

The only Refuge for him who aspires to true perfection is Buddha alone
—K. H.

50

THE MAHA-BODHI

Journal of the Maha Bodhi Society.

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1932

[No. 2.

THE MAHA BODHI SOCIETY OF INDIA

Premier International Buddhist Association

Founded by the Sri Devamitta Dharmapala on 31st May,
1891 and Incorporated in Ceylon

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2. To educate the illiterate people by opening schools in villages.
3. To revive ancient Buddhist arts and crafts by importing teachers from Buddhist countries.
4. To train youngmen of unblemished character to become Bhikkhu Missionaries to carry the message of the Lord Buddha of Love and Activity to the people of India and other countries.
5. To found the nucleus of a Buddhist University on the lines of the ancient University of Nalanda.
6. To found Pali scholarships and to send students to Buddhist countries and to Europe and America; and to provide facilities to foreign Buddhist students in Calcutta.
7. To found a Buddhist International Library and Museum with a fully equipped Press to print Texts and pamphlets and to start journals.
8. To incorporate any society or association having similar objects as this association.

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THE MAHA-BODHI

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THE MAHA-BODHI

FOUNDED BY THE ANAGARIKA H. DHARMAPALA

अथ भिक्षुवे चारिकं बहुजनहिताय बहुजनसुखाय लोकानुकम्पाय अत्याय
हताय सुखाय देवमनुस्मानं । ईसिय भिक्षुवे धम्मं आदि कल्लायं मज्जे कल्लायं
परियोसान कल्लायं सारथं सव्यञ्जनं केवलपरिपुषं परिसुद्धं ब्रह्मचारियं पकासिय ।

“Go ye, O Bhikkhus, and wander forth for the gain of the many, for the welfare of the many, in compassion for the world, for the good, for the gain, for the welfare of gods and men. Manifest holiness, perfect and pure.”—MAHAVAGGA, VINAYA PITAKA.

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NOTICE

A few copies of the Mulagandhakuti Vihara Inauguration Issue of the Maha-Bodhi are still available. It contains *inter alia* the messages of H. E. Lord Willingdon, Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, Ven'ble Sri Devamitta Dhammapala and others read on the occasion of the Opening Ceremony, a detailed report of the proceedings, the memorable address of Dr. S. N. Das Gupta, President, Buddhist Convention and fifteen pictures depicting the different phases of the celebrations. On special request, the price has been reduced to Re. 1/- only. Please apply sharp to

THE MANAGER,
The Mahabodhi.

BUDDHISM AS A WORLD RELIGION

By J. F. MCKECHNIE.

There is no religion in the world which is so well adapted to be a religion for the whole world as is Buddhism. This is so on two counts: its perfect ethical code, and its profoundly true philosophical basis. Its ethical code furnishes the completest guide to correct conduct which the world possesses. It prohibits all that is forbidden in other codes of right behaviour, and then has something more that is excellent, and puts it ahead of all these other codes: it forbids the partaking of intoxicating liquors and narcotic drugs, indulgence in which is such a prolific cause of human misery.

It is this moral teaching of Buddhism which makes it a supremely valuable religion for the common man of any race all the world over. And what makes this teaching still more valuable is that it is recommended to men, not by appeals to any hypothetical beings or being, but on the basis of its essential reasonableness, that is, on the basis that obedience to it will reduce men's suffering, not in any hypothetical future, but in this world, here and now. No man likes pain. No man likes to suffer. Buddhism, in its moral code, tells men how they may escape suffering, avoid much pain, here where they are, in their present life.

But this is not all. There is taught in Buddhism a further reason why men should observe right conduct. Right conduct is the first stage, so men are taught by the Buddha, towards right thinking, the clearing of the mind so that it can see and judge things rightly. And when it sees and judges things rightly and truly, then, so Buddhism teaches, it will find the way to the overcoming of the very *possibility* of pain and suffering, it will be able to see that way, and to follow it. It

will see that the possibility of pain and suffering arises only where there is an ego which wants and desires things for itself ; and that where this ego ceases to exist, and just as soon as it ceases to exist, all possibility of suffering also ceases, automatically, at once, that very instant.

The man, then, who accepts Buddhism and its ethical code as his guide in life, sees in breaches of the moral code not only what will bring pain and suffering to him now, but also, what is much more important, or at least, of equal importance, what is intensifying and strengthening his sense of ego, and therefore perpetuating and prolonging the period during which he will be subject to suffering. In brief, Buddhism tells every man that he should "be good", first because he will save himself present pain ; and then, because in so behaving he is bringing nearer the time when he will be delivered completely from the very possibility of any pain. And this latter is what constitutes the incontrovertible philosophical foundation on which the whole of Buddhism is erected. All the moral precepts, and all the mental practices of self-control taught in Buddhism, have no other aim whatever but this : to lead men from pain to the ending of pain for ever.

Is a religion which teaches this so clearly and plainly, and yet so soundly, and is so well established in reason, anything else but a religion that is suited to all men? For what, after all, is the universal desire of all men, nay, of all sentient creatures whatever, but to be delivered from suffering and pain of all descriptions? And Buddhism in its teaching, meets this universal need and desire, in a manner that is absolutely un-gainsayable, whether by the simplest peasant with his simple wants and comprehension, or by the most subtle and deep-thinking philosopher. Both these classes of men, alike, and all the numerous classes of men that may lie between them, will find in Buddhism all they need to satisfy their most elementary and most urgent want : to be delivered from pain.

It remains to ask how such a religion can be best, most fitly, presented to them so that they may see it for what it is,

and accept it. Obviously this can best be done by insisting upon, and never forgetting, these two central points around which the whole scheme of Buddhism revolves: suffering and the ending of suffering; and treating as more or less irrelevant and of secondary importance everything else that does not bear upon these two points. Such a course of exposition will naturally treat very lightly, nay, even pass over in complete silence, much that might interest mere scholars and students of the history of religions, much also, let it be said without fear, that in the course of the years that have passed since the Great Teacher first uttered his dictum: "One thing only do I teach: suffering and the destruction of suffering," has been tacked on to his teaching by later commentators. All these things, in the preaching of Buddhism to the modern world as the world-religion will be treated as matters of little or no importance. But everything that has to do with these two points, pain and deliverance from pain, will receive the fullest possible treatment; and all the light that may be receivable from modern science or art or literature will be gathered together and thrown upon these sole two points of the Buddha's teaching, with a view to illuminating them and setting them in clearer, fuller, more outstanding detail before the eyes of men.

