanas* namely, "Kāma-rāga" (sensual craving) and 'Paṭigha-' (ill-will). He will not be reborn in "Kāma-loka" (sensual world) but will be reborn in "*Rūpa-loka*" (fine material world) and 'Arūpa-loka' (Immaterial world) where he will become an Arahatsip and attain Nibbāna.

When an *Anāgāmi* carries out the practice of *Vipassanā* with a view to getting to the state of 'Anāgāmi Phala-sammāpatti' he will then reach that state. When he carries out the practice for the higher state the *Vipassanā-ñāṇa* will be developed in the same serial order and on full maturity will realise Nibbāna with the insight of 'Arahatsip Magga and Phala' (Path of Arahatsip and its Fruition) become an Arahatsip.

An Arahatsip is free from the remaining five 'Samyojanas' of—

- (1) *Rūpa-rāga* (craving for fine-material existence),
- (2) *Arūpa-rāga* (craving for immaterial existence),
- (3) *Māna* (conceit),
- (4) *Uddhacca* (restlessness), and
- (5) *Avijjā* (ignorance or delusion) together with all 'Kilesas' (Defilements). At the end of the span of the present life he will enter Nibbāna. As there is no more rebirth for him after the *Parinibbāna*, he is absolutely free from suffering the woes of old age, ill-health, death etc. It is with a view to this freedom that the question in the beginning of this article:

"What is the purpose of carrying out the practice of Meditation" has been given the following answer:—

"The practice of Meditation is carried out for the purpose of realising Nibbāna and thereby escaping from the ills of life in the form of old age, ill-health, death and so forth".

Therefore all those who earnestly wish to realise *Nibbāna* and thereby gain absolute freedom should carry out the practice of Meditation according to the instructions given here.

May all be able to practise Meditation and attain Nibbāna.

# WHAT IS NIBBANA?

*By Myanaung U Tin.*

Nibbāna is the ultimate goal cherished by the Buddhists. Whatever good we do, or whenever we do a meritorious deed, each of us say, "By virtue of this good deed, may I attain Nibbāna." What is Nibbāna? Where is it? Why do we wish to attain it? How shall we attain it? When shall we attain it? What is meant by its attainment? These questions crop up in our minds at one time or other.

We approached our respected lay teachers as well as our revered monks. They very kindly tried to explain to us all pertaining to Nibbāna but we were at first more impressed by their erudition than by their explanations.

Then we read up books we could lay our hands on, or made available to us. Our confusion became worse confounded because we were lost on the high sea of texts, commentaries and sub-commentaries.

We have *saddhā* or trustful confidence in the Three Gems: Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha, and yet we were vexed by sceptical doubts. In short, for a considerable time we were torn between our traditional reverence for our religion, and our own intellect. We might even go to the extent of finding fault with our elders and teachers and pass such remarks as: they were orthodox; they were not scientific in their approach; so on and so forth. And we would quote a relevant passage from the Kālāma Sutta whereby the Buddha exhorts us explicitly not to have blind faith in Him, His teachings, our elders and teachers.

However, we failed to do one important thing; we failed to take notice of our own limitations in intellect, mental outlook, spiritual development and sublime experience. By and by, these limitations dawned upon our minds and we began to realise that the fault, dear Brother, is not in our teachers, but in ourselves, that we are worldlings. In Pāli, the word for worldling is *Puthujjana*, which means one who is still possessed of all the ten fetters (*samyojana*) binding to the round of rebirths, and therefore has not yet reached any of the four stages of holiness. Ten fetters of existence and four stages of

holiness will be explained later; here, it will suffice to say that worldlings are assailed by sceptical doubts, which constitute one of the ten fetters. Nevertheless, sceptical doubts are not altogether useless; they lead us on to further efforts in our search for truth.

Nibbāna is our cherished goal. What is Nibbāna? Before an attempt is made to answer this question, it may be reminded that the Four Noble Truths are the foundation of the Buddha-Dhamma: (1) The Noble Truth of Suffering, (2) the Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering, (3) the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering, and (4) the Noble Truth of the Path that leads to the Cessation of Suffering. The fundamental point to note is that the Buddhists recognise the universality of suffering. The opposite of suffering is its cessation, and this cessation or extinction is ordinarily considered to be Nibbāna. But a question arises: 'Is Nibbāna a mere cessation?' The answer will become clear in due course.

As the Venerable Anuruddha points out in his *Abhidhammatha-Sangaha*, Nibbāna is in its nature single, but for purposes of logical treatment, it is two-fold, namely: (1) the element of Nibbāna, wherewith is yet remaining stuff of life, and (2) the element of Nibbāna without that remainder. One is referred to as *Sa-Upādisesa Nibbāna Dhātu*, and another as *Anupādisesa Nibbāna Dhātu*. That Nibbāna is single is also explained in *Patisambhidā Magga* and *Visuddhi Magga*. In regard to two elements of Nibbāna, the Buddha himself says, in *Itivuttaka* (II, II, VII).\*

"There are, O Bhikkhus, two elements of Nibbāna. What two? The element of Nibbāna with the basis still remaining and that without basis.

"What, O Bhikkhus, is the element of Nibbāna with the basis still remaining? Herein, a Bhikkhu is an Arahāt, one who has destroyed the defilements, who has lived the holy life, done what was to be done, laid aside the burden, who has attained his goal, who has destroyed the fetters of existence, who rightly understanding is delivered. His

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\* *Itivuttaka, Duka Nipāta, Duttiya Vagga, Nibbāna-dhātusutta. 6th synod Ed. ps. 220.*

five sense organs still remain, and as he is not devoid of them he undergoes the pleasant and the unpleasant, experiences pleasure and pain. That destruction of attachment (greed) hatred and delusion of his, O Bhikkhus, is called the element of Nibbāna with the basis still remaining.

“What, O Bhikkhus, is ‘The element of Nibbāna without the basis?’ Herein, a Bhikkhu is an Arahāt, one who has destroyed the Defilements, who has lived the holy life, done what was to be done, laid aside the burden, who has attained his goal, who has destroyed the fetters of existence, who rightly understanding is delivered. In this very life, O Bhikkhus, all his sensations will have no delight for him, they will be cooled. This is called, O Bhikkhus, ‘the element of Nibbāna without a basis.’”

This is the meaning :

“These two Nibbāna states are shown by him

Who seeth, who is such and unattached.

One state is that in this same life possessed

With base remaining, tho’ becoming stream

Be cut off. While the state without a base  
Belongeth to the future, wherein all

Becomings utterly do come (arise) and cease.

They who, by knowing this state uncompounded

Have heart’s release, by cutting off the stream,

They who have reached the core of the Dhamma, glad

To end—such people have abandoned all becomings.” \*

From this passage it is clear that there is but one Nibbāna, and two names are given to it according to the way it is experienced before or at the death of an Arahāt.

In this passage, it will be noticed that the destruction of attachment, hatred and delusion, itself is called Nibbāna. The same definition is also found in *Samyutta Nikaya*

(XXXVIII, 1).\*\* What does it mean? It means the extinction of life-affirming will as manifested in greed, hatred and delusion; the extinction of the craving which produces rebirth, accompanied by passionate clinging, welcoming this and that life; the extinction of the craving for sensual pleasures, craving for becoming and craving for annihilation. In *Udāna* (III, x)\*\*\* the Buddha says, “Craving’s utter ending, utter stopping, is Nibbāna.” In short, the destruction of greed, hatred and delusion means the destruction of the cause or origin of suffering.

At this point, it may be asked, “What is the difference between Nibbāna and *Parinibbāna*?” It has been incorrectly supposed that the term *Parinibbāna* refers merely to the dissolution of the constituent five groups of existence at the death of an Arahāt. *Parinibbāna* is, in fact, used in two senses: (1) *Kilesa Parinibbāna*, destruction of the Defilements, and (2) *Khandha Parinibbāna*, dissolution of the constituent five groups of existence at the death of an Arahāt. *Nibbāna* stresses the experience before and at the death of an Arahāt, whereas *Parinibbāna* emphasises the fact of destruction of Defilements, before, and dissolution of the psychico-mental process of existence at the death of an Arahāt. *Samyutta - Nikāya* commentary clearly explains *Parinibbāna*. In other words *Sa-upādisesa Nibbāna Dhātu* is experienced with the destruction of the Defilements, and *Anupādisesa Nibbāna Dhātu* is experienced with the dissolution of the psychico-mental process of existence. Sometimes both aspects take place at one and the same moment, that is, when one becomes an Arahāt at the moment of death. Nibbāna and *Parinibbāna* appear to be synonymous but, in fact, convey different shades of meaning.

I do not propose to deal with the etymological explanations of Nibbāna as they are likely to take us away from the main track. I shall confine myself to the exegetical explanations.

According to the *Abhidhamma*, there are four realities in the ultimate sense: (1) consciousness, (2) Mental properties, (3) Material qualities and (4) Nibbāna. Nibbāna

\* The Minor Anthology of the Pāli Canon. Part II. Ps. 144.

\*\* *Samyutta Nikāya*, Saḷāyatana vagga-Samyutta, Jambukhādakasamyutta, Nibbānapaṇha sutta; 6th synod Ed. ps. 446.

\*\*\* *Khuddaka-Nikāya*, Udāna, Nanda Vagga, Loka Sutta; 6th synod Ed. p. 116.

is a reality. In *Udāna* (VIII, iii)\* the Buddha defines Nibbāna as an unborn, a not-become, a not-made, a not compounded. The Pāli word is *Asankhata*. It means unformed, unoriginated, the Beyond of all becoming and conditionality. It is the opposite of *Sankhata* which means the formed, the originated, comprising all phenomena of existence. Again, in *Udāna* (VIII, i)\*\* the Buddha says “Bhikkhus, there exists that condition wherein is neither earth nor water nor fire nor air: wherein is neither the sphere of infinite space nor of infinite consciousness nor of nothingness nor of neither consciousness nor unconsciousness; where there is neither this world nor a world beyond nor both together, nor moon-and-sun. Thence, O Bhikkhus, I declare is no coming to birth; thither is no going (from life); therein is no duration; thence is no falling; there is no arising. It is not something fixed, it moves not on, it is not based on anything. That indeed is the end of suffering”. From this passage, it can be seen that Nibbāna is the end of suffering and yet it is not a mere cessation of suffering. It is neither annihilation nor a state of nothingness. It is a positive unconditioned state.

In *Udāna* (VIII iii)\*\*\* as well as in *Itivuttaka* (II ii vi)\*\*\*\* is found an identical passage wherein the Buddha says:

“O Bhikkhus, there is an unborn, a not-become, a not-made, a not-compounded. If that unborn, not-become, not-made, not-compounded were not, there would be apparent no escape from this here that is born, become, made, compounded. But, O Bhikkhus, since there is an unborn, a not-become, a not-made, a not-compounded, therefore the escape from this here that is born, become, made, compounded is apparent.”

Surely, if Nibbāna were not a reality, there could be no path leading to it. If there were a path, it could lead nowhere. If the path reaches nowhere, Nibbāna cannot be the goal. This point will become more clear

when we deal with the question: “How shall we attain Nibbāna?”

Nibbāna is. But where is it? In the *Milinda Pañha*\*\*\*\*\* the Venerable Nāgasena answers the question thus: “There is no spot looking East, South, West or North, above, below or beyond, where Nibbāna is situate; and yet Nibbāna is; and he who orders his life aright, grounded in virtue, and with rational attention, may realise it whether he lives in Greece, China, Alexandria, or in Kosala”. In illustration thereof he says: “Just as fire is not stored up in any particular place but arises when the necessary conditions exist, so Nibbāna is not said to be existing in a particular place, but it is attained when the necessary conditions are fulfilled.”

In the identical passage cited above from *Udāna* and *Itivuttaka*, the Buddha says that Nibbāna has no duration. It means that Nibbāna is *Kālavimutti*, out of time, or literally, freed from time. Nibbāna is not to be thought of in terms of space either.

It is a remarkable thing that scientific philosophy is turning in the direction of the Buddhist concepts. Einstein's Law of Relativity to a great extent corroborates our notions regarding Nibbāna in so far as it is based upon the recognition that time and space are not the absolute entities.\*\*\*\*\* Einstein says: “Till now it is believed that time and space existed by themselves. even if there was nothing else—no sun, no earth, no stars; while now we know that time and space are not the vessel of the universe, but could not exist at all if there were no contents—namely, no sun, earth and other celestial bodies.” Furthermore he says: “In the pre-relativity physics, space and time are separate entities. One spoke of points of space, as of instants of time, as if they were absolute entities..... It is neither the point in space, nor the instant in time, at which something happens that has reality, but only the event itself. There is no absolute (independent of the space of reference) relation in space; and no absolute

\* Khuddaka-Nikāya, Udāna, Pāṭaligāmiyavagga, Tatiya Nibbāna Paṭisaṃyutta sutta, 6th Synod Ed. p. 178. (Minor Anthology of the Pāli Canon II, p. 98)

\*\* Khuddaka-Nikāya, Udāna, Pāṭaligāmiyasutta Paṭhama Nibbāna Paṭisaṃyutta Sutta 6th, Synod Ed. p. 177.

\*\*\* Same as \*

(Minor Anthology.....p. 97)

\*\*\*\* Itivuttaka, Dukanipāta, Dutiyavagga, Ajāta sutta. 6th synod Ed. p. 220. (Minor Anthology. p. 142)

\*\*\*\*\* Milinda Pañha, Anumānapañha, Vessantaravagga, Nibbāna-sannihitapañha; 6th synod Ed. p. 312.

\*\*\*\*\* The meaning of Relativity, three lectures given by Prof. Albert Einstein at the Princeton University, U.S.A.

relation in time between two events, but there is an absolute (independent of the space of reference) relation in space and time. The circumstance that there is no objective rational division of the four-dimensional continuum into a three-dimensional space and a one-dimensional time continuum indicates that the law of nature will assume a form which is logically most satisfactory when expressed as laws in the four-dimensional continuum." Since Einstein propounded his theory, those who were used to a three-dimensional world began to think in terms of four dimensions. Only last month (April 1958) Nobel Prize-winner Dr. Hideki Yukawa of Japan announced his new theory of unified field, which suggests a five-dimensional world. Dr. Yukawa has been working on a theory of unified field in the footsteps of Einstein. In his paper, he urges that in order to unify theories of time and space which are continuous manifolds forming a four-dimensional world, and the requirements of quantum mechanics which deals with discontinuity, **a five-dimensional world transcending space-time must be taken into account.** Of course we (at least I) don't know what all this new theory means, but it serves our purpose in that it agrees with the concept of Nibbāna transcending space-time. It is, indeed, not an easy matter for those who are confined within three dimensions or even within a four-dimensional world to appreciate this five-dimensional concept. The Buddha says, "Hard is the infinite to see; truth is no easy thing to see." (*Udāna* VIII, ii).\*

Nibbāna is our ultimate goal. Why do we wish to attain it? Because we have learnt from our own experience of life that there is universal suffering. Because we can appreciate what the Buddha teaches, "Birth is suffering; Decay is suffering; Disease is suffering; Death is suffering; to be associated with the unloved is suffering; to be separated from the loved is suffering; not to get what one desires is suffering; in short, the five constituent groups of Existence are suffering. Because we can also appreciate that the cause of suffering is craving; craving for sensual pleasures; craving for becoming; and craving for annihilation.

In respect of the universality of suffering, Sir Edwin Arnold's "Light of Asia" contains

a most moving passage: Prince Siddhattha cried:

".....Oh! Suffering world  
Known and unknown of my common flesh,  
Caught in this common net of death and woe,

And life which binds to both! I see, I feel  
The vastness of the agony of earth.  
The vainness of its joys, the mockery  
Of all its best, the anguish of its worst;  
Since pleasures end in pain, and youth in age,

And love in loss, and life in hateful death,  
And death in unknown lives, which will  
but yoke

Men to their wheel again to whirl the round  
Of false delights and woes that are not false.

Me too this lure hath cheated, so is seemed  
Lovely to live and life a sunlit stream  
Forever flowing in a changeless peace;  
Whereas the foolish ripple of the flood  
Dances so lightly down by bloom and lawn  
Only to pour its crystal quicklier  
Into the foul salt sea. The evil is rent  
Which blinded me! I am as all these men  
Who cry upon their gods and are not heard,

Or are not heeded—yet there must be aid!  
For them and me and all there must be help!  
Perchance the gods have need of help themselves.

Being so feeble that when sad lips cry  
They cannot save! I would not let one cry  
Whom I could save!....."

Prince Siddhattha, after enlightenment, became our Buddha, but he is not a saviour in the sense of a deliverer or a redeemer. In the *Dhammapada*, *Maggavagga*, (verse 276), He exhorts us: "You yourselves should make an effort; the Buddhas are only teachers." He shows us the path to deliverance, but we must make an effort ourselves to obtain deliverance from this suffering world, that is, to attain Nibbāna. How shall we attain it? By walking the path, the Noble Eightfold Path—Right Speech, Right Action and Right livelihood are grouped in *Sīla* (virtue or morality); Right Effort, Right Mindfulness

and Right Concentration in *Samādhi* (concentration), and Right Understanding and Right Thoughts in *Paññā* (Wisdom).

Students of *Abhidhamma* will remember that these factors comprising the Noble Eight-fold Path signify the mental properties (*cetasikas*) collectively found in the four classes of transcendental (supramundane) consciousness. *Visuddhi Magga*\* treats of these eight factors of the Noble Truth of the Path leading to Extinction of Suffering under the above-mentioned three heads, namely, virtue, concentration and wisdom. We can learn all the details relating to the Path in that book as well as in several other authoritative expositions. I would only say that, in my opinion, Right Mindfulness is *always necessary*.

In the *Dhammapada*, *Buddha vagga*, (verse 183) the teaching of the Buddha is succinctly defined thus:

“Not to do any evil,  
To cultivate good,  
To purify one’s mind  
This is the teaching of the Buddhas.”

The first two verses of *Dhammapada* describe the importance of mind. Mind is the forerunner of all evil and all good mental states. Mind is their chief, and they are mind-made. A person holding a balance by the central pivot lifts both scales at the same moment. In the same way, a person, in developing his concentration, becomes virtuous and wise at the same time. *Sīla* enables him to control his tongue and body only. *Samādhi* stands guard over his mind and therefore, over his tongue and body as well. A pure mind or a mind purified will “see things, by perfect wisdom, as in themselves they really are.”

The Buddha’s teachings offer a great variety of methods of mental training and subjects of meditation, suited to the various individual needs, temperaments and capacities, but all of them ultimately converge in “the way of Mindfulness” (*satipaṭṭhāna-magga*), called by the Buddha himself “the only way” (*ekāyana-magga*).

Chapter II of the *Dhammapada* (*Appamāda Vagga*) deals with the importance of heedfulness or ever-present mindfulness or

watchfulness. “Heedfulness is the path to the deathless (Nibbāna.)” There is a wrong supposition that mindfulness is possible only when one is actually meditating at a quiet and secluded place. As a matter of fact, one can be mindful at all places and at all times, except when asleep or unconscious. *Udāna Sutta* provides illustrations to support this statement.

To borrow the words of Edward Conze, the author of “Buddhist Meditation”: “Meditational practices constitute the very core of the Buddhist approach to life..... Enlightenment, or the state of Nibbāna, is, of course, the ultimate aim of Buddhist meditations. On the way to Nibbāna, they serve to promote spiritual development, to diminish the impact of suffering, to calm the mind and to reveal the true facts of existence.”

In the *Anguttara Nikāya* (IV,V)\*\* the Buddha says, “In this very fathom-long body, along with its perceptions and thoughts, I proclaim the world, the origin of the world, the cessation of the world, and the path leading to the cessation of the world.” Important as is the doctrinal aspect of the Buddha-Dhamma, the practice alone can lead us to Nibbāna. The Buddha’s last exhortation is: “Subject to change are all compounded things. Strive on with diligence.”

We have come across in the Books, the Seven Stages of Purity and Ten Knowledges of Insight. Appalled by the difficulty of their achievement we would often despair. We should however not give way to despair. Let us be watchful of our minds and purity and insight will come by themselves. As the Venerable Nāgasena explained to Milinda, when the necessary conditions are fulfilled Nibbana is attained.

Here, I would draw your attention to a few lines from *Abhidhammattha Sangaha* by the Venerable Anuruddha. (U Shwe Zan Aung’s. Compendium of Philosophy, part IX - page 215.) The tenth knowledge of Insight is that by which one qualifies oneself for the Path. “After this, the consciousness of the Initiate (*Gotrabhu*) leaning upon Nibbāna occurs, over-mastering kinship with the worldly, and evolving kinship with the

\* English translation. (1) Path of Purity by Prof. Maung Tin.

(2) Path of Purification by Bhikkhu Ñānamoli.

\*\* (1) *Ang-Nikāya*, Catukka nipāta, paṭhama-paṇṇāsaka, Rohitassavagga, Rohitassa-sutta; 6th synod Ed. p. 357.

(2) *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, Sagāthā vagga saṃyutta.

Ariya's. (The Noble ones.) Immediately after that consciousness, the Path (*Magga Ñāṇa*), namely, (consciousness) discerning the Fact of Suffering, expelling the fact of its cause, realizing the fact of its cessation, cultivating the fact of the Way (to cessation,) descends into the ecstatic thought. After that Path-consciousness when two or three flashes of the consciousness of fruition (*Phala Ñāṇa*) have taken their course, there comes subsidence into the life-continuum; and then, again, the life-continuum is interrupted and the knowledges concerned with 'review' occur. (*Paccavekkhanā-Ñāṇa*.)"

These few lines explain Nibbāna as an ultimate reality, and the realization of the four Noble Truths. In the first instance, the consciousness of the Initiate has to lean upon Nibbāna to over-master kinship with the worldly, and evolve kinship with the *Ariya*'s. Secondly, Nibbāna is the object of Path-consciousness as well as of Fruition-consciousness.

Suffering; cause of suffering; cessation of suffering; and the path leading to the cessation of suffering—are facts or truths but they are realized only by the Path-consciousness of the *Ariya*. *Putthujjanas* can appreciate them on account of their knowledge based on learning or their knowledge based on thinking or both, but they have not realised them through insight or wisdom. In the *Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta*, the Buddha says, "Thus, O Bhikkhus, with respect to things unheard before, there arose in me the eye, the knowledge, the wisdom the insight, and the light." Four truths are realized by the *Ariyas*; hence four Noble Truths.

There are four stages of holiness:

1. Sotāpanna — stream-winner
2. Sakadāgāmi — once-returner
3. Anāgāmi — never-returner
4. Arahatta — the Holy one.

I do not propose to dwell at length on this point. Suffice it to say that with the realization of the first stage, the Noble One becomes free from (1) self-illusion (personality belief) (2) sceptical doubt and (3) attachment to mere rite and ritual. At the second stage, the Noble One becomes free from (4) coarse sensuous craving and (5) coarse ill-will. It means that he has weakened these two fetters and not yet completely eradicated them. At the third stage the Noble One becomes fully free from the above-mentioned five fetters. At the last stage, an Arahāt

breaks asunder the remaining five fetters namely : (6) craving for fine-material existence, (7) craving for immaterial existence, (8) conceit, (9) restlessness (10) ignorance. The Arahāt gains release from the round of rebirth and attains Nibbāna.

All those who have reached these four stages of holiness are known as *Ariyas* and they are considered to have attained Nibbāna to the extent they have got rid of some or all fetters of existence.

In the Books, namely, texts, commentaries and sub-commentaries, the word "Nibbāna" is used in five senses:

Nibbāna, as an ultimate reality, (1) which makes possible the destruction of Defilements and (2) which makes possible the dissolution of the physico-mental process of existence. Secondly, Nibbāna is used in the sense of (3) the resultant Destruction of Defilement and (4) the resultant dissolution of the physico-mental process of existence. In Pāli, these four are

- (1) *Paramattha Asankhata Sa-upādisesa Nibbāna*
- (2) *Paramattha Asankhata Anupādisesa Nibbāna*
- (3) *Paññatti Sa-upādisesa Nibbāna*
- (4) *Paññatti Anupādisesa Nibbāna*.

It is, therefore, clear that the latter two are only names, not in the sense of ultimate reality. The former two are one and the same thing, used in the sense of ultimate reality. There is but one single Nibbāna.

In the sub-commentaries, namely, *Visuddhi Magga Mahā Tikā* and *Sārattha Dīpanī Tikā*, (5) Nibbāna is used in the sense of Fruition-consciousness. Obviously, it refers to Fruition-consciousness of an Arahāt. This is the fifth manner in which the word 'Nibbāna' is used. Nibbāna is apparently used here in the figurative or metaphorical sense, the resultant Fruition-consciousness standing for Nibbāna as an ultimate reality, because no Fruition-consciousness is possible without Nibbāna as an object.

*Phala-samāpatti* (Attainment of Fruition) denotes the moments of supermundane consciousness and, therefore, should not be mixed up with *Nirodha-samāpatti* (Attainment of Extinction) which is the suspension of all consciousness and mental activity in the cases of Anāgāmi and Arahāt. *Phala-samāpatti*,

strictly speaking, is not Nibbāna as a reality whereas *Nirodha Samāpatti* is reckoned as *Nibbāna* itself. We should take note of the nuances of the term Nibbāna to be able to grasp its sense in a particular context.

The next question is "When shall we attain it?" It has been said: "When necessary conditions are fulfilled, Nibbāna is attained." Nibbāna is attainable here and now or, in other words, in this very life. "Well expounded is the Dhamma by the Blessed One; to be self-realised; with immediate fruit; to be but approached to be seen; capable of being entered upon; to be attained by the wise; each for himself." The meaning of the word *Akālika* with immediate fruit, is quite clear: our efforts can bear fruit immediately, right here and now.

What is meant by the attainment of Nibbāna? It means the end of suffering, and realization of unutterable eternal bliss. Its

peaceful state cannot possibly be described in finite terms, but its condition can be appreciated as a contrast to *samsāra* or the round of rebirth. *Samsāra* is impermanent, miserable and undesirable, whereas Nibbāna is eternal, blissful and desirable. Nevertheless, after this fairly exhaustive discussion of Nibbāna, it must be conceded that "Nibbāna is not a subject to be grasped by intellect alone; it is something transcendental, and to be reached by one's own intuitive wisdom."

Beginning with His first sermon, *Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta*, throughout His life, up to the last sermon *Parinibbāna Sutta*, the Buddha stresses the fundamental importance of the Destruction of the Defilements. We are, therefore, primarily concerned with their destruction, and with that in view, let us strive on with diligence. Nibbāna is the end. Dhamma is the means. Our duty is to make full use of the means while the going is good, with unwavering confidence that the end can be reached in this very life, here and now.



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**AṄGUTTARA-NIKĀYA, PAÑCAṄGUT-  
TARA, NIRAYA SUTTA**

( Discourse on Hell )

O monks, one who has the following five vices arises in hell as if he were taken and thrown there . What five?

He kills a living being; he takes what is not given; he indulges in sexual misconduct; he tells lies; and he partakes of intoxicants.

O monks, one who has these five vices arises in hell as if he were taken and thrown there.

O monks, one who has the following five virtues arises in heaven as if he were taken and placed there. What five?

He abstains from killing any living being; he abstains from taking what is not given; he abstains from indulging in sexual misconduct; he abstains from telling lies; and he abstains from partaking of intoxicants.

O monks a lay adherent who has these five virtues arises in heaven as if he were taken and placed there.

**AṄGUTTARA-NIKĀYA, PAÑCAKA-  
NIPĀTA CATUTTHA-PANṆASĀSAKA,  
UPĀSAKA-VAGGA, VISĀRADA SUTTA**

( Discourse on Self-confidence )

Thus I have heard. On one occasion the Buddha was staying at Jeta's Grove in the monastery of Anāthapiṇḍika at Sāvatti. There the Buddha addressed the monks, "O monks". "Yes, Revered Sir", answered those monks to the Buddha.

O monks, a lay adherent who has the following five vices lives the home-life without self-confidence. What five?

He takes life; he takes what is not given; he indulges in sexual misconduct; he tells lies; and he partakes of intoxicants.

O monks, a lay adherent who has these five vices lives the home-life without self-confidence.

O monks, a lay adherent who has the following five virtues lives the home-life with self-confidence. What five?

He abstains from killing any living being; he abstains from taking what is not given; he abstains from sexual misconduct; he abstains from telling lies; and he abstains from intoxicants.