Will such a treatment of Buddhism, such a manner of presenting it to the modern world have any chance of success? We think it will. If there is anything that distinguishes our modern days from all that have gone before, it is the desire to get at the essentials of any question, it is keen wish to get at the "meat" of any matter discussed, its impatience of everything that draws away attention from the pith, the core, the heart of any question. If then, Buddhism, is presented to such minds in the stark simplicity of its essential teaching, and the rest treated as more or less of only secondary interest, men will be attracted to it, give it a fair hearing, seriously consider if it is not the thing they have been looking for all their lives and never known where to find.

But how can these two essential points of Buddhism be so universally brought before the present world as to give it a chance of becoming the world's universal religion? At first, this must be by literature, well-written, cogent, dealing with the matter in hand, and with some claims to consideration merely by the *manner* of its presentation; for there is no reason why offence should be given to prospective converts to Buddhism by a slovenly or uncouth manner of putting its message in words. In the exercise of common sense, we should see to it, that the Dhamma, the greatest and best message of deliverance from suffering in the world, should be given the dress in words that is deserved by so great and good a thing. In short: Buddhist literature should really *be* literature, and by its dignity and worth and general mien be made a worthy garment for the fair form of the Message it conveys.

In addition to good literature, it goes without saying, there is need of good Bhikkhus to present the teaching by word of mouth, as also to offer an example of Buddhism in actual living. Some may think that, with its dislike of the idea of "monks" in connection with religion, the appearance of Buddhist Bhikkhus (in Western countries at least) would be a hindrance rather than a help towards the acceptance of its teaching. There are some grounds for such an apprehension. But it would be the task of precisely such Bhikkhus as are chosen for work in Western countries to make clear that the Bhikkhu is not a "monk" after the western pattern, not the abject creature, absolutely subjected to a "superior" by vows of obedience, the completely devoted limb of an organisation which may use him as it wills, and demand of him the fulfilment of any action which it thinks good in its own interest, which is what many western monks are. The Bhikkhu in the West will have to present himself simply as one who is following more directly and swiftly than the layman, the Path that leads to the surmounting of all Ill: this, and nothing more, save what his talents in oral exposition or in writing

may give him, by way of distinction. However, the mode of life, and the rules which the Bhikkhu, for his own defence, is required to observe by the Vinaya prescriptions, will always make it difficult under modern conditions in the West, for Bhikkhus to come to the West in the large numbers required to make an impression upon the western races. There would therefore seem to be need of another mode of presenting the Doctrines of Buddhism orally before the men of the West.

Would it not be possible some time when the means are available, to train a body of preachers of Buddhism who should not be Bhikkhus, with all their weighty obligations of observing Rule, but yet not men living the ordinary life of the world? Would it not be possible to have a body of men trained, who should be devoted to the task of preaching Buddhism, and supported in doing so, as long as they did not call upon the Buddhist world to maintain for them also a wife and children? In short: Could we have an intermediate order of—shall we say?—Buddhist deacons, unmarried, and bound by no other ties of worldly relationship, whose business it would be to study and lay hold of the essential teachings of Buddhism as found in the Pali Scriptures, and cultivate the ability, in the various languages of the West, French, German, Italian, Spanish, and so on, to set forth the teaching of the Buddha in an attractive and yet entirely accurate manner?

The time seems ripe for such a project to be carried through. Those countries in the West where the monkish mode of life has been lived for centuries by certain bodies of men, now seem to be freeing themselves from the superstitious awe with which they formerly regarded those who lived that mode of life, being entirely estranged and even in some instances disgusted, with the glaring contradiction between the professions of holy life made by such men and their actual mode of living. Spain and Italy are outstanding examples of this at the present day. Suppose we were in a position to show the peoples of those countries, to name no others, the example of real monks whose professions were lived up to,

and were based upon rational grounds, not upon the arbitrary dictates of the hierophants of a Society, would there not be here a favourable soil in which to plant the seed of a real and eventually successful and influential Sangha of the West? For Oriental Buddhists are undoubtedly right when they say that there is Buddhism only where there is the Bhikkhu, that is, Buddhism, as a doctrine of the surmounting of the world. And it is necessary for a right comprehension of this doctrine, that people should have before their eyes the spectacle of living beings who are following the speediest and most direct road to that surmounting, if for no other reason, to make them see that Buddhism is not just an affair of words, and doctrines, but of *life*.

To sum up, then :

Buddhism as a world-religion recommends itself to all men as a practical doctrine of what is good for man to do here and now in order to enjoy as much freedom from infelicity as is possible in this world. It also recommends itself to all men as a teaching of what requires to be done to surmount this world altogether and pass beyond to what is better. To do this effectively it needs expounders in spoken and in written words ; and not least, those who shall exemplify that teaching in actual life, exhibited before all men's eyes. With such a cogent and all-appealing message as deliverance from suffering, it only needs the other two things, expounders and livers of that message, to become the religion best suited to the needs of all men all over the world, in short, *the world-religion par excellence*.

THE BODHISATTA IDEAL

BY BHIKKHU NARADA.

(Continued from the last issue.)

Without killing or causing injury to any living being, he is kind and compassionate towards all, even to the tiniest creature that crawls at his feet. Refraining from stealing whether in its dissembled or obvious forms, he is upright and honest in all his dealings, and endeavours to cultivate a spirit of mutual confidence. He does not seek to secure gain by compassing loss for another in any underhand way. Abstaining from sexual misconduct, he is pure and chaste. He refrains from lying, slandering, harsh speech and frivolous talk. He deceives none even if there be an opportunity to do so, nor does he speak falsehood even if he could go undetected. Avoiding all sorts of pernicious drinks, which lead to infatuation and heedlessness, he is sober and diligent.

A Bodhisatta endeavours to observe these elementary principles as strictly as possible, for transgression of them is likely to create fresh troubles and obstacles almost impassable and insurmountable.