O monks, a lay adherent who has these five virtues lives the home-life with confidence.



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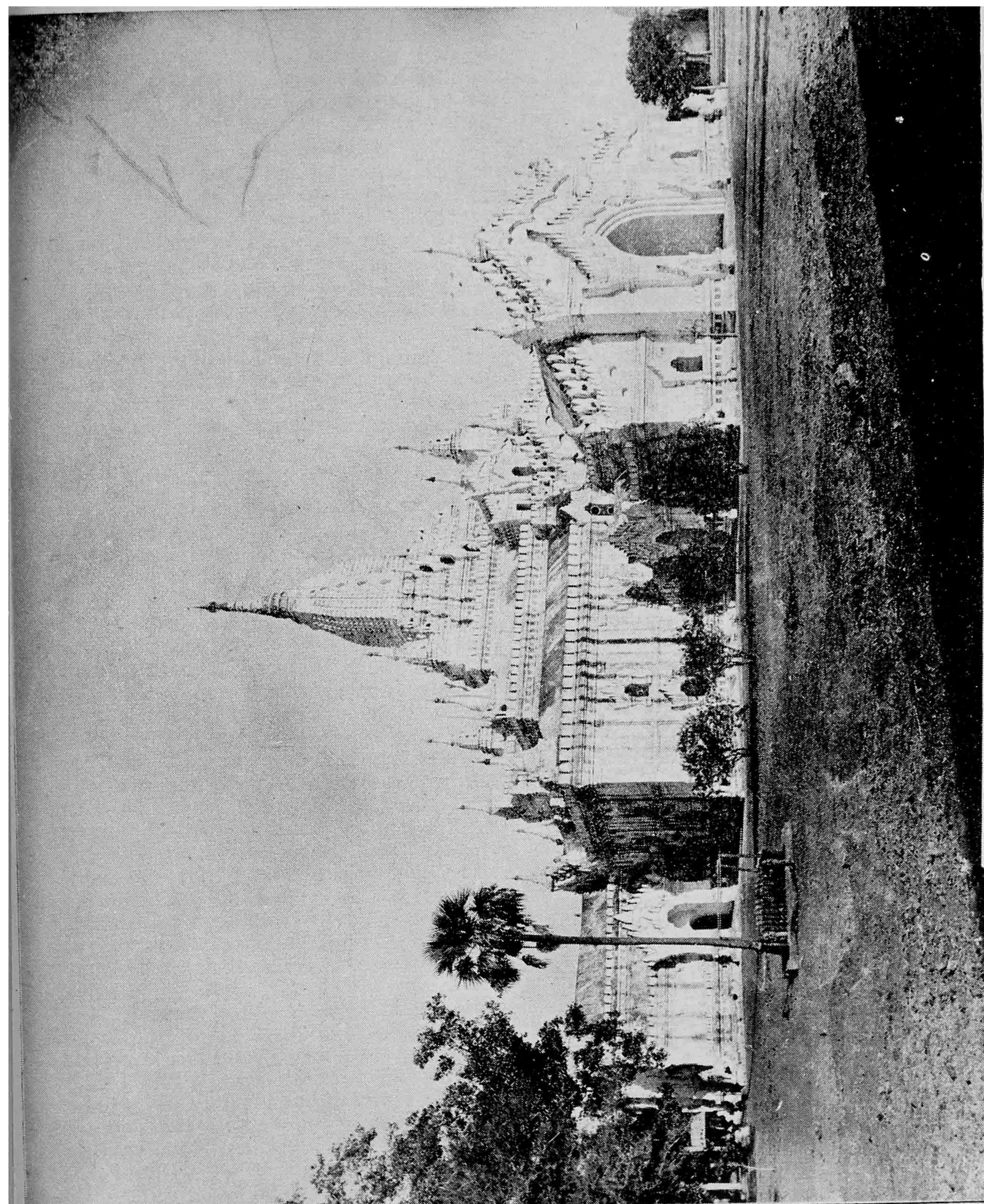
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The Ānanda Pagoda.

## BURMESE ART AND ARCHITECTURE

*Thiripyanchi U Lu Pe Win.*

Pagān, traditionally known to be founded in the 9th century C.E., reached the zenith of its political and cultural progress during the dynasty of the "Temple builders" beginning with the rule of Anôrahtā (1044-77 C.E.). It owes its prosperity and progress to the new faith, Theravāda Buddhism with the Pāli Piṭakas. Before the advent of Theravāda Buddhism the people of Pagān professed Mahāyānism and were under the religious-tutelage of the Ari priests of the Tantric sect who practised grossly immoral rites. Anôrahtā knew that such a state of affairs was undesirable and he found in Shin Araham, a learned Mōn monk, an enthusiastic preceptor of the pure Buddhism, by whose efforts the court and the citizens became convinced converts to Theravāda.

After the conquest of Thatôn in 1057 C.E. Anôrahtā brought back thirty sets of the Pāli canon and brought also to Pagān the captive king, Manuhā, together with hosts of courtiers, artists and artisans. The people saw their king promoting the new faith and Pāli learning and devoting himself to Pāli studies. They followed suit and gave their whole-hearted cooperation in the noble cause. Buddhism thus moulded the character of the Burmese as a nation. It broadened their outlook and gave them the idea of art and architecture, language and literature. For all their customs and manners, their domestic dealings, their special intercourse and their economic planning, the Burmans got their guidance from the Pāli Piṭakas. Law and order prevailed in the country and the people gained every opportunity to devote their time to produce works of art. With the heightening of his religious zeal Anôrahtā built many Pagodas of which the golden Shwezigon (left unfinished at his death) is the most famous of all his meritorious achievements. The court and the commoner also vied with each other to erect sacred buildings as a result of which *stūpas* and temples sprang up in thousands throughout the Pagān period of over two centuries. The magnificent monuments still preserved, and the numerous ruins which stand today, testify to the splendour of the city eight centuries ago.

Though it was Anôrahtā who brought the Mōn architecture and artists to Pagān it was only during the reign of Kyanzittha (1084—

1112) that the fine arts of the Mōd appeared at their best. As the twelfth and thirteenth centuries progressed, more and more monuments, evolved on purely Burmese aims of architectural designs and decoration, were built by successive kings and the citizens until an area of about sixteen square miles was practically filled with religious edifices.

These structures may be distinctly divided into two main categories, the *stūpa* and the temple. The first is a bellshaped structure of solid brickwork raised on a series of receding terraces and crowned by a conical finial. The second is a square hollow structure constructed to contain images of the Buddha, and rising up in gradually diminishing terraces and pyramidal roofs culminating in the curvilinear spire called the "*sikhara*".

The origin of the *stūpa* lies in the erection of a tumulus over the corporeal remains or the relics of holy personages like the Buddha. Next, the objects which served the use of the Buddha are revered and enshrined in the mound. The shape of the structure gradually changed to an elongated dome until it assumed the likeness of a bell. Then from motives of piety people erect *stūpas* in memory of the Buddha, by which act the greatest merit can be gained. The Pagodas in Burma are originally derived from the Indian *topes* but the Burmans evolved their own style of architectural forms and decorations and attained the fully developed stage by the 11th. century.

The typical pagoda can be divided into four distinct portions. The first is a square masonry plinth on which are generally placed small pagodas, sometimes miniature ones of the main *stūpa* which they surround. Steps ordinarily lead up to this plinth on the four sides. At the corners are frequently found huge figures of human-headed lions called *manussiha*. The second portion is made up of receding terraces with bold mouldings, and often projecting angles occur at this stage. The third portion is the bell which is the representative of the hemispherical body of the ancient *stūpa*. The fourth is the spire, consisting of a number of diminishing rings, and decorative features. Above the rings is a band of lotus leaves pointing downwards and another with the

leaves upturned, the two being intercepted by a bead moulding. The next component of the spire is a cone designated *āmalaka* in Indian architecture and known in Burmese as *khayaythee*. The whole structure is finally surmounted by a richly gilt iron umbrella. It consists of several rings rising in diminishing stages and the central iron rod, which bears a gilt and bejewelled iron vane, is topped by a "diamond-bud" often made of crystal or genuine precious stone.

At Pagān, the Shwezigon pagoda is a fine example of such solid cylindrical structure. It was built by King Anōrahtā, who left it in an unfinished state, and completed by Kyanzittha. Around the terraces of the pagoda, there are set in panels enamelled plaques illustrating scenes in the previous lives of the Buddha. It is believed to contain the frontal bone and a tooth of the Buddha and is thus held in great veneration by the Buddhists of the whole of Burma. On each of the four sides of the pagoda is a small temple which enshrines a standing Buddha of the Gupta school of art.

The Shwesandaw is another notable *stūpa* built by the same king. Standing on five receding terraces, it assumes a conical shape in its main outlines, the whole edifice being crowned by a tapering finial.

Three main features of decorative treatment are developed in the pagodas while maintaining their dignity, grace and effect of permanence. Firstly, the sides of the platforms or terraces are outlined with boldly projecting moulding, and the space between these ornamented with bas-reliefs in square terracotta panels to enrich the entire composition and to attract the attention of the devout in the course of their progression around the shrine. Secondly, lotus leaves are carved at the base of the bell and in the upper part of the finial. The rich ornament applied to the bell also consists of pendants and bead festoons held in the mouths of gorgons. The third feature is the addition of small pagodas ranged around the *stūpa* on each angle of the several terraces.

The Mingalazedi indicates the high-watermark of the type of architecture because it was constructed a few decades before the subversion of the Pagān Empire by the Mongols. It consists of three stepped terraces and the usual superstructure in fine proportions. The pagoda is noted for its beautiful terracotta tiles with Burmese legends set in the panels round the terraces.

The prime purpose of the temple is to enshrine the image of the Buddha, but in

course of time interior arrangements consisting of galleries and corridors were designed for religious ceremonial. The most imposing structure of this type at Pagān is Ānanda temple built by Kyanzittha in 1091 C.E. It is in plan a square of two hundred feet to the side, broken on each side by the projection of large gabled vestibules, which convert the plan into a perfect Greek cross. These vestibules are somewhat lower than the main square mass of the building, which elevates itself to a height of thirty five feet in two tiers of windows. Above this rise successively diminishing terraces, the last of which just affording breadth for the spire which crowns and completes the edifice. The lower half of this spire is in the form of a mitre-like pyramid adapted from the temples of India; the upper half is the same moulded taper pinnacle that terminates the common bell-shaped pagodas of Pagān. The gilded *hti* (umbrella) caps the whole at a height of 168 feet above the ground.

The interior consists of two vaulted and high but narrow corridors running parallel to each other along the four sides of the temple. They are connected by low and narrow passages in front of the windows by which light is admitted and further intersected by four large corridors into which access is obtained through porticoes. In the centre is an enormous cube, on the four sides of which are deep and high niches enshrining four colossal standing Buddhas of the present world who have appeared and entered Nibbāna. Each of them is 31 feet above the throne, which itself is nearly 8 feet in height above the floor level.

The Ānandā stands unique in the whole of Burma for its lavish ornamentation, the most striking feature of which is the crowd of terracotta bas-reliefs and stone sculptures. The basement as well as the terraces are ornamented with glazed terracotta tiles. The plaques of the basement represent the two principle phases of the Buddha's attainment of Omniscience, those on the western half depicting the hosts of Māra assailing the Buddha, and those on the east his glorification by the gods after his victory, each scene being explained by a short legend in Mōn. The tiles round the next story illustrate the five hundred and thirty seven shorter Jātakas, each of which is numbered and the title in Pāli given. The upper terraces are ornamented by a series of nearly four hundred bas-reliefs illustrating the last Ten Great Jātakas, there being an average of 38 to 40

plaques to each Jātaka story with a line of explanation in Mōn below each scene. In the first corridor along the side of the inner face of the outer wall are two rows of niches containing stone sculptures, nearly four feet high, illustrating the principal events in the Buddha's career until his attainment of supreme wisdom. The whole series contains 80 scenes. But these are not the only sculptures, for the walls of both the corridors are honeycombed with numerous small niches in which are Buddha figures, either seated or standing, in various attitudes. In each of the four porticoes also are 16 other sculptures, mostly repeating themselves, but among which are a few interesting scenes from the Buddha's life. The western sanctum also enshrines the life-size statues of its founder, Kyanzittha, and the primate, Shin Araham.

The architectural accomplishment of the Ānandā is rivalled by the massive and majestic Thatbyinnyu temple built by Alaungsīthū, grandson of Kyanzittha. Standing within the ancient city-walls, some 500 yards to the south-west of the Ānandā, the Thatbyinnyu rises to a height of two hundred and one feet above the ground and overtops all the other monuments. Its general plan is similar to the Ānandā, but it does not, like the latter, form a symmetrical cross. The eastern porch alone projects considerably from the wall. Narrow stairways built in the thickness of the walls lead to an upper platform above the main mass of structure and 3 diminishing terraces. From this level rises another square cube of greater height which again supports another series of terraces together with the *sikhara* and the finial. Before reaching the upper platform a circumambulatory corridor forming the first floor of the building has to be passed through. Thus the main sanctuary enshrining the biggest Buddha in the temple is contained in the cubicle on the second floor of the structure.

Though different in architectural treatment the *stūpa* and the temple convey the same soaring effect, the former by its gradual attenuation and the latter by the introduction of pointed arches, flamboyant pediments over the doorways and the series of miniature *stūpas* at the corners of the receding terraces.

All these architectural features are purposive. They are dictated by the Burmese conception to make a symbol for something spiritual. The Burmese erect a pagoda over sacred relics and put up an image of the Buddha in a temple, not to worship blindly,

but to afford, to the pious followers of the faith, the means of localising their feelings and concentrating their thoughts on the supreme model. The craftsman's ideas are not confined to mere artistic appeal but imbued with national traditions and religious beliefs. So there is hardly any architectural design or artistic motif in Burmese religious art which does not suggest a spiritual significance.

The *stūpa* itself is designed to convey an aspect of the Buddha's philosophy. Nibbāna, or complete emancipation is the highest goal of the Buddhist and this can only be attained by rising spiritually above this mundane plane. The Buddha having attained Nibbāna is allegorically represented by the spire of the *stūpa* which shoots from the conventionalized lotus flower above the concentric rings. The umbrella signifies sovereignty—in this case, supreme enlightenment. The 3 terraces above the base of the *stūpa* suggest the worlds of men, devas and Brāhmas. The octagon above is said to stand for Tusitā heaven, the abode of the Bodhisattas, and the hemispherical dome now transformed into the shape of a bell over a begging bowl represents Nibbāna. Contemporary original inscriptions describe the mouldings of the plinth or base of the Pagān temple to have been modelled to resemble the shape of a lotus vase, and the *sikhara* is after all a conventionalized lotus flower, a symbol of purity and nobleness, symbolically associated with the representation of the Buddha. In short, the religious buildings of Burma were evolved to conform to purely Burmese aspirations to express the transcendent nature of religious feelings.

In the 11th—13th. century in Burma, whose capital then was Pagān, it was the Theravāda Pāli Buddhism that freed the king from the tutelage of the Tantric priest, and the king in turn, despotic though he was, gave to the people, everybody in his country, every freedom in their devotion to and interpretation of the new faith. It is no wonder to us Buddhists, therefore, though it may be strange to non-Buddhists, that a semi-desert terrain of sixteen square miles of Pagān and her environs are now richly covered with unique works of art and architecture in their various stages of stagnation and decay beyond the scope of state finance for their preservation and maintenance. In Pagān, it is, therefore, one discovers and rediscovers the glory that is Burma and Burmese and the art and architecture that is Burmese and Buddhist.

# ADVICE TO THOSE CONTEMPLATING A PERIOD OF PRACTICE OF VIPASSANĀBHĀVANĀ IN THE UNION OF BURMA AND/OR ENTERING THE ORDER OF BHIKKHUS IN THE UNION OF BURMA

Burma, through the Union of Burma Buddha Sāsana Council, is ready to extend a cordial welcome to those of other countries who desire to practise Buddhist Meditation and/or to enter the Noble Order of Bhikkhus.

It will, therefore, help us very much, and help you, if you will give us the fullest possible information as to your life and background and we would suggest that the following be included:—

Name in full, sex, married or unmarried, place and date of birth, if parents living their address, your education (school standard or University degree, if any), your profession, religion (if Buddhist state whether Theravāda or Mahayana), extent of Buddhist reading, knowledge of languages, physical health, any other details that might help.

Two references from people of some standing should be sent with the application and a letter of recommendation from the Burmese Embassy, Legation or Consulate concerned should also be attached.

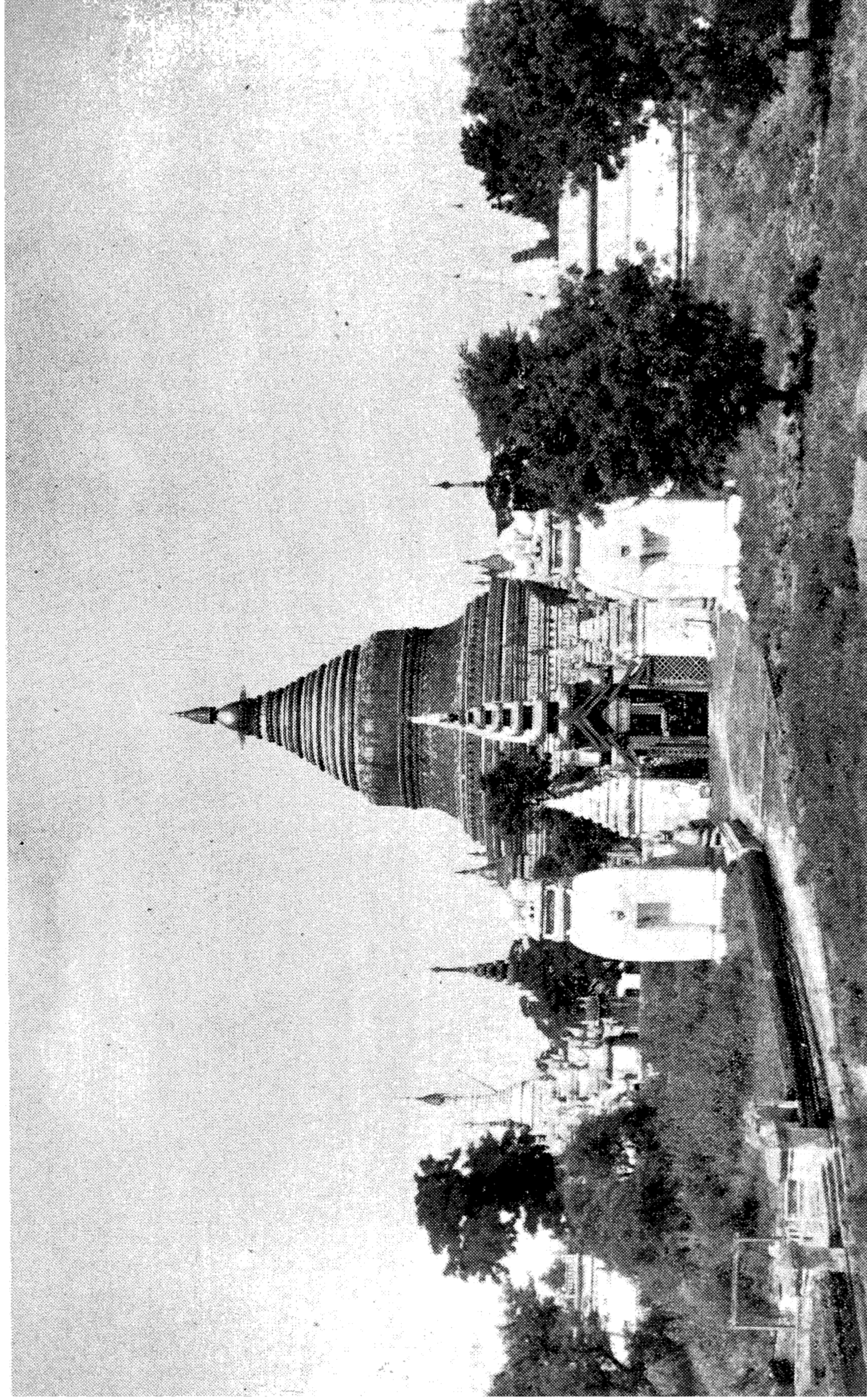
Those desiring to practise will be accommodated at a Meditation Centre selected by the Union Buddha Sāsana Council and the Course at this Centre will vary from a minimum of six weeks to ten weeks, depending on the progress of the pupil. During this period the Council will provide free accommodation and food. Food is not strictly vegetarian but vegetarian food can be arranged if desired.

*The following RULES have been framed:-*  
During their stay at the Meditation Centre, pupils

- (i) Must observe the Eight Precepts.
- (ii) Must follow unconditionally the instructions given by their preceptor,
- (iii) Apart from six hours of sleep, must spend the rest of the 24 hours in Vipassanābhāvanā (Insight-Meditation).  
(Reading, writing, purposeless talking and visitors, are to be avoided.)
- (iv) Must undertake to practise for a minimum of six weeks.

Those desirous of entering the Noble Order as Bhikkhus are required to study Buddhist Doctrine and practise Vipassanābhāvanā. They will undergo a period of probation as laymen during which time they will learn the 75 Rules binding on a Samanera (novice), and a further period as a Samanera during which they will practise Meditation and learn the rest of the 227 Vinaya Rules binding on a Bhikkhu.

Both in the case of those practising Meditation and those who join the Noble Order of Bhikkhus, they must promise that they will not write and speak on Buddhism mentioning the name of the Union Buddha Sāsana Council without the prior consent of the Council. Those who, in the opinion of the Council, have made sufficient progress will, naturally, be helped and encouraged to preach the Dhamma.



The Shwezigon Pagoda.

# SATIPATTHĀNA

## THE HEART OF BUDDHIST MEDITATION

*Bhadanta Nyanaponika Mahāthera*

( Continued from previous issue )

### B. THE FOUR OBJECTS OF MINDFULNESS

1. Body, 2. Feeling, 3. State of Mind, 4. Mental contents.

The objects of Right Mindfulness comprise the entire man and his whole field of experience. They extend from the body and its functions, to the feelings as well as to the processes and contents of perception and thought. The method of Right Mindfulness includes in its range the most primitive as well as the most lofty aspects of that complex being called 'man': from the functions he has in common with animals, e.g. nutrition and excretion, up to the exalted heights of the Factors of Enlightenment. We meet here again the Method's fundamental principle of thoroughness, together with its character as a Middle Path, which, avoiding one-sidedness or exclusiveness, aspires to completeness and harmony. The work of spiritual practice receives here a broad and secure foundation, being based upon the entire personality. Without such a foundation it may happen that from what is overlooked, underrated, neglected or ignored, strong antagonistic forces may grow, which may seriously damage, or even destroy, the results of long spiritual effort. Thoroughness of procedure will make the road of inner progress as safe as one may reasonably expect in a venture that aspires to such heights. There are further to be considered those various inner conflicts which consume so much energy and are the cause of so many defeats in the spiritual struggle: e.g., the conflict between 'the mind that is willing and the flesh that is weak,' between emotion and reason, etc. These conflicts, too, will be greatly reduced or mitigated by the equal attention and the wise understanding which, in this method of harmonious development, is given to each participant. What is to be mastered, transformed or transcended, has first to be known and understood.

Therefore it is necessary that the disciple of this method should cultivate all four Contemplations, or Objects, of Mindfulness mentioned in the Discourse, whenever they

come into the range of his daily experience. The systematic meditative practice, however, centers (as will be shown in the Appendix) on a very few selected subjects taken from the 'Contemplation of the Body', but the other objects of Mindfulness will likewise have ample opportunity to come into the range of observation and should then receive full attention.

#### *'The Instructions for Practice'*

The thoroughness and completeness of the method applies to other fields too, as exemplified in what we may call 'the Instructions for Practice', which are repeated in the Discourse after every single exercise. They begin as follows: 'Thus he dwells contemplating the body internally (in himself)..... externally (in others).....both internally and externally.....'

According to that first part of the 'Instructions', each single exercise has to be applied first to oneself, then to others (in general or to a definite person just observed) and finally to both. This threefold rhythm of each aspect of the practice was obviously regarded as very important. It occurs, in different connections and applications, in various Discourses of the Buddha and also in later Pāli literature. By following the instruction, incomplete statements and misjudgements, resulting from an insufficient range of mindfulness, and one-sided attitudes, will be eliminated.'

As to the latter, there are, e.g., those basic types of character as formulated by C.G. Jung: introverts and extraverts, i.e. people turned predominantly inward or outward, respectively. The former type will naturally prefer the contemplation of things internal; the latter, of those external. The deficiencies resulting from each partial contemplation will be compensated by faithfully following the instructions given above. The natural outcome of that threefold method of practice will be that each characterological type will remedy its shortcomings until an ideal balance is achieved. This method of Right Mindfulness, as an embodiment of the Middle Path, does in fact provide what each extreme type is lacking, and it does so in a form

acceptable and intelligible to each. But in this brief exposition it is not possible to enter into these details.

Many things permit of better understanding when observed in others, or in external objects, than in oneself. A closer scrutiny, and one more impartial, may thus be possible, and defects, virtues and their consequences may appear in a clearer light. On the other hand, by an exclusive attention to persons or things external, one may conveniently forget the all-important application of mindfulness to oneself. This may happen quite unconsciously even in contemplating Impermanence, etc. If such contemplations proceed only in a very general way, without direct reference to one's own case, they will have only a very limited effect.

The third phase in this threefold rhythm of practice is that of viewing internal and external things in immediate succession. In comparing them, the observed similarities as well as the differences will be highly instructive. In addition attention will be drawn to the interconnections existing between internal and external components of the same group of things, e.g., the matter composing this body of ours, and external nature; to the causal, and other relations among the various internal and external phenomena, in brief: to the fact of conditionality or relativity. This scrutiny of relations and conditions is as important for a comprehensive understanding of actuality as are the results of analysis. Finally, this third, combined, phase of the practice serves to show the general validity of the knowledge and experience gathered, and the impersonal character of any object under view. This will gradually lead to the result that both internal and external things, *i.e.*, those pertaining to oneself or to others, are instantly viewed as impersonal processes.

It should be noted, however, that in the systematic meditative development of Insight only *internal* objects are taken up and brought into the focus of Bare Attention. This is so because only one's own bodily and mental processes are accessible to direct experience. And it is a knowledge by direct experience (*paccakkha-ñāṇa*), in the strictest sense, which is aimed at, and which is the distinguishing mark of the Buddhist meditation of Insight (*vipassanābhāvanā*). Inference, reflection, etc., are entirely excluded at

the beginning of the practice, and only at a later stage may they receive a limited place in it, as a kind of interlude, when inference is made from the meditative observation of the facts present, to past and future events of the same type. Mindfulness on *external* objects, however, may, and should, be cultivated outside the strict meditative practice. These external objects, *i.e.*, bodily and mental activities of others, will present themselves to us either by direct sense-perception or by inference. The contemplation of them will assume a different character according to the specific details of each exercise (as given in the Discourse), and will claim varying degrees of importance—a subject which here can only be intimated, but not treated in detail.

The *second* way of application of the single exercises proceed likewise in a threefold rhythm; it is the attention to (1) the origination, (2) the dissolution, (3) both the origination and dissolution, of the respective objects. As pointed out earlier, this direct experience of the fact and the nature of Change is a key-point of the practice, and of decisive consequence for its success. The Commentary to the Discourse should be consulted at each repetitive occurrence of that passage. The Commentary, however, does not deal with the actual meditative observation of the facts and the nature of Change, for this does not so much require comment as diligent practice. It deals rather with the utilisation of those meditative observations for analytic reflection, and with a penetrative understanding of them in the wider context of the Dhamma. Here we shall mention, in addition, only the fact that, by way of reflection, this contemplation on origination and dissolution may be used with advantage for the avoidance as well as the refutation of certain speculative theories. According to the Buddha, the belief in annihilation (philosophical nihilism, materialism, etc.) is countered by the fact of origination; the belief in eternalism (theism, pantheism, naive realism, etc.), by the fact of dissolution.