It must not be understood that a Bodhisatta is wholly infallible and totally immune from all evil. Some Jatakas such as the Kanavera Jataka (No. 318) depict him as a highway robber of no mean order. This, however, is the exception rather than the rule.

The great importance an aspirant to Buddhahood attaches to Sila is evident from the Silavimansa Jataka (No. 362) where the Bodhisatta says:—"Apart from virtue wisdom has no worth."

Still keener is the enthusiasm he exhibits for *Nekkhamma* or Renunciation, for by nature he is a lover of *solitude*.

Nekkhamma implies both renunciation of worldly pleasures by means of adopting the ascetic life and the temporary inhibition of Hindrances (Nirvana) by means of cultivating *Jhāna*.

To him comes the idea, though he may sit in the lap of luxury, immersed in worldly pleasures, that

"A den of strife is household life
And filled with toil and need ;
But free and high as the open sky
Is the life the Homeless lead."

Realising thus the vanity and suffering of life, he voluntarily forsakes his earthly possessions and donning the ascetic garb he tries to lead the Holy Life in all its purity. Here he practises the Higher Morality to such a degree that he practically becomes selfless in all his actions. Neither fame nor wealth nor honour nor worldly gain could induce him to do anything contrary to his lofty principles.

Sometimes the mere appearance of a grey hair, as in the case of the Makhādeva Jataka (No. 9), is sufficient to stimulate a Bodhisatta to leave his uncongenial atmosphere in order to lead the independent, solitary life of a hermit. At times a tiny dew-drop acts as an incentive for him to adopt the ascetic life. The practice of renunciation is not observed as a rule by a Bodhisatta. In the Kusa Jataka (No. 531), for instance, the Bodhisatta was subject to much humiliation owing to his unrestrained desire to win the hand of the beautiful princess Pabhāvati.

Again in the Darimukha Jataka (No. 378) it is mentioned that a Pacceka Buddha, a quondam friend of the Bodhisatta, approached him and said:—

"Pleasures of sense are morass and mire,
The triply-rooted terror them I recall.
Vapour and dust I have proclaimed them, Sire,
Become a Brother and forsake them all,"

To which he instantly replied :—

“Infatuate, bound and deeply stained am I
 Brahmin, with pleasures, fearful they may be,
 But I love life, and cannot them deny :
 Good works I undertake continually.”

Nekkhamma is followed by *Paññá* or wisdom. It is the right understanding of the nature of the world in the light of transiency, sorrowfulness, and soullessness. Bodhisatta meditates on these three characteristics—*Anicca*, *Dukkha* and *Anatta*—but not to such an extent as to attain Arahantship, for then he would be deviating from his goal.

He does not at the same time disparage worldly wisdom. He strives to acquire knowledge from every possible source. Never does he show any desire to display his knowledge, nor is he ashamed to plead his ignorance even in public, for under no circumstances does he prove to be a charlatan. He has no closed fist of the teacher. What he knows is always at the disposal of others, and that he imparts to them unreservedly.

Viriya or Energy goes hand in hand with the above. *Viriya* does not mean here physical strength, as in the ordinary acceptation of the term, but mental vigour or strength of character, which undoubtedly is far superior to the former. It is defined as the relentless effort to work for others both in thought and deed. Firmly establishing himself in this virtue he develops self-reliance and makes it one of his prominent characteristics.

As Dr. Tagore has well expressed it, a Bodhisatta would stand on his legs and say :—

“Let me not pray to be sheltered from dangers, but to be fearless in facing them.

Let me not beg for the stilling of my pain, but for the heart to conquer it.

Let me not crave in anxious fear to be saved, but hope for the patience to win my freedom.”

The Viriya a Bodhisatta exhibits is beautifully illustrated in the Maha Janaka Jataka (No. 539). Ship-wrecked in deep sea, he struggled strenuously for seven days until he was finally rescued.

All this pales into insignificance when one thinks of the indomitable energy displayed by him as a squirrel in the Kalandaka Jataka.

Failures he views as successes ; opposition doubles his exertion ; dangers only increase his courage. Cutting his way through difficulties, which impair the enthusiasm of the feeble, surmounting obstacles, which dishearten the ordinary, he looks straight towards his goal.

To Mára who advised him to abandon his quest, the Bodhisatta said :—“Death in battle (with passions) is more honourable to me than a vanquished life.”

Just as his wisdom is always at the disposal of others, so he has a fund of energy at his command. Instead of confining it to the realisation of private personal ends he directs it into the open channel of activities that tend to universal happiness. Ceaselessly and untiringly he works for others, expecting no remuneration.

As important as Viriya is *Khanti*. It is the patient endurance of suffering inflicted upon oneself by others, and the forbearance of others' wrongs.

A Bodhisatta practises patience to such an extent as not to be provoked even when his hands and feet are severed. In the Khantivada Jataka (No. 313) it appears that the Bodhisatta not only cheerfully endured the tortures caused by the drunkard king who mercilessly ordered his hands and feet, nose and ears, to be cut off but also wished him long life.

Lying on the ground, sunk in a deep pool of blood, with arms and limbs severed from the body, the Bodhisatta said :—

“Long live the king, whose cruel hand my body thus
has marred.

Pure souls like mine such deeds as these with anger
ne'er regard.”

Of his forbearance it is said that whenever he is harmed he thinks :—This person is a fellow-being of mine. Intentionally or unintentionally I myself must have been the source of his provocation. As it is the outcome of my own action, surely I must cherish no ill-will towards him.

It may be mentioned in this connection that a Bodhisatta is not irritated by any man's shameless conduct either. He tries to bear and forbear as well.

Sacca or Truth comes next. By *Sacca* is here meant keeping of one's promise. This is one of the salient characteristics of a Bodhisatta, for he is no breaker of his word.

He makes Truth his guide and holds it his bounden duty to keep his word. He considers well before he makes a promise, but, when once the promise is made, he fulfils it at any cost.

In the Hiri Jataka (No. 363), the Bodhisatta advises :—

“Be thou in deed to every promise true,
Refuse to promise what thou cans't not do,
Wise men on empty braggarts look askew.”