The remaining part of our passage indicates the *results* of the aforementioned twofold practice, *i.e.* concerning things internal, etc., and origination, etc. 'The body exists', 'feeling exists', etc., but no separate self, no abiding personality or soul. These words of the text indicate the results in terms of insight, *i.e.*, the realistic view of things as they actually are. We read further in the text: 'He lives independent and clings to naught'. This

indicates the resulting attitude of detachment. This concluding part of the repetitive passage shows, as the result of the practice, the liberation from the two principal 'dependencies', or attachments, of man, as formulated in the Commentary, false views (*diṭṭhi*) and craving (*taṇhā*), i.e., liberation from intellectual and irrational, theoretical and practical bondage.

The whole passage that we have now considered is a striking instance of the distinctive qualities apparent in statements coming from the source of Perfect Enlightenment (*sammā-sambodhi*). They have a quality of unique completeness and finality, as to their meaning and their way of expression, carrying deep conviction for those able to appreciate this quality at least partly. It is the very nature of these enunciations to combine profundity with simplicity, and, consequently, they are felt to be satisfying on any level of understanding. Their action on the mind is tranquillizing and stimulating as well: tranquillizing, by stilling doubts and conflicts, and by imparting that feeling of satisfaction, we have spoken of; stimulating, by their depth, or, as we may also express it, by their 'expanding horizon'.

Here we have been able to give only a bare indication of the far and deep-reaching significance of these seemingly simple words of the Master. He who practises accordingly, and reflects wisely, will discover more about them.

We now proceed to the consideration of the Single Contemplations and exercises, given in the Discourse.

## 1. THE CONTEMPLATION ON THE BODY

### 1. *Mindfulness on Breathing*

The section on Contemplation on the Body starts with 'Mindfulness on breathing in and breathing out' (*ānāpāna-sati*). It is an exercise in *mindfulness*, and not a 'breathing exercise' like the *prāṇayāma* of Hinduistic Yoga. In the case of the Buddhist practice there is no 'retention' of breath or any other interference with it. There is just a quiet 'bare observation' of its natural flow, with a firm and steady, but easy and 'buoyant' attention, i.e. without strain or rigidity. The length or shortness of breathing is noticed but not deliberately regulated. By regular practice, however, a calming, equalizing and deepening of the breath will result quite naturally: and the tranquillization and deepening

of the breath-rhythm will lead to a tranquillization and deepening of the entire life-rhythm. In this way, Mindfulness on Breathing is an important factor of physical and mental health, though that is only incidental to the practice.

Breathing is always with us. Therefore we can, and we should turn our attention to it in any free or 'empty' minute during our daily occupations, even though we may not be able to do so with that highest attention demanded by the exercise proper. Even such a brief and casual application of the mind to the 'breath-body' lays the foundation for a very noticeable feeling of well-being, self-sufficient happiness and invulnerable quietude. Such happy conditions of mind as well as the keenness and naturalness of attention, will grow with repeated practice.

To put in a few conscious, deep and calm respirations before starting any continuous work, will likewise be found most beneficial to oneself and to the work as well. To cultivate the habit of doing so before taking important decisions, making responsible utterances, talking to an excited person, etc., will prevent many rash acts and words, and will preserve the balance and efficiency of mind. By simply observing our breath, we can easily and, unnoticed by others, withdraw into ourselves if we wish to shut ourselves off from disturbing impressions, empty talk in a large company, or from any other annoyance. These are only a few examples of how even a casual Mindfulness on Breathing, as applicable in the midst of ordinary life, may have beneficial results.

These instances will show that Mindfulness on Breathing is very effective in *quietening* bodily and mental unrest or irritation, for ordinary as well as for higher purposes. It is further a simple way to the initial stages of *concentration* and *meditation*, used either as a prelude or preparation to other exercises, or as a practice in its own right. For attaining, however, to a more advanced degree of concentration, or even for achieving complete mental one-pointedness in the meditative 'Absorptions' (*jhāna*), Mindfulness on Breathing is not at all a simple method, but, for all that, most worthy of adoption. Progress on that higher level of the practice can lead to the four stages of meditative Absorption, and even to still higher attainments. About this developed stage of the practice, Buddhist tradition says: 'Mindful-

ness on Breathing takes the first place among the various subjects of meditation (*kammaṭṭhāna*). To all Buddhas, Pacceka-Buddhas, and holy disciples it has been the basis of their attainment of the Goal, and of their well-being here and now'.

Breath stands on the threshold between the voluntary and the involuntary functions, and offers, thus, a good opening to extend the scope of conscious control over the body. In this way, Mindfulness on Breathing is able to contribute to that partial task of *Satipaṭṭhāna* which may be formulated in the words of *Novalis*: 'Man should become a perfect self-instrument.'

Though, according to tradition, Mindfulness on Breathing is regarded, in the first instance, as a subject for Tranquillity-meditation (*samatha-bhāvanā*), i.e., for inducing the meditative Absorptions (*jhāna*), it does, however, make important contributions also to the development of Insight (*vipassanā-bhāvanā*). In respiration, used as an object of Bare Attention, the heaving of the Ocean of Impermanence, its continuous rise and fall, can be well observed.

Mindfulness on Breathing will also contribute to a general understanding of the body's true nature. Just as, in ancient mystical thought, Breath is identified with the life force itself, so does Buddhist tradition regard Breathing as representative of the bodily functions (*kāya-sankhāra*). In the obvious evanescence of breath we perceive the *impermanence* of the body; in heavy or short breath, or in the ailments of respiratory organs, we become aware of the *suffering*, associated with the body; in breath as a manifestation of the vibrant, or Wind Element (*vāyodhātu*) the nature of the body as activated by impersonal processes becomes evident, i.e., *the absence of any substance* in the body; the dependence of breath on the efficient functioning of certain organs, and, on the other hand, the dependence of the living body on breathing, show the *conditioned* nature of the body. Thus does Mindfulness on Breathing help towards a true understanding of the body and to detachment from it resulting from such understanding.\*

## 2. Mindfulness on the Postures of the Body

In the general application of this exercise, during one's routine life, its first purpose is

to increase the awareness of one's momentary bodily behaviour when going, standing, sitting or reclining. It frequently happens that the preoccupation with thoughts about the *aim* of going, completely blots out the full consciousness of the *act* of going; and that, through giving sole attention to the activity performed while standing or sitting, there may be no conscious awareness of those two postures themselves. Though, in ordinary life, it will neither be possible nor even desirable to be always fully conscious of the postures, nevertheless a practice of this awareness of postures will be wholesome for many practical reasons too. By directing one's attention to the posture, any nervous haste in going will be restrained; unnecessary and harmful distortions of the body, in the case of the other postures, will be avoided, or corrected, and thereby those postural defects with which medical science has to deal in the case of children, and adults too, will be prevented. Unnecessary fatigue of the body, and, consequently, of mind, will be avoided, and reduction of the radius of conscious control over the body prevented. Controlled movement of the body is necessarily an expression of a self-possessed mind.

As to the ultimate purpose of *Satipaṭṭhāna*, Mindfulness on Postures will bring an initial awareness of the impersonal nature of the body, and will be conducive towards an inner alienation from it. In the course of the practice, one will come to view the postures, just as unconcernedly as one views the automatic movements of a life-sized puppet. The play of the puppet's limbs will evoke a feeling of complete estrangement, and even a slight amusement like that felt by an on-looker at a marionette show. By looking at the postures with such a detached objectivity, the habitual identification with the body will begin to dissolve.

In strict meditative training, the awareness of the bodily postures forms the starting point of the whole day of practice and its frame (see Appendix). Particularly through the sharpened awareness developed in strict practice, the postures, too, will afford an opportunity to observe the momentary rise and fall of phenomena, and to make those other observations to which we have referred earlier.

\* For a full treatment of the practice of 'Mindfulness on Breathing', see the relevant chapter in *The Path of Purity* ('Visuddhi Magga') by Bhikkhu Nāṇamoli.

### 3. *Clear Comprehension*

Clear Comprehension extends to all functions of the body: to the four postures again, to the acts of looking, bending, stretching, dressing, eating, drinking, excreting, speaking, keeping silent, being awake and falling asleep, etc.\* The general principles of that practice, its purpose and value, have been described earlier. To summarize briefly: the practice of Clear Comprehension teaches circumspect and purposeful action, (1) for practical ends; (2) for the purpose of progress in the Dhamma; (3) for a gradual merging of ordinary life and spiritual practice; (4) for a deepening of insight into the impersonality of bodily processes, by visualizing it in daily experience; (5) for the resulting detachment from the body.

In the previous exercise, Mindfulness accompanies the postures while they are assumed, simply registering their occurrence. In distinction to it, the first and the second kind of Clear Comprehension ('Purpose' and 'Suitability') exercise a *directing* influence upon the various bodily activities. The previous exercise consisted of a full, but only general, awareness of the postures and their impersonal character. The fourth kind of Clear Comprehension ('Reality') may also include a more detailed analysis of the processes involved, leading thereby to a deeper penetration of their impersonal nature.

### 4. *Parts of the Body*

This contemplation opens, as it were, with a scalpel, the skin of this body of ours, and exposes to view what is hidden under it. This mental dissection dissolves the vaguely-held notion of the oneness of the body, by pointing to its various parts; it removes the delusion of the body's beauty, by revealing its impurity. When visualizing the body as a walking skeleton loosely covered by flesh and skin, or seeing it as a conglomeration of its various strangely shaped parts, one will feel little inclination to identify oneself with one's so-called body, or to desire that of another being. Thus this practice will lead through initial repulsion and disenchantment to alienation and detachment as well as to the realization of the body's impersonal nature.

### 5. *The Four Elements*

This practice continues the dissection of the body into components of more and more

impersonal character, by reducing it to those four primary manifestations of matter which it has in common with inanimate nature. The result will likewise be disenchantment, alienation and detachment, as well as an intensified awareness of impersonality.

### 6. *The Cemetery Contemplations*

One either obtains the actual object of these contemplations for direct observation, or, if that is not possible, the objects are viewed by vivid visualization. They show the dead body in various stages of decay. They are meant to arouse, in a passionately sensual nature, disgust towards the object of his desire (though, in some cases, other methods may prove more suitable). They are further an object lesson of impermanence, by showing the dissolution of this composite body, which, in other exemplars but particularly in that of one's "own", one sees moving about full of life: 'Thus he applies it to himself "Verily, this body of mine, too, is of the same nature as that body, it will become like that, and will not escape it."'

These contemplations will also point to the self-deception in regarding and cherishing as 'Mine' this body which to-morrow may 'belong' to the elements or, as prey, to the birds and worms. These contemplations will also make one more familiar with the fact of death.

Here, too, the sequence of development will proceed as before: from disgust through disenchantment and alienation, to a detachment with regard to the body which comes from a vivid awareness of its impersonal nature.

In ancient India, the objects of these contemplations could be seen easily on the charnel grounds where the dead bodies of the poor, and executed criminals, were exposed to the elements and to the beasts of sky and earth. Nowadays opportunity for seeing these actual objects is rare, but it might still be available in the morgues, mortuaries or dissecting rooms of our cities, and, also, the greed, hatred and stupidity of man still sees to it that battlefields, too, offer such sights.

### *Concluding remarks on Body Contemplation*

The exercises in the section now concluded on 'Contemplation on the Body' cover both types of the practice: they belong partly to

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\* For details, see the Commentary on the Discourse, in 'The Way of Mindfulness', by Bhikkhu Soma.

Bare Attention and partly to Clear Comprehension.

As a feature common to all these exercises we have found that they lead to a *detachment* with regard to the body, grown from the observation of its nature and from a true understanding of it. Detachment gives, with regard to its objects, mastery as well as freedom. This holds good in the case of the body, too. No mortification of the body is here required to assert mind's mastery over it. Above the extremes of mortification and sensuality leads the Middle Path, the simple, realistic and non-coercive Way of Mindfulness and Clear Comprehension, bringing mastery and freedom. In following that 'Only Way for the destruction of pain and grief', the body will become light and pliant to the wanderer on the path; and even if the body succumbs to sickness and pain, the serenity of his mind will not be affected.

## 11. THE CONTEMPLATION ON FEELING

The Pāli term *vedanā*, rendered here by 'feeling', signifies, in Buddhist psychology, just pleasant, unpleasant or indifferent sensation of physical or mental origin. It is not used, as in English, in the sense of emotion, which is a mental factor of a much more complex nature.

Feeling, in the sense spoken of, is the first reaction to any sense impression, and, therefore, deserves the particular attention of those who aspire to mastery over the mind. In the formula of 'Dependent Origination' (*paṭicca-samuppāda*) by which the Buddha shows the conditioned 'arising of this whole mass of suffering'. Sense Impression is said to be the principal condition of Feeling (*phassa-paccayā-vedanā*), while Feeling, for its part, is the potential condition of Craving, and subsequently of more intense Clinging (*vedanā-paccayā taṇhā, taṇhā-paccayā upādānam*).

This, therefore, is a crucial point in the conditioned Origin of Suffering, because it is at this point that Feeling gives rise to passionate emotion of various types, and it is, therefore, here that one may be able to break that fatuous concatenation. If, in receiving a sense impression, one is able to pause and stop at the phase of Feeling, and make it, in its very first stage of manifestation, the object of Bare Attention, Feeling will not be

able to originate Craving or other passions. It will stop at the bare statements of 'pleasant' 'unpleasant' or 'indifferent', giving Clear Comprehension time to enter and to decide about the attitude or action to be taken. Furthermore, if one notices, in Bare Attention, the conditioned arising of feeling, its gradual fading away and giving room to another feeling, one will find from one's own experience that there is no necessity at all for being carried away by passionate reaction, which will start a new concatenation of suffering.

An undue stress on the 'feeling' aspect of reality marks the so-called emotional natures. By them, the pleasurable or unpleasant features of an experience are repeatedly and passionately dwelt upon, and thereby magnified. This will often lead to an exaggerated view of the situation and an extreme reaction to it, be it one of elation or dejection, overrating or depreciating, etc. But apart from markedly emotional types, even when feeling is just as uncontrolled as is the case with the average man, it will also tend to produce habitual overstatements, with all the dissatisfaction and disappointment they entail. Often one may hear people exclaim: 'This or that is my only happiness', or 'This or that would be the death of me!' But the still voice of Mindfulness speaks: 'It is a pleasant feeling, like many others too,—and nothing else!' or 'It is an unpleasant feeling, like many others too,—and nothing else!' Such an attitude will contribute much to an inner balance and contentedness, which are needed so greatly among the vicissitudes of life.

Another innate weakness of the world of feeling as far as it is uncontrolled by reason and wisdom, is its extreme and uncritical *subjectivity*. Uncontrolled feeling does not in the least question the values that it attaches so lavishly to persons and things; it does not admit that other evaluations of the same object are possible at all; it easily disregards or hurts the feelings—*i.e.*, the emotional values—of others, all this owing to its being so naively self-centred. Here, too, Right Mindfulness provides the remedy, by extending detached observation also to the 'feelings' of others, and comparing them with one's own, in accordance with the 'Instructions for Practice'.

In the text of the Contemplation on Feeling as given in the Discourse, there is first the

simple statement of the general quality of the feeling just arisen, *i.e.*, pleasant, unpleasant or indifferent. Then follows the same statement combined with a qualification as to the worldly or lofty nature of these three kinds of feelings. Such bare discriminative statements will prove to be very helpful to a gradual refinement of the emotional life and to an increase of noble and elimination of ignoble feelings. The curt and simple but repeated registering of the nature of feelings just arisen will have a greater influence on the emotional life than an emotional or rational counterpressure by way of eulogy, deprecation or persuasion. Experience shows that emotional persons are less susceptible to the arguments or emotional reactions of others than to repeated suggestion through brief, simple and definite statements,—impressing them by the strength and assurance of the inner conviction with which they are made. The same principle will work with our own emotions too. The simple device of Bare Attention, *i.e.* of making those bare statements given in the Discourse, will prove a very apt method for rendering that elusive world of emotions more susceptible to guidance and control. This will be particularly important when, in daily life, in the encounters with one's own emotions and those of others, a quick, simple, but effective dealing with them is required.

### III. THE CONTEMPLATION ON THE STATE OF MIND

Here too, mind is placed in front of the clear mirror of Bare Attention. The object of observation is here the condition and the level of mind, or consciousness, in general, as it presents itself at the given moment. For that purpose, the relevant passage of the Discourse gives various examples of contrasting states of mind of a beneficial or harmful, developed or undeveloped nature, *e.g.*, mind with and without lust, mind concentrated and unconcentrated. Exceptions are only two terms—the shrunken and distracted mind—where two states of mind, both of harmful, but opposite nature, are contrasted.

In most cases man carefully avoids looking too closely into his own mind, lest the sight of his own faults and shortcomings may disturb his complacency or do serious damage to his self-esteem. But if, on certain occasions, he cannot but notice his faults, he tends to gloss over that unpalatable truth as hurriedly as he can. By such an attitude

he will make himself unable to check the reappearance and the growth of these undesirable traits.

On the other hand, man's good qualities too, particularly those which are still weak, should receive full notice when they appear; it will encourage their development. This express attention to, and recollection of, one's good traits is likewise often neglected.

Both omissions are made good by the Contemplation on the State of Mind. We had occasion to speak about this subject earlier when dealing with the value of Bare Attention for Shaping the Mind.

Thus the Bare Attention to one's present mental condition, as undertaken in the Contemplation on the State of Mind, proves helpful for both the understanding and the development of mind.

### IV. THE CONTEMPLATION ON MENTAL CONTENTS

(*dhamm'ānupassanā*)

By the constant practice of the last of the four contemplations, the mental objects (Pāli. *dhamma*,—having here this specific meaning), *i.e.* the contents of thought, will gradually assume the thought-forms of the *Dhamma*, in the sense of the Buddha's teaching of actuality and liberation. The single exercises in the Discourse furnish for that purpose a sufficient selection of such thought-forms or terms, which are in accordance with true vision and will give to the mind a natural slant towards the goal of liberation. They should be absorbed as much as possible into the thought patterns of daily life, and should replace those concepts which cannot stand the scrutiny of Right Understanding, and are too closely associated with notions and purposes alien to the way of Mindfulness.

Here, the *first* exercise deals with the five principal Mental Hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*), and the *fourth* with the seven Factors of Enlightenment (*bojjhaṅga*); *i.e.* these two exercises deal with qualities to be abandoned and qualities to be acquired, respectively. Other qualities to be abandoned are intimated in the *third* exercise (on the six Sense Bases), under the term of Fetters (*samyojana*), which are enumerated in the Commentary.

The first parts of the first and the fourth exercise belong to the practice of Bare Atten-

tion. The content of these passages is, briefly, as follows: if a certain Mental Hindrance or a Factor of Enlightenment is present or absent in the meditator, he should be fully aware of that fact. To Bare Attention belongs likewise the following part of the *third* exercise: '..... and what fetter arises dependent on both (e.g. eye and forms) that he knows well'. All the aforementioned three passages giving a bare statement of the present state of mind, are properly part of the Contemplation of the State of Mind. Here they serve as the indispensable preparation for the second phase of all these three exercises. In that second phase purposeful and thoroughly examining Clear Comprehension is employed in the following tasks. (1) to avoid, to overcome temporarily, and to annihilate finally the respective Hindrances and Fetters; (2) to produce and to develop the Factors of Enlightenment. For both these tasks, the negative one, and the positive, an intimate knowledge of the conditions which are conducive to the arising or non-arising of the respective states of mind is indispensable. In the Discourse, this enquiry about the conditions is mentioned in a general way thus: 'In what manner the arising of the non-arisen (Fetter, Hindrance, Factor of Enlightenment) comes to be, that he knows well...' The several conditions, in detail, are dealt with in the respective passages of the Commentary which are of great importance. But the knowledge of these conditions of good and evil states of mind will become a true mental possession of the disciple only if it is applied to, and tested in, the actual occasions of daily life.

The aforementioned three exercises (the third one, in its second phase) will supply the 'thought-forms', or conceptual tools, of the Dhamma, with regard to its *practice*.

The *second*, *third* (in its first phase) and the *fifth* exercise, dealing with the five Groups of Grasping (*khandha*), the six Sense Bases (*āyatana*) and the four Noble Truths (*sacca*), circumscribe actuality in its entirety,—each in its particular way, and from a different angle.

These three exercises will enable the meditator to bring his daily experiences, which are habitually referred to a non-existing personality, into conformity with the impersonal nature of actuality itself. Conventional language (*vohāra* or *sammuti*), based on the belief in personality, is here converted into the

'ultimate' or factual terms (*paramattha*) of the Dhamma. In that way, the single experiences of life can be brought into relationship with the Dhamma as a whole, and can be assigned their proper places within the system of the Doctrine.

For such application of the Contemplation on Mental Contents, the Commentary gives an example which becomes all the more impressive as it is regularly repeated there. After explaining in full each exercise given in the Discourse, the Commentary always brings it into relationship with the four Noble Truths. For instance: 'Here the Truth of Suffering is the mindfulness which lays hold of in-and-out-breathing. The Craving that foreruns that mindfulness and causes it is the Truth of Origination. The non-occurrence of both is the Truth of Cessation. The Pure Path of understanding Suffering, of abandoning Origination, of taking Cessation as the object, is the Way of Truth'.

The three exercises, Nos. 2, 3 and 5, provide the *theoretical* thought-forms of the Dhamma, i.e. the framework for a factual analysis of actuality. The fifth, about the Truths, fulfils the additional purpose of keeping up the connection with the fundamentally *practical* purpose of the Dhamma as expressed in the Truths of Ill's Cessation and of the Path leading to it.

The three Contemplations on Feeling, State of Mind and Mental Contents dealing with the mental part of man, converge, just as the Contemplation on the Body, in the central conception of the Dhamma; *Anattā* (No-self). The whole Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness may be regarded as nothing else but a comprehensive theoretical and practical instruction for the realization of that liberating truth of *Anattā*, having two aspects of No-self (Impersonality) and Voidness of Substance. The guidance provided by *Satipaṭṭhāna* will bring about not only a deep and thorough understanding of that truth, but also, by visible demonstration through the single exercises, that immediate visualization of it which alone imparts life-transforming and life-transcending power.

The exposition of the *Satipaṭṭhāna* method, in its twofold division as to the modes and objects of practice, is now concluded. This exposition has been based in its fundamental principles, though not in its details and formulations, on the characteristic features of

the New Burman *Satipaṭṭhāna* Method about which a few facts have been given in the Preface.

### *The New Burman Satipaṭṭhāna Method*

The fundamental principles of this method of practice may be summarized as follows:—

(1) The main emphasis is on a radical practice of Bare Attention. To have understood the importance and efficacy of it is a chief merit of the Burman school of practice.

(2) From the principle of Bare Attention follows the insistence on 'first-hand knowledge', *i.e.* on direct experience and exclusive self-reliance. This implies: avoidance of abstract or discursive thinking during the strict meditative practice; disavowal of external devices for the practice, and avoidance of methods that may lead to self-deception.

(3) Since the perceptual object of Bare Attention can only be one of the immediate present, there is the insistence on the Here and Now. Thoughts of the past and the future are obviously a breach of the strict practice, and should be reduced even outside it.

(4) From this again another important practical rule follows: the transformation of *disturbances* of the practice into *objects* of the practice, *i.e.* each present thought, whatever it may be, has to be attended to in the light of the practice. This rule is very significant for the spirit of the method and it is of great practical efficacy. The procedure is as follows: if any disturbance from within or from without does not vanish soon or naturally, but offers resistance against the return to the primary object of contemplation, then this very disturbance itself has to form the new object of mindfulness. When the mind has been quietened, or the outer disturbances have disappeared, one should return to the primary subject of meditation.

This procedure is in conformity with a method of mental training that teaches one to utilize any opportunity for spiritual practice, without insisting on particular conditions and circumstances. This again implies:

(5) The practice of all four Objects of Mindfulness, according to occasion.

(6) The method does not aim at attaining the highly focussed concentration of the meditative Absorptions (*jhāna*), but leads directly to liberating Insight (*vipassanā*). Hence there is no strict limitation to a single subject of meditation (*kammaṭṭhāna*), as is required for gaining the Absorptions, though here too there is strong emphasis on the cultivation of the primary and secondary subjects taken up in the practice (for details, see Appendix A).

A few *illustrations* from the Burman practice might be of interest:

Illustrating point (2):—A disciple undertaking one of the periodical courses of strict practice wanted to take with him into the cell the rosary that he was accustomed to use when reciting the 'Parts of the Body'. But he was requested to leave the rosary behind.

Another disciple told the Meditation master on the occasion of one of the latter's regular visits to the cell that, during the practice, he had had a very vivid mental image of the Buddha that had made him very happy. The Meditation Master remarked, in a somewhat reproachful tone: 'Concepts, concepts (*paññatti paññatti*)!', and he added that it was a decline from the level of practice reached earlier.

Illustrating point (4):—A disciple told the Meditation Master that the creaking noise of passing carts was disturbing his Mindfulness on Breathing, for noise is particularly detrimental to it. The Master said: 'Change over your mindfulness to the noise! Meditate on "sound"! In explanation we may add that this may be done by way of the third exercise of the Contemplation on Mental Contents: 'He knows well the ear and sounds; and whatever fetter (here: annoyance) arises dependent on both, that too he knows well'.

### *Culture of Mind and Culture of Heart*

*Satipaṭṭhāna*, the training in Right Mindfulness, is Culture of Mind in its highest sense. But from the Discourse, the Commentary, and also from the preceding exposition, some readers may perhaps gather the impression that it is a rather coldly intellectual, dry and prosy teaching, being indifferent to ethics, and neglecting the Culture of Heart. Though we hope that the warm life pulsating within the sober frame of the *Satipaṭṭhāna* practice will not have remained unnoticed, a few words about that objection shall be added. The seeming deficiency, as to the

consideration of ethics, is explained by the fact that, on many other occasions, the Buddha has spoken with the greatest emphasis of morality as the indispensable basis for any higher mental development. This fact, well known to all followers of the Master, did not require to be mentioned again in a discourse devoted to a special subject. But to meet any doubts or objections a few additional remarks, to that purpose, are added here.

Morality, regulating the relations between the individual and his fellow men, must, in this world of ours, be supported and protected by precepts, rules and laws, and it must also be rationally explained by common sense and philosophy. But morality's safe roots lie in a true *Culture of Heart*. In the Dhamma, this Culture of Heart has a prominent place, and finds an ideal expression in the four 'Sublime States' or 'Divine Abodes of the Mind' (*brahma-vihāra*), viz. Loving-kindness, Compassion, Sympathetic Joy and Equanimity. Selfless and boundless Loving-kindness is the basis of the other three qualities as well as of any effort for ennobling and elevating the mind. Therefore, in the *Satipaṭṭhāna* method too, a primary task of mindfulness is to watch that no deed, word or thought offends against the spirit of unbounded Loving-kindness (*Mettā*). The cultivation of it should never be absent from the path of the disciple. 'Maintain this mindfulness (*i.e.* of Loving-kindness)!', says the classical *Mettā Sutta*, the 'Song of Loving-kindness'.

Furthermore it was said by the Buddha, again connecting this subject with *Satipaṭṭhāna*:

"I will protect myself", thus the Foundations of Mindfulness have to be cultivated. "I will protect others", thus the Foundations of Mindfulness have to be cultivated. By protecting oneself one is protecting others; by protecting others one is protecting oneself.

'And how does one, by protecting oneself, protect others? By repeated practice, by meditative culture of mind, and by frequent occupation with it.

'And how does one, by protecting others, protect oneself? By patience, by a non-violent life, by loving-kindness and compassion'.

(Samyutta Nikāya 47, 19)

### *The Message of Self-help*

In the beginning of this exposition the Royal Way of Mindfulness was called a

'message of help'. Now, after all that has been said in these pages, it may be more exactly described as a 'message of *self-help*' which, in truth, is the only help that is possible.

'By self alone is evil done, by self one is defiled;

By self is evil left undone, by self alone one is purified.

Pure and impure on self alone depend;  
No one can make another pure'.

(Dhammapada, v. 165)

'The effort you yourself must make,  
The Perfect Ones point out the Way.'

(ib., v. 276)

But quite apart from clearly showing the way of help, the message that there *is* help at all must of itself be regarded as truly glad tidings by a world that has become entangled all over in ties of its own making. Mankind has good reasons to despair of any help at all, because too often attempts have been made to loosen the fetters in one place or another with the only result that, just by that action, the fetters cut still deeper into the flesh somewhere else. But there *is* help, and it has been found by the Buddhas and the Holy Disciples who followed in their footsteps. By men 'whose eyes are not completely covered by dust', these Enlightened Ones will not be mistaken for those who offer only partial, and therefore illusory help. The true Helpers will be recognized through the singular harmony and balance, consistency and naturalness, simplicity and depth, appearing in their teachings as well as in their life. These great Helpers will be recognized by the warm smile of understanding, compassion and assurance that glows on their lips and inspires a confidence that will grow beyond all doubt.