Again in the Mahasutasoma Jataka (No. 537) it is stated that the Bodhisatta even went to the extent of sacrificing his life in order to fulfil a promise.

“Just as the morning star on high
Its balanced course doth ever keep,
And through all seasons, times, and years,
Doth never from its pathway swerve ;
So likewise he in all wise speech
Swerves never from the path of Truth.”

This is followed by *Adhitthána* which may be interpreted as resolute determination. This will-power of his forces all obstructions out of his path, and no matter what may come to him—sickness, grief, or disaster—he never turns his eye from his goal.

The Bodhisatta Gotama, for instance, made a firm determination to renounce his royal pleasures and gain Enlighten-

ment. For six long years he struggled hard. He had to endure many a hardship and face many a difficulty. At a time when help was badly needed, his five favourite disciples who attended on him deserted him. Yet he did not give up his noble effort. His enthusiasm was redoubled and at last achieved his desired goal.

“Just as a rocky mountain-peak,
Unmoved stands, firm-established,
Unshaken by the boisterous gales,
And always in its place abides ;
So likewise He must ever be
In Resolution firm intrenched.”

The most important of all the Paramis, it may be said, is *Mettá*, which may be rendered as benevolence, good-will, or loving-kindness. It is this Metta that prompts a Bodhisatta to renounce personal salvation for the sake of others. He is permeated with boundless good-will towards all beings. He identifies himself with all—irrespective of caste, creed or colour. To him nothing gives more delight than to feel that all are his brothers and sisters. Since he is the embodiment of Metta, he fears none, nor does he give cause for fear to any.

In the Maha-Dhammapala Jataka (No. 385) it is stated that the Bodhisatta, though yet a boy of seven months, extended his loving-kindness with equal measure towards his father, who ordered him to be tortured and killed, towards the executioner, towards his loving mother, and towards himself.

Last, but not the least, of the Paramis is *Upekkhá* or Equanimity. The commentarial explanation of the term is consideration in the light of justice. According to this interpretation the Pali term has a far wider connotation than the English equivalent.

Slights and insults are the common lot of humanity. So are praise and blame, loss and gain. Under all such varied vicissitudes of life, a Bodhisatta stands unmoved like a firm

rock, exercising equanimity and endeavouring his best to be constantly cheerful and happy.

In times of happiness and in times of adversity, amidst praise and amidst blame, he is even-balanced.

“Just as the earth, whate'er is thrown
Upon her, whether sweet or foul,
Indifferent is to all alike,
Nor hatred shows, nor amity ;
So likewise he in good or ill,
Must even-balanced ever be.”

All these *Paramis* have to be cultivated continuously throughout the enormous periods previously mentioned.

In addition to all these he has to practise the following three modes of conduct (*Cariyá*) namely, *Atta Cariyá*, working for self-development ; *Nátyattha Cariya*, working for the betterment of relatives ; and *Loḷattha Cariyá*, working for the amelioration of the whole world.

By the second mode of conduct is not meant nepotism, but an endeavour to promote the well-being of one's kinsfolk, without in any way jeopardising the interests of those outside one's family circle.

Practising thus the ten *Paramis* to the highest pitch of perfection, developing the three modes of conduct as circumstances permit, giving the five kinds of *dana*, as occasion demands, he traverses this tempest-tossed sea of *Sansara*, wafted hither and thither by the irresistible force of *Kamma*, manifesting himself at the same time in multifarious phenomena.

Now he comes into being as a mighty *Sakka* or as a radiant *Deva*, anon as a human being high or low, again as a helpless brute and so forth, until he finally seeks birth in the *Tusita* heaven, having consummated the *Paramis* and anxiously awaiting the opportune moment to appear on earth and blossom as a *Sammà Sambuddha*.

It is erroneous to think that a *Bodhisatta* purposely mani-

festes himself in such diverse forms in order to acquire universal experience. No person whatsoever is exempt from the inexorable law of Kamma. It is law in itself. It alone determines the future birth of every individual, except of course in the case of Arahants and Buddhas who have put an end to all life in a fresh existence.

However it may be mentioned that a Bodhisatta is accredited with a special power, by the force of his own Kamma, when for instance, he is reborn in a Brahma realm here the life span extends for countless æons, thereby depriving him of the opportunity to perfect the Paramis. In such a case, by will-power he ceases to live in that sphere, and comes to life in another place best suited to his temperament.

Apart from this *Adhimuttikâlakiriyâ* (voluntary death), as the Pali phrase runs, the Jataka commentary states that a Bodhisatta enjoys the special privilege of not seeking birth in eighteen states, in the course of his wanderings in Sansara, as the result of the potential Kammic force accumulated by him. For instance he is never blind or deaf, nor does he become an absolute misbeliever (*Niyata Micchâditthi*), who denies Kamma and its effects. He is born in the animal kingdom, but never as a creature larger than an elephant or smaller than a snipe. He is to atone in the ordinary states of misery (*Apāyas*), but is never destined to the Avicis. A Bodhisatta does not also seek birth in the "Pure abodes" (*Suddhavasa*)—the camping place of Anagamis and Arahants—nor in the formless realms where one is deprived of the opportunity to be of service to others.

It might be asked: Is the Boddhisatta aware that he is aspiring to Buddhahood in the course of his rebirth? He may or may not be.

According to the Jatakas it appears that at times he is fully cognisant of the fact that he is striving for Buddhahood. *Visayha Setthi Jataka* (No. 340) may be cited as an example. In some births, as in the case of the *Jotipala Manavaka* (*Ghatikara Sutta* No. 81, *Majjhima Nikaya*), he seems to have

been perfectly ignorant of it, so much so that he starts abusing the Buddha at the mere utterance of the word.

Hence, who knows that we ourselves are not Boddhisattas who have dedicated our lives for the noble purpose of serving the world? Let us not be discouraged by the thoughts that the Bodhisatta ideal is a Herculean task, reserved only for supermen. What has been accomplished by one could also be accomplished by another with necessary effort and enthusiasm. Let us too endeavour our best to utilise every unit of energy and each moment of time to work disinterestedly for the good of ourselves and others, having for our objects in life—the noble ideal of *service* and *perfection*.