This smile of assurance on the Buddha's face says: 'You too can attain! Open are the doors to the Deathless!' Soon after the Buddha had entered through these doors of Enlightenment, he proclaimed:

'Like me victorious saints will be,  
Who have attained  
to the defilements' end'.

The Buddha's 'showing the way' to the exalted goal was not made with cold indifference; it was not merely a casual pointing of the finger to the road, nor was it a mere 'piece of paper', with an intricate 'map' provided by some abstruse scripture

that was thrust into the hands of those in need of an experienced guide and helper. The pilgrims were not merely left to their own poor devices (as far as they knew any) to wend their way with emaciated bodies and confused minds. The 'showing of the way' included the pointing to the *provisions* needed for that long journey—provisions which, in fact, the pilgrims carry with them without being aware of it, in their dumb stupor. Emphatically did the Buddha proclaim again and again that man is in full possession of all the resources needed for self-help. The most simple and most comprehensive way in which he spoke about these resources is just this method of *Satipaṭṭhāna*. Its essence may be compressed into the two words: 'Be mindful!' That means: *Be mindful of your own mind!* And why? Mind harbors all: the world of suffering, and its origin, but also Ill's final cessation and the path to it! All this depends on our own mind, on the guidance that the flux of mind receives through this very moment of mind-activity, which faces us just now!

*Satipaṭṭhāna*, as dealing with just this crucial present moment of mind-activity, must necessarily be a teaching of *self-reliance*. But self-reliance has to be gradually developed, because men, knowing not how to handle the tool of mind, have become used to leaning on others and on habit, and, owing to that, this splendid tool, the human mind, has, in fact, become unreliable through neglect. Therefore the road to self-mastery which *Satipaṭṭhāna* shows, begins with very simple steps which even the most diffident of men may take.

*Satipaṭṭhāna*, in that simplicity which befits a teaching claiming to be the Only Way, starts, in fact, with very little: with one of the most elementary functions of mind, *attention*, or initial mindfulness. This is indeed so very near and familiar that every man, if he only would, may easily base on it his first steps of self-reliance. And quite as familiar are the first objects of that attention: they are *the tasks and little activities of everyday life*. What mindfulness does with them first, is: to take them out of their habitual grooves, and sort them out for closer inspection and improvement.

The visible *improvements in the work of everyday life*, effected by careful attention, thoroughness and circumspection, will give

additional encouragement to the quest for self-help.

There will be noticeable *improvements in the mind's condition* too; the quietening influence of self-possessed action and thought will infuse a well-being and happiness where once dissatisfaction and ill-humour may have ruled.

If, in that way, the burden of daily life has been eased to a certain extent, it will be a tangible proof of the *Satipaṭṭhāna*—method's capacity to relieve suffering. This initial result, however, will accord with the Dhamma only so far as it is said to be 'beneficial in the beginning' (*ādi-kulāna*). Higher results—the benefits of the middle and of the end of the road—are to follow and have to be aspired for.

In the course of further practice, the *little things of everyday life* will become teachers of great wisdom, revealing gradually their own immense dimensions of depth. If one gradually learns to understand their language, profound aspects of the Dhamma will come into the range of one's direct experience, and thereby confidence in one's own mind, and in the power of its hidden resources will grow.

Receiving such direct instruction from life itself, one will gradually learn to dispose with unnecessary mental ballast and unnecessary complications of thought. Seeing how life wins clarity and ease under the selecting and controlling influence of Right Mindfulness, one will gradually learn to deal with unnecessary complications in one's practical life too, caused by the thoughtless perpetuation of habits and wants.

*Satipaṭṭhāna* restores *simplicity* and *naturalness* to a world that grows more and more complicated, problematic and reliant on artificial devices. It teaches these virtues of simplicity and naturalness primarily for the sake of their own inherent merits, but also for easing the task of spiritual self-help.

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

*Satipaṭṭhāna* teaches man how to cope with all this confusing complexity of his life

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

As to the complications *capable* of reduction, *Satipaṭṭhāna* holds up the ideal of *simplicity of wants*. To stress this ideal today is most urgent in view of the dangerous modern tendency artificially to create, to propagandize and 'condition' for, ever new wants. The results of that tendency as appearing in social and economic life, belong to the secondary causes of war, while the root of that tendency, *i.e.* Greed, is one of its primary causes. For the material and spiritual welfare of humanity it is imperative to check that development. And as to our particular subject, spiritual self-help,—how can man's mind become self-reliant if it keeps on surrendering itself to that endless and weary toil of continuously increasing imaginary needs entailing a growing dependency on others? Simplicity of life should be cultivated for the sake of its own inherent beauty as well as for the sake of the freedom it bestows.

Let us glance now at the avoidable *inner* complications, or at least a few of them. Here *Satipaṭṭhāna* teaches how to control and to improve man's principal tool, the mind, and it shows the right purpose for its use.

A frequent source of the growth of inner and outer complications is unnecessary and uncalled-for *interference*. But one who is truly mindful will first mind his own mind's business. The desire to interfere will be effectively curbed by acquiring the habit of Bare Attention, which is in direct contrast to interference. Clear Comprehension, the guide to circumspect action, will then carefully examine the purpose and suitability of an intended interfering activity, and will mostly advise to drop it.

Many inner complications are caused by *extreme attitudes* of the mind, and by an unwise handling of the various pairs of opposites operating in life. Surrendering to extreme attitudes of any description will limit one's freedom of action and thought, and the capacity of true understanding; it reduces independence and the chances of effective practical and spiritual self-help. By ignorance of the laws governing the pairs of opposites or by taking sides with either of the extremes in their eternal conflict, one will become a helpless pawn in their recurrent movements. *Satipaṭṭhāna* as an expression of the Buddha's Middle Path is a way leading above and beyond extremes and opposites. It corrects one-sided development by filling out deficiencies and reducing excess. It instils a sense of proportion, and aspires to harmony and balance without which there cannot be lasting self-reliance and effective self-help.

As an example, two opposite types of character may be mentioned as they were formulated, and further elaborated, by C.G. Jung: the introvert ('turned inward') and the extravert ('turned outward') which partly cover such other opposites as the contemplative and the active, the solitary and the sociable type, etc. The character as a Middle Path is so deeply ingrained in *Satipaṭṭhāna* that this method is, in fact, capable of attracting as well as compensating both types.

Beginners in meditation will often be painfully conscious of the sometimes considerable disparity in the condition of their minds during ordinary life and during the limited period given to spiritual practice. By *Satipaṭṭhāna* that gap is reduced and finally closed by a gradual merging of life and practice, which will be of benefit to both. Many, discouraged by the disparity spoken of above, and by the failure of their efforts, have left the road of mental culture and spiritual self-help, and have surrendered to creeds teaching that man can only be saved by grace. This is not likely to occur to the disciple of the *Satipaṭṭhāna* Method of self-reliance and self-help.

Another source of inner complications is the powerful and unpredictable influence of *subconsciousness*. But through Bare Attention a natural, close and more 'friendly' contact with it will result, due to the growing familiarity with the most subtle vibrations of body and mind, and supported by the attitude

of 'waiting and listening' that avoids all coarse and harmful meddling with the subconscious realm. In that way, and by the slowly and steadily pervading light of Mindfulness, the subconsciousness will become more 'articulate' and more amenable to control, *i.e.* capable of being co-ordinated with, and helpful to, the governing tendencies of the conscious mind. By reducing the element of the unpredictable and of the unmanageable emerging from the subconscious, self-reliance will receive a safer basis.

In its spirit of self-reliance, *Satipaṭṭhāna* does not require any elaborate technique or external devices. The daily life is its working material. It has nothing to do with any exotic cults or rites, nor does it confer 'initiations' or 'esoteric knowledge' in any way other than by self-enlightenment.

Using just the conditions of life it finds, *Satipaṭṭhāna* does not require complete seclusion or monastic life, though in some who undertake the practice, the desire and the need for these may grow. Occasional periods of seclusion, however, are helpful for initiating methodical and strict practice, and for stepping up the progress in it. Western society, too, should provide opportunities for such periodical seclusion in suitable environment. Apart from their value for strict meditative practice, the atmosphere of such 'Houses of Stillness' will be a source of physical and mental regeneration from the effects of urban civilization.

*Satipaṭṭhāna* is a way of *self-liberation*. Being based on the Law of Kamma, it is, in its ultimate aim and in its complete practice, incompatible with a belief in vicarious salvation, in a saving divine grace, or in mediation by priests.

*Satipaṭṭhāna* is free from *dogmas*, from reliance on 'divine revelations', or any external authority in matters spiritual. *Satipaṭṭhāna* relies only on first-hand knowledge as furnished by the direct vision of one's own experience. It teaches how to purify, extend and deepen this mainspring of true knowledge,—direct experience. The Word of the Buddha is accepted and cherished by the disciple of *Satipaṭṭhāna*, as the detailed travelling directions from one who has already gone the whole length of the Way, and therefore deserves confidence. But it becomes a mental property of the disciple only according

to the degree of verification by his own experience.

This character of *Satipaṭṭhāna* as a message of self-reliance and self-help is documented in the words of the Buddha himself, spoken during the very last days of his life, a fact that gives to them a particular emphasis:

'Therefore, Ānanda, be ye islands unto yourselves! Be ye a refuge unto yourselves! Betake yourselves to no external refuge! The Truth (Dhamma) be your island, the truth be your refuge! Take no other refuge! And how is this done?

'There, Ānanda, a monk dwells contemplating the body, in the body,—contemplating the feelings, in the feelings,—contemplating consciousness, in consciousness,—contemplating mind objects, in mind objects, ardent, clearly comprehending and mindful, having overcome, in the world, hankering and dejection.

And whosoever, Ānanda, either now or after I am dead, shall be an island unto themselves, a refuge unto themselves, shall betake themselves to no external refuge, but holding fast to truth as their island and refuge, taking refuge in nothing else,—it is they, Ānanda, among my Bhikkhus, who shall reach the very topmost height—but they must be anxious to learn'.

(*'Mahā-parinibbāna-sutta'*)

The serious student will appreciate the cogency of that last sentence.

For the rest, it was tersely and rightly said that, after a disciple has received information about the Way and the Goal, there are only two rules for his successful spiritual practice: 'Begin!' and 'Go on!'

'With folded hands I greet all those  
Whose hearts are bent on guarding their  
own mind.

With all your strength you should  
protect

Attentiveness and Comprehension Clear.'

SHANTIDEVA.

# THE DHAMMAPADA COMMENTARY

## THE STORY OF TWO FRIENDS

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

Bahum pi ce sahitam bhāsamāno  
na takkarō hoti naro pamatto,  
gopo'va gāvo ganayam paresam  
na bhāgavā samaññassa hoti

—*Dhammapada*, V.19.

(Though he recites much of the Texts, yet, if he, being heedless, does not live up to them, he is like a cowherd who counts the cattle of others; he has no share in the advantages of the holy life.)

Appam pi ce sahitam bhāsamāno  
dhammassa hoti anudhammacārī,  
rāgañ ca dosan ca pahāya moham  
sammappajāno suvimutta-citto  
anupādiyāno idha vā huram vā  
sa bhāgavā sāmāññassa hoti.

—*Dhammapada*, V.20.

(Though he recites little of the Texts, yet if he acts in conformity with the Dhamma, dispelling lust, hatred and delusion, truly knowing, with mind totally freed, not clinging to this world or the next, he shares the advantages of the holy life.)

While residing at the Jetavana monastery the Teacher (the Buddha) gave this religious discourse beginning with *bahum pi ce* in connection with two monks who were friends.

Two friends of noble family from Sāvatti, went to a monastery, listened to the religious discourse of the Teacher and abandoning sensual pleasure, imbued with the desire of practising the Dhamma, renounced the world. Having spent five years under instructors and preceptors they approached the Teacher, asked about the courses of practice in His Teachings and heard in detail about the course of insight-meditation, and that of study. Thereupon one of them said, "Revered Sir, as I have become a monk in old age, I shall not be able to fulfil the course of study; but will fulfil the course of insight-meditation", and had the course of insight leading to Arahatsip preached to him. Striving with patience and zeal, he attained Arahatsip together with mastery over analytical knowledge. But the other said, "I shall fulfil the course of study" and gradually learned the three *Piṭakas*, the Word of the Buddha, and wherever he went he preached the Dhamma and recited the Texts. He travelled about

and taught five hundred monks to recite the Dhamma and became the instructor of eighteen large groups of monks.

The monks (who were with the Buddha) received a subject of meditation from the Teacher, went to the abode of the other (the one who had mastered the course of insight-meditation) and abiding by his instructions attained Arahatsip. They paid respects to the Elder and expressed their desire to pay a visit to the Teacher. Said the Elder, "Go you, brethren, pay respects to the Teacher and to the eighty great Elders on my behalf, as also to the Elder who is my friend, and tell him that your instructor pays respect to him also."

They went to the monastery, paid respects to the Teacher, to the eighty great Elders and also to the Elder (their instructor's friend) and said, "Sir, our instructor pays respects to you". Being questioned "Who is your instructor?" they replied; "He is your fellow-elder". In this way the Elder sent messages of respect to him time and again. That monk forbore for sometime, but later on could not bear it any longer, and when he was again greeted: "Our instructor sends respects to you," asking "Who is he?" and being told, "He is your fellow-monk", he asked, "What have you learnt from him? Have you mastered even one of the *Nikāyas*, such as the *Dīgha*, or any of the *Piṭakas* out of three?" He then thought: "He does not know even a stanza of four lines; after becoming a monk, taking the vow of wearing dust-stained robes, he entered the forest and gathered many resident pupils. When he comes, I shall put questions to him".