PRACTICE OF BUDDHISM

(BY SAW HLA PRU, BURMA).

I wish to tell you something about the present decline of our Buddhist religion and that of other religions as well. For this I shall give you an extract from a famous Buddhist lecture "The Glorious Mission of Buddhism." The quotation runs thus :—

"Now when Buddhism started in the valley of the Ganges, there were no priests in the sense of those who were necessary for any ceremony. The disciples were mere recluses who were not called into the homes for worship on this or other occasions. There were no temples and images. So powerful was the life-side of the religion. There were no Pagodas or stupas. All this came on later. That happens with regard to each religion if you will see the history of every religion. When that happens slowly the form side becomes more predominant in the people, and after many centuries if you go to any country which had any religion, you see far more temples and churches and ceremonies, and very little of the real spirit of religion.

The form is kept up and many people imagine that if only they can intensify the form by building pagodas after pagodas, marble images, and by having all kinds of pujas, worships and ceremonies, this is the religion. But you find most unfortunately in these days that almost every religion is far more predominant in the form side than in the life side. Now that aspect of things is called here negative Buddhism. The life-side is softened in its hardness by the Buddhist traditions, and while one admires the beautiful pagodas and temples, while one sees the gay and happy life of the Buddhists, and while one finds viharas after viharas being built, with beautiful images, all that is negative Buddhism, the type of Buddhism which did not exist in those days when Lord Buddha and his immediate disciples lived. All that passes for religion to-day is negative Buddhism and not positive Buddhism. Remember that Lord Buddha came to a very old civilisation, not a primitive, but far advanced and full of philosophical culture.

There were temples and shrines all over India, and there were all kinds of complicated rituals in the Hindu religion, and when Lord Buddha came what was it that was new in His teachings? You will find that many of the truths existed already in Hinduism. But still there was something new in the message that Lord Buddha gave.

What was new was the proclamation by the Lord Himself of the middle-way. He taught us that there was the middle between certain extremes which He found existing in India in His days. One extreme was the foolish, un-Aryan, barbaric or extreme excessiveness of the world lovers, who lived in the things of matter and who only sought enjoyment in the senses. There was a similar extreme on the other side, equally barbaric and un-Aryan, and that was the extreme asceticism. That type you still find in India where men try to gain all kinds of power and the sense of liberation by performing penance or Hatha-Yoga. Lord Buddha pointed out that there was a middle way between these two extremes,

and His great teachings taught them that it was possible for us, men and women who were householders, to tread the path, the middle way. How are we to tread the middle way—not by performance of ceremonies, not by repetition of mantras, not by outer observances. These are excrescences. When the middle way was begun to be taught, there came about a change in the individuals, who began to look at the problem in a new way. Lord Buddha saw what was life in its fundamentals. That life was sorrow. He fought for sorrow's cause. The cause of sorrow was this feverish sense of excitement, the new sense of coming from one thing to another, and being never satisfied with this. He found that the end of this was the ending of thirst for sensation. It is only by the end of this inner craving for sensation, this excitement, that there is any possibility of ending the sorrow”.

Brothers and Sisters, the last few statements in the above extract are nothing but a vivid description of the Four Noble Truths. The fourth of these Four Noble Truths is the Noble Eightfold Path that leads to the extinction of Dukkha, suffering or sorrow. It is only when our minds are calm and quiet, that real wisdom comes to us and opens our inner eyes to see things as they actually are just as a light at night makes the darkness disappear and enables us to see things as they really are. Concentration of the mind can be effected only by a regular practice of meditation. Meditation is as necessary to the spiritual growth as food is essential to growth of the physical body. No one can reach Nirvana unless and until he can meditate effectively, though he may be a genius and may have a spotless character. The truth of this statement is quite obvious from the two examples I am going to give you presently. I think the circumstances, under which the two Buddhist monks—Phwetthila and Sulaban became Arahats in the time of Lord Buddha, are known to some of you. For the enlightenment of those, who do not know them, I shall briefly say how they attained the Arahatship.

Once upon a time there was a very learned monk by the

name of Phweththila. He was well versed in the Three Pitakas and was a great teacher and his pupils numbered over 1000. One day he went and worshipped Lord Buddha. The Lord told him that he did not know and enjoy the nectar of His religion just as a ladle does not know and enjoy any taste though it is used in stirring many dainty soups and curries. This hint made him to request Lord Buddha to teach him how to meditate. Knowing that he was very proud of his learning, the Lord rejected his prayer and told him to learn the right way of meditating from a young Arahāt aged 7 years in order to enable him to get rid of the fetter of pride. So he went and begged the young Arahāt for a right method of meditation. Thereupon he was instructed how to meditate correctly. Accordingly he meditated and obtained the Arahātship very soon.

Now I shall give you a short account of the other Buddhist priest named Sulaban. This monk was very dull. He was so dull that he could not commit to memory even a single Pali stanza during the four months of the Buddhist Lent. When the Lent was over, his elder brother Mahaban Arhat explained to him that it was no use for him to remain in the order of monks and advised him to leave it. As he did not wish to do so, he went weeping to Lord Buddha. On seeing him cry the Lord asked him what was the matter with him. He repeated the words spoken to him by his brother Mahaban Arahāt and expressed his unwillingness to become a layman. Lord Buddha told him to meditate "Harazaw haranan". Accordingly he meditated and attained the Arhatship very quickly. These two illustrations undoubtedly and conclusively prove that meditation must be practised for the realization of Nibbana. They further prove that one can attain Nibbana only when he has an Ariya Guru to teach him how to meditate properly, and that it does not matter whether he is very learned or ignorant. Only a Samma-sam-Buddha or Pacceka Buddha needs no such spiritual Guru. If we are so fortunate as to get a right method of meditation either from

any one of the aforesaid Gurus or from any one of their qualified disciples and to be able to meditate daily, we can become Arhats even in our present existence. In support of my statement I shall quote what Lord Buddha spoke in Mahâwa Sutta.

Lord Buddha tells Bhikkhu Subhadda that the gate of Nibbana remains open always as long as there is a single person who meditates correctly and regularly. In other words one can, at any time, attain Arhatship and Nibbana if he practises meditation systematically and punctually.

Therefore, brothers and sisters, do not get disheartened and slackened, thinking wrongly that you cannot become Arahats in your present existence. So wake up and look for any one of the spiritual Gurus mentioned before or any one of their inner disciples. On finding such a teacher or such a pupil beg for and learn a right method of meditation thoroughly and after this meditate daily and regularly.

Meditation alone is not sufficient. It must be accompanied by efforts for the purification of our minds and bodies and by our good deeds. On this account the eight different parts of the Noble Eightfold Path are classified as Morality, Concentration and Wisdom, which correspond respectively with the Pali terms, Sila, Samadhi and Paññā.

I. Morality consists of

1. Right Speech—Sammā Vācā.
2. Right Action—Sammā Kammanta.
3. Right Living—Sammā Ajiva.

II. Concentration consists of

1. Right Effort—Sammā Vāyāma.
2. Right Attentiveness—Sammā Sati.
3. Right Concentration—Sammā Samādhi.

III. Wisdom consists of

1. Right Understanding—Sammā ditti.
2. Right Mindedness—Sammā Sankappa.

The Four Noble truths are the essence of all the teachings of Lord Buddha and may be taken as real Buddhism in a nutshell. They can be realized not by any amount of book knowledge and learning but by a constant observance of the Noble Eightfold Path in the daily life. Their realization immediately leads to the attainment of Arhatship and Nibbana. This is quite clear from the following statements made by the Exalted One.

“Bhikkhus! There are two extremes which the man, who is devoted to the higher life, ought not to follow. They are : The devotion to sensuous pleasures which is low, pagan, ignoble and unprofitable. This is fit only for the worldly-minded. The other is the devotion to Asceticism or Self-mortification, which is painful ignoble and unprofitable.

Avoiding these two extremes the Tathagata (the Buddha) has discovered a Middle Path, which opens the eyes and affords clear perception, bestows understanding, gives peace of mind and tranquility and leads to higher wisdom, to full enlightenment or perfect Knowledge and Nibbana. This is the Noble Eightfold Path.” (Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta).

The Exalted One addressed the brethren and said :—‘It is through not understanding and grasping four Aryan Truths, O brethren, that we have had to run so long, to wonder so long in this weary path of transmigration, both you and I!

‘And what are these four?’

‘The Aryan truth about sorrow ; the Aryan truth about the cause of sorrow ; the Aryan truth about the cessation of sorrow ; and the Aryan truth about the path that leads to that cessation. But when these Aryan truths are grasped and known, the craving for future life is rooted out, that which leads to renewed becoming is destroyed, and then there is no more birth!’

Thus spoke the Exalted One ; and when the Happy One had thus spoken, then again the Teacher said :—

'By not seeing the Aryan truths as they really are,
Long is the path that is traversed through many a
birth ;

When these are grasped, the cause of rebirth is
removed,

The root of sorrow uprooted, and then there is no
more birth.'

Mahâ Parinibbâna Suttanta.

To completely deal with each of the Four Noble Truths will take several hours. There exist numerous works written on the Four Noble Truths and on the Noble Eightfold Path. So I shall not dwell on them in details. But I shall briefly tell you something about their practical side. I have already mentioned that the order of the eight different parts of the Noble Eightfold Path is Morality, Concentration and Wisdom. I have also said that meditation alone is not enough and that efforts to purify our minds and bodies must be made at the same time. If one wants to understand a book, he must both read and ponder over its contents carefully. Similarly meditation and purification must go hand in hand. Both of them must be done every day till Arhatship is achieved. To practise them by fits and starts is no use. If we do so, we shall be merely marking our time without progressing spiritually just as a looking-glass will soon become and remain as dirty as before if it is neglected after it has been cleansed partly. So we have to regularly practise meditation and purification every day, if we really desire to realise the Four Noble Truths, Arhatship and Nibbana as soon as possible.

Brothers and Sisters, I shall now come to the ethical side of our Buddhist religion. The moral laws contained in the Vinaya are the natural laws which should be observed in

building a noble character. They are numerous and are very difficult for complete observance. They are 227 precepts and can be condensed into the ten precepts and again into the 8 precepts and then into the 5 precepts. Finally they can be condensed into and expressed in one word as Metta of universal love. Metta or love is the root of all virtues whereas hatred is the root of all evils. When love is developed and perfected, the other nine virtues, Paramitas namely dāna (charity), sīla (noble deeds), Paññā (wisdom) etc., also come to perfection at the same time. It grows step by step thus. "Love of the opposite sex grows into love of family ; love of family grows into love of community ; love of community into love of province ; love of province into love of country ; love of country into love of humanity."

The partial growth of the love of Humanity has been manifested in the form of the League of Nations and other movements for the outlawry of War. All these are signs of our time and are effects of a cause or causes. Their cause seems to be the blessing, which the future Buddha is constantly pouring over the world out of His boundless love for mankind. When He becomes an Enlightened One, His love of humanity will come to perfection and He will be known as Maitreya Buddha, which means Lord of love and compassion ; the virtue of love will be most predominant in His religion ; peace and happiness will then reign supreme in the world.

Brothers and Sisters, we have been given a great privilege and a golden opportunity to work for the cause of our Buddhist religion. Let us make the best use of them and strive hard in harmony and love for the revival of Buddhism in all the Buddhist countries and for its propagation all over the world.

THE MESSAGE OF THE VEN'BLE SRI DEVAMITTA DHAMMAPALA

(Read on the occasion of the Septuagenary Celebrations held at Calcutta in December last in honour of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore.)

“Sprinkle the world with the water of Everlasting Life, Thou who art the fountain of Peace, of Welfare, of Holiness, of Love.”