Then, on a certain occasion, the Elder came to pay a visit to the Teacher. Leaving his bowl and robe with his fellow-elder, he went and paid respects to the Teacher as well as to the eighty great Elders and returned to the residence of his friend. He, after performing the duty of a host towards him, took a seat on the same level as his guest and sat down with the intention of asking questions of him. At that moment, the Teacher thought, "As the result of giving trouble to such a disciple of mine, this one will be reborn in hell"; and out of compassion for the monk,

He went to the place where they stayed as if on a visit to the monastery and sat down on the seat specially prepared for the Buddha. Wherever the monks assembled, they usually did so after keeping a seat specially set apart for the Buddha. Therefore, the Teacher sat down on the seat specially arranged for him. Having done so, He put questions on the first *Jhāna* to the monk who had studied the Texts. When the monk did not answer, He asked him questions beginning with the second *Jhāna* and on the eight attainments, the *Rūpa* and *Arūpa Jhānas*. The learned monk could not answer even a single question. The other monk answered all the questions. Next He asked the learned monk questions on the Path of *Sotāpatti*, which he could not answer. Thereafter, the Buddha put the questions to the Elder who had destroyed the *Āsavas*.\* The Elder gave Him the answers. The Teacher was highly pleased and said, "Well done, well done, O monk"! and asked questions on the remaining Paths one after another. The learned monk, was not able to answer even one of these questions, but the one who had attained arahatship answered every question that was put to him. The Teacher applauded him on four occasions. On hearing that, all classes of gods from the terrestrial world up to the Brahmā world as also the *Nāgas* and the *Supaṇṇas* congratulated him.

Having heard the words of congratulation, the resident disciples and the co-resident monks of the Elder who had studied the Texts grumbled amongst themselves about the Teacher saying: "What is that the Teacher has done! On as many as four occasions He applauded the old monk who does not know anything, but has not spoken even one word of praise for our teacher who has mastered all the Texts and is the leader of five hundred monks". Thereupon, the Teacher asked them, "What are you talking about, monks?" When the matter was told Him, the Master made this remark, "Monks, in my Order your instructor is like a person who looks after the cows for wages, while my disciple is like the owner of the cows who enjoys the

five kinds of produce of cows at his will and pleasure", and uttered the verses:

Bahum pi ce sahitaṃ bhāsamāno  
na takkarō hoti naro pamatto,  
gopō'va gāvo ganayaṃ paresaṃ  
na bhāgavā samaññaṃsa hoti

(Though he recites much of the Texts, yet, if he, being heedless, does not live up to them, he is like a cowherd who counts the cattle of others; he has no share in the advantages of the holy life.)

Appam pi ce sahitaṃ bhāsamāno  
dhammassa hoti anudhammacārī,  
ragaṇ ca dosaṇ ca pahāya mohaṃ  
sammappajāno suvimutta-citto  
anupādiyāno idha vā huraṃ vā  
sa bhāgavā samaññaṃsa hoti.

(Though he recites little of the Texts, yet, if he acts in conformity with the Dhamma, dispelling lust, hatred and delusion, truly knowing, with mind totally freed, not clinging to this world or the next, he shares the advantages of the holy life.)

Therein, *sahitaṃ* means the three *Piṭakas* which are the words of the Buddha.

*Bahum pi paresaṃ bhāsamāno* means reciting much to others after having approached the Teacher and learnt the Texts; after having listened to the *Piṭakas*, he does not carry out that which ought to be done. He does not pay careful attention to Impermanence, and so on, even for the time a cock takes to flap its wings. He is like the one who tends cows for the day for wages. Taking charge of cows early in the morning, in the evening he returns them to the owner after proper counting. He gets only his daily wages, but not the privilege of enjoying the five kinds of produce of the cows at his will and pleasure. In the same way, such a monk enjoys only the different types of service rendered to him by his resident pupils, but does not enjoy the advantages of monkhood. Just as only the owners enjoy the produce of cows which are handed over to them by the cowherds similarly, after having listened to the Dhamma preached by a monk, the diligent practise it as instructed,

\* *Āsava*: The word has been translated as "poisons", "banes", "biases", "inflows", "cankers", "intoxicants", "fluxes" and "fluxions". The latter are perhaps academically correct translations but "cankers" (Childers) seems to give the more correct concept to the average Westerner. It is used figuratively in the sense of surrounding or flowing up to, much as in Western writings one finds the expression "a wave of sentiment" or "an upwelling of..." The *Āsavas*: *Kāmaśava*, Sensuous Canker; *Bhavaśava*, Canker of existence; *Diṭṭhāśava* Canker of Views; *Avijjāśava*, Canker of ignorance; and they are of course corrupting biases or cankers and the manner in which they may be overcome or eradicated or cured is taught in the *Sabbāśava Sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*.

and some of them attain to the first stage of *Jhāna* and so on, while some develop insight and attain to the Paths and Fruitions. As the owners of cows get a share of the produce of cows, so also such people enjoy the advantages of monkhood. Thus, the Teacher spoke the first stanza in connection with a monk who, though endowed with virtue and wide learning, leads a negligent life and does not pay careful attention to Impermanence (*anicca*) and so on, and it was not spoken in connection with one who is devoid of virtue. The second verse, however, was spoken in connection with a person who, though of little learning, acts by paying careful attention.

Therein, *appam pi ce* implies only a little, just a section or two.

A person who, having understood the letter and the spirit of Dhamma, practises the four *Pārisuddhi\* Sīlas*, the *Dhutaṅgas\*\** (Ascetic practices), *Asubha Kammatṭhāna* (Meditation on the unpleasantness of the body) etc., which are regarded as preliminary steps and are conducive to the attainment of the nine supramundane Dhamma,\*\*\* is an *Anudhammacārī*—one who acts in conformity with the Dhamma.

Such a person practises the Dhamma aspiring after penetration into the Truth “this very day”. Having abandoned lust,

hatred and delusion (*rāgañ ca dosañ ca pahāya moham*) through this perfect practice and by fully grasping the Dhamma which should be comprehended methodically and by right means, he attains to the emancipation of mind (*suvimuttacitto*) by way of momentary emancipation,\*\*\*\* emancipation by suppression,\*\*\*\*\* emancipation by destruction,\*\*\*\*\* emancipation through tranquillisation\*\*\*\*\* and that through absolute freedom.\*\*\*\*\*

*Anupādiyāno idha vā huraṃ vā* implies that the Noble One, having got rid of the *Āsavas* and not being attached by way of fourfold clinging to aggregates, sense spheres and elements, whether internal or external, related to this world or the next, becomes a sharer (*bhāgavā*) of the advantages of monkhood known as the Path as well as of the group of five qualities of an arahat.

The Buddha emphasised arahatship as an encrownment of the discourse just as a mansion is encrowned by a jewelled pinnacle.

At the end of the utterance of the stanzas many persons became *Sotāpannas* and so on, and the discourse was beneficial to the multitude.

The Story of the two friends, the fourteenth one.

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\* Restraint with regard to the monks' Code of Discipline *Pātimokkha saṃvarasīla*; restraint of the senses *Indriya saṃvarasīla*; purity with regard to one's livelihood *ājīva-pārisuddhisīla* morality with regard to the requisites of a monk *Paccayasannissitasīla*.

\*\* *Dhutaṅga*, 'Means of purification'. 'The monk training himself in morality should take upon himself the Means of Purification, in order to gain those virtues through which the purity of morality will become accomplished, viz.; fewness of needs, contentedness, austerity, detachment, energy, moderation etc.' (*Visuddhi Magga* 11) (*Nyanatiloka's* translation) They are described as:—

1. wearing patched-up robes. *Paṃsukūlakaṅga*.
2. wearing only three robes. *Tecīvarikaṅga*.
3. going for alms. *Piṇḍapātikaṅga*.
4. not omitting any house while going for alms. *Sapadānacārikaṅga*.
5. eating at one sitting. *Ekasanikaṅga*.
6. eating only from the alms-bowl. *Pattapiṇḍikaṅga*.
7. refusing all further food. *Khalupacchābhattikaṅgai*.
8. living in the forest. *Ānaññaikaṅga*.
9. living under a tree. *Rukkhamūlikaṅga*.
10. living in the open air. *Abbhokāsikaṅga*.
11. living in a cemetery. *Sosānikaṅga*.
12. being satisfied with whatever dwelling. *Yathāsantatikaṅga*.
13. sleeping in sitting position (and not lying down). *Nesajjikaṅga*.

\*\*\* *Lokuttara*. Supramundane. The four paths and four fruitions of Sotapanship etc. with Nibbāna as the ninth.

\*\*\*\* as a result of *vipassanā*.

\*\*\*\*\* as a result of *jhāna*.

\*\*\*\*\* as a result of attainment of *magga*.

\*\*\*\*\* as a result of attainment of fruition.

\*\*\*\*\* as a result of attainment of nibbāna in this very life.

Because of others' welfare howsoever great,  
 One's own welfare should not be neglected.  
 Well perceiving one's own welfare,  
 Be zealous regarding self-interest. Dhammapada. 166.  
 Beings imagining wrong in what is not wrong,  
 And viewing as not wrong what is wrong,  
 Embrace false views and go to a woeful state. Dhammapada 318.



If anyone were to hit anyone else with his hand or clod or stick or weapon in your presence, there too you should train yourself thus - 'My mind shall not be perverted; nor shall I utter evil words, I shall abide cherishing good-will and with no hatred in heart'.....Even if robbers and fellows of vile profession should cut off limb after limb with a two-handed saw, even there, should his mind be corrupted, he is not one who acts according to my teaching.

*Majjhima Nikāya, Kakacupama Sutta.*



Hatreds never cease by hatreds in this world. By lovingkindness alone they cease. This is an ancient law. Dhammapada 5.

Though he should conquer a million men in battle, yet he is the noblest victor who conquers himself. Dhammapada. 103.

Neither for the sake of self nor the sake of another. Dhammapada 84.

All tremble at punishment, all fear death.

Comparing others with oneself, one should neither kill nor cause to kill. Dhammapada 129.

In the case of a soldier who in battle exerts himself, puts forth effort, he must previously have had this low, mean, perverse idea: 'Let those beings be tortured, be bound, be destroyed, be exterminated, so that they may be thought never to have existed'. Then, so exerting himself so putting forth effort, other men torture him and make an end of him. When body breaks up after death he is reborn in Hell.

*Saṃyutta Nikāya IV, 308.*



What do you think about, this Dhānañjāni? Suppose someone were a non-dhamma-farer or an uneven dhamma-farer because of his parents, because of his wife and children, .. because of the Ruler; would they gain anything by saying: 'It was because of us that he was a non dhamma-farer, an uneven dhamma-farer—do not let the guardians of Hell drag him off to hell'?

No good Sāriputta, for the guardians of Hell would hurl him wailing into Hell itself.

*Majjhima Nikāya, 11, 186.*



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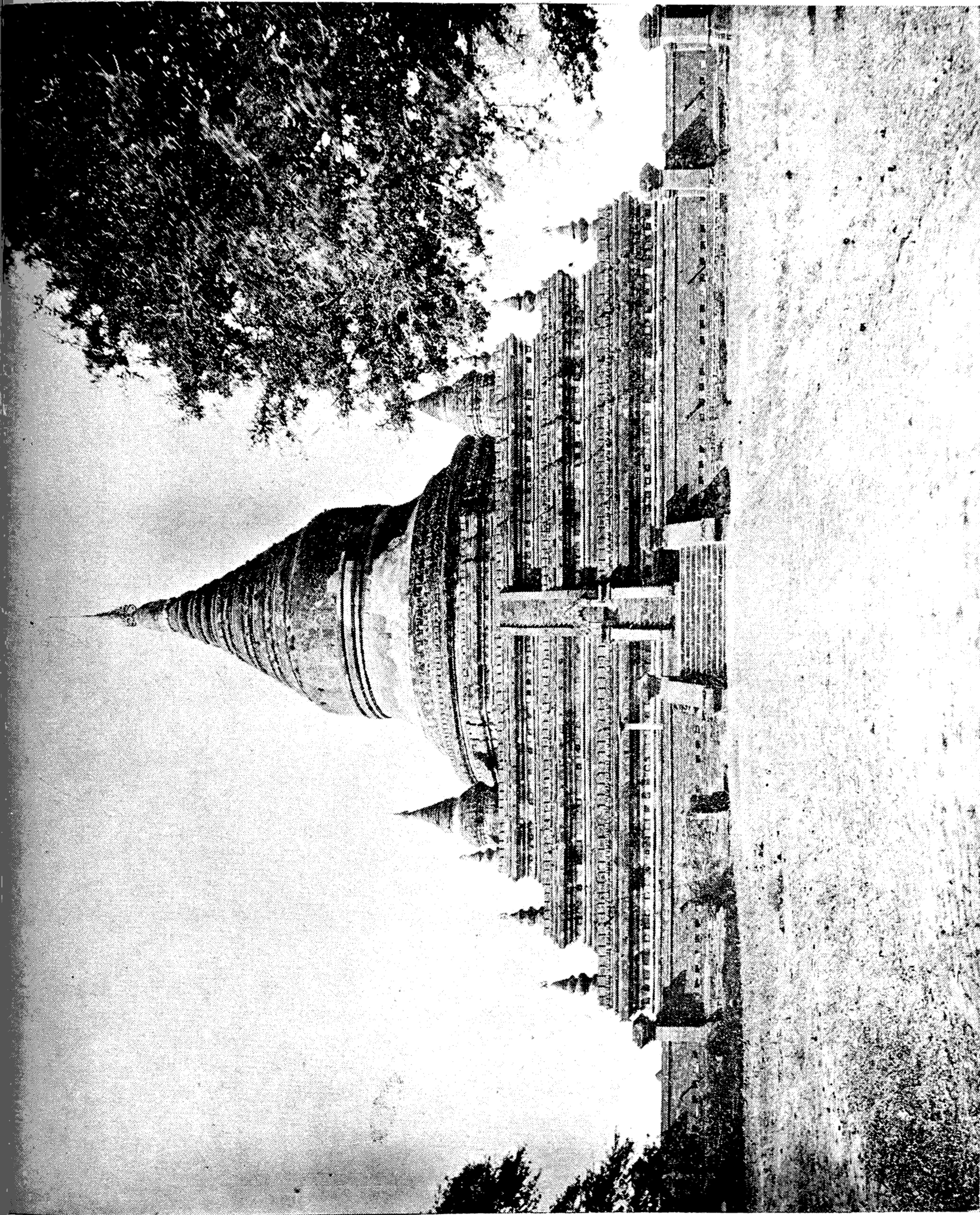
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