With this solemn hymn to Lord Buddha, sung in the Waisakha Celebration, Rabindranath Tagore sends all over the world the eternal message of India. Peace is the keynote of Hindu history and Peace and Fraternity are the greatest contributions of India to humanity. Naturally the Poet Laureate of Asia, amidst the sunset-glow of his genius, is harping on that eternal theme to reclaim the benighted human beings from hatred and cruelty to sacrifice and love. The world has deservedly crowned him as the greatest living poet of the present age and one of the greatest for any age, but very few realise as yet that his silent and often unnoticed labour in the cause of World Peace, is one of his greatest titles to immortality. Poets will come and poets will go, but very few of the creative artists of the world would show this unique record of Tagore, as a spinner of the golden dream of *Maitri*, fellowship, making the whole world kin, silently removing the apparently irremovable barriers between a nation and a nation. Through his prophetic messages and passionate poems men and women all over the world have felt that they belong to one family; and that is the greatest miracle which Rabindranath has worked in this age darkened by selfishness and savagery. May the blessings of all beings be on his noble life and may victory attend on his dreams, illumining the Future of Mankind!

Sri Devamitta Dhammapala.

BUDDHIST IDEAL IN RELIGIOUS LIFE

I

(NIBBANAM PARAMAM SUKHAM).

BY MR. ANANTA KUMAR BARUA.

Truth can have no tendency which is not religious and religion can have no interests which are not secured by the whole-hearted and honest search for truth. The intellectually idle can hardly realise the value of search for truth. Love of truth is a very welcome necessity. With it, man can struggle rightly, heroically and gloriously against the temptation of the world,—the devil, against every evil propensity. Life without religion becomes an easy prey to the very dangerous intellectual sloth. The relics of the religious superstition are being rapidly out-grown though lingering long enough to hamper the development of right view, catholicity or detachment requisite to the floral growth of life, in the kingdom of love and truth.

Buddhism not only holds out the secure hope of salvation before man, but also, leads him to a quiet secure existence through the royal avenue of the Noble Truth. It is a universal religion on the basis of the fundamental principle of the totality of man, nay, of the cosmic unity of life with the Infinite (Anantam). The Buddha calls it 'Anantam' or Nibbānam.' It is the source of all our peace and bliss, at the end of all our woes arising from ignorance and craving. Such is the cursory, but panoramic view of the Buddhist Ideal in Religious Life. And, it captivates the mind of the lovers of truth and freedom of thinking who sacrifice all but truth for realisation of peace and bliss.

From the moral, spiritual and psychological points of view, Buddhism is the highest ideal of life. It is certain that man reaches forward to the kingdom of peace and bliss with per-

fection of love, sympathy or pity, joy and equanimity. It teaches man how to lead a life upon earth without greed, malice and illusion for his moral and spiritual happiness and glory. These are the root causes of animality in man. They are detrimental to a sweet and constant action of those powers of the mind and body,—powers with which man is to triumph over evil, and, go forward in his mission to a perfect and peaceful life as a rational being. Buddhism holds that life is more than breath and the quick round of blood. Its fundamental teachings are that, 'man lives in action, not years ; in thoughts not breaths. Man most lives who thinks most, acts the best, feels the noblest.' Its philosophy of Action is not compatible with the theory of the perfection of life in dreams of everlasting nothingness, but of nothingness (*suññatā*-void) of what is evil in man—"lobha-dosa-moha."—man reaches the goal of his mission and ambition of life with higher thoughts and deeds, and, making peace and progress of the world. Buddhism, in its true sense, is an ideal doctrine that holds out before mankind the universal truth of life *i.e.*, '*Nibbānaṃ paramaṃ sukhaṃ*'—'*Nibbāna* is the highest or perfect bliss.' And, in its esoteric form, it is mysticism with the transcendental philosophy of life based on a rational theology of its own. Its '*Tathāgatalogy*' holds out the light of Infinite Truth before man for realization of life, eternal and immortal, in the supermundane and superspiritual realm, or, "*Asaṃkhata-Dhātu*." It is not based on any irrational fear of the unknown or mysterious or misdirected reverence that forms the nucleus of animism, paganism, nihilism or devotionism. It has a splendid ethics of its own the characteristic spirit of which is conducive to peace and bliss of the world, and, to the universal brotherhood. It is the neology of the Buddha ('*nava lokuttara Dhamma*') with the rationalistic religious views, and without the concepts of any vicarious sin, suffering sacrifices or authority, and without any mixture of Platonic ideas with mysticism of any irrational or superstitious belief. In theology too, it is neologicistic. Buddhism totally denies its origin from

any other religion, and, there is a gulf of difference between it and the Vedic Brahmanism, or, any other ancient religion of the world. It is as old as the dawn of civilisation. History and reference of the previous Buddhas and Bodhisattas in it prove its existence long before Gotama, the founder of modern Buddhism. All the Buddhas are the same in essence. It tells us that the antiquity of man and the dawn of civilisation are not within the pale of chronology (of modern history).

Now the question arises ; "What is Nibbāna?" At the very outset of answering this nice question, it may be said that like all other transcendental and infinite conceptions of truth, it cannot be properly, and exactly defined, but it may be explained from the different view points of its realism, idealism and mysticism. The nucleus of the Nibbānic doctrine is, both psycho-ethical, and super-cosmic. The theory or philosophy of Nibbāna is correlative to the (Buddhist) theory of "Cittaṃ, Cetasikaṃ and Rupaṃ." It is not proper, and, true to think of 'Nibbāna' as Utopia, or, ideally perfect place, or state of life. That aspect of Nibbāna or Nibbānic life which is 'Akataṃ'—Uncreated, 'Anantaṃ'—Infinite, boundless, endless, eternal or Asaṃkhata-Dhātu—Unoriginated, should not, and cannot be, properly or correctly reasoned out as it defies all proof within the pale of our sense-perceptions that are false and deceptive though they are real only within the pale of finiteness. This aspect of 'Nibbānaṃ'—Anantaṃ', or 'Āsaṃkhata-Dhātu' or the Infinite requires a definite realisation more real than the five senses can ever produce. Such realisation of the Infinite is infallible. No ability in arguments is equal to the Nibbānic Truth. No definition of Nibbāna is defensible on ground of consistency based on human logic that is meant for the doctrine of the limits, finites or things of the world, physical and moral. The doctrine of Nibbāna is not based on mere mathematical reasoning that finally contradicts itself about the truth of the Infinite and Eternal. To realise the truth of this aspect of Nibbāna requires a spiritual power capable of realis-

ing Nibbāna in truth, beauty, goodness, love and justice, infinite and eternal.

“**Nibbanam Paramam Sukham**” also teaches us that freedom is an essential attribute of life. In “**Manopubbangama Dhamma Manosetha Manomaya**” Buddhism teaches that the freedom of the human will is a creative activity. Our conception of ethics and of progress depends on our view of freedom. ‘Nibbāna,’ ‘Sacca,’ ‘Dhamma’—(Sīla, Samādhi and Paññā) are its watch-words expressive of its ideal and grandeur.

In the **Udana** says the Buddha :—

“This (Nibbāna) is the end of suffering. But since there is an Unborn, Unoriginated, Uncreated, Unformed therefore is escape possible from the world of the born.” Thus Nibbāna is explained by the Buddha from the points of view of wonderful but deep and sound Spiritual Philosophy, and mysticism. In other words, the Nibbānic Truth is based on an intuitional philosophy of the “**Bodhipakkhiya-Dhamma**” that is necessary for our spiritual welfare. It can give the Buddhist joy, by its intuition, its super-intellectual vision, that vital contact with the Nibbānic truth itself, in the fulness of life and its action, individual and social. Thus the ideal that Buddhism gives us in our religious life is far grander and truer than the ideals of all other religions, the teachings of which are not concordant or compatible with—in perfect correspondence with all that man as a rational being needs for his perfection in love, beauty, freedom, peace and bliss.

Buddhism rose as a direct revolt against Brahmanism and its Vedic revelation, and dealt blows at both scepticism and sensualism. There is a great demand for constructive thought—for the peace and progress of humanity, and Buddhism is just the religion to satisfy this demand. Its doctrine of “**Anicca**” aims at intellectual reconstruction. It emancipates man from the intellectual slavery, moral vagary, and from the influences of theological dogmas bringing on a great change in the sociological views of religious life. For the uplift of mankind it also dealt blows at Traditionalism standing on the strong

basis of the doctrine of human brotherhood and solidarity, and, against individualism, the virtue of saving one's own soul without any attempt at social salvation. Buddhism is a true spiritualism "**Lokuttaro Dhammo**". It upholds man's spiritual nature, his liberty, moral and social responsibility, the dignity of true morality, disinterestedness, charity, justice, love and beauty. From the sociological points of view, its doctrine of action is, 'All by action and all for action'; and, it has, already, been proved by the history of the golden age in Buddhist India,—and, in many parts of the world where Buddhism is a living religion—a living truth for the Aryanisation and humanisation of those millions of human beings who, without the saving influence of Buddhism, and, without the salutary sociological science of it could not, and would not, go forward to reach the desired end gradually moving into a new climate of thought and action,—towards the goal of humanity—universal brotherhood, or "**Brahma-Vihāra**" that is needed for the realisation of its highest ideal—"**Nibbanam Paramam Sukham**".

(To be continued)

BODHI-DHARMA

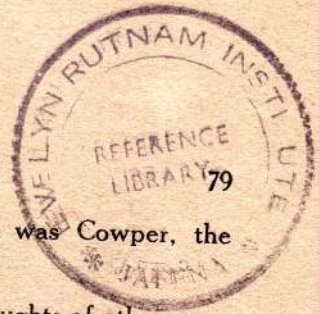
BY MADAME B. P. WADIA.

A Lecture delivered at Anand Vihara, Bombay, under the auspices of the Buddha Society, on Sunday, December 13th, 1931.

Today a new regular activity begins in our city of Bombay and all of us must feel grateful to the promoters and especially to our friend Dr. Nair who made possible the public preaching

of Buddha-Dharma, the dharma or law of the Buddha here. I feel real joy at the opportunity which Karma has brought me to deliver the first lecture in this Vihara. Its name naturally arouses in us two ideas—one about the great disciple, the beloved disciple of the Enlightened One, after whom the Vihara is named. The other is that quality or virtue which the name recalls, spiritual joy and inner bliss. Those who have studied the teachings of the mighty Buddha, and especially those who have tried to visualize the prolonged service He rendered for forty-five years, according to a definite programme, well know the important part played by Ananda, as he followed the Lord up and down this country blessed by His presence ; they also learn how deep was the Bliss felt by Ananda and the other Bhikkhus, the Bliss which the Lord radiated—not passive pleasure or passive peace, but that beneficent and positive energy that healed the souls of men and women, that enlightened their minds, and gave compassion to their hearts. Joy, born of contentment and of knowledge, was and is the keynote of the philosophy of the Chain of Nidanas, of the Law of Karma, of the Noble Path of the soul. So in our work here, in our daily toils, in labour and in leisure, let us feel and radiate Ananda, bliss and joy, the predominant power of the Lord which the Beloved Disciple embodied.

The title of our subject is Bodhi-Dharma, Wisdom Religion, not belief-religion made of priests, nor knowledge-religion made of books, but Bodhi-Dharma, Religion born of Wisdom, sustained by Wisdom, regenerating through Wisdom. When mere feelings and emotions become the foundation of our religion we have beliefs ; when book knowledge becomes the basis of our religion we have ideas and reasonings and arguments ; but when inner Wisdom is the guiding principle of our religion, then it becomes the Religion of Life, giving it peace, giving it power, giving it eternal and imperishable Joy. And here we must first differentiate between mere knowledge and true wisdom, for we ought to make this Vihara a Centre for gathering and radiating Wisdom, and not only



knowledge, Bodh and not only Jñan. It was Cowper, the English poet who defined these two :

“Knowledge dwells in heads replete with thoughts of other men,
Wisdom in minds attentive to their own.”

Let us learn here the Science and the Religion which would enable our minds to be attentive to our own. In the world of today there is too much of knowledge and too little of Wisdom ; that is why religion fights religion, science fights spirituality, nation fights nation, and community wrangles take place. True Wisdom brings not only liberation from the thoughts of other men, but also enables us to recognise the true quality of our heart, thus bringing about real brotherhood and true unity because of real understanding. The Great Buddha, the Teacher of Nirvana and the Law, imparted Wisdom which in freeing the minds of men made it possible for them to breathe the pure atmosphere of universality. And from this point of view, what is the most practical and simple aspect of Nirvana? Why, to be without the limitations of binding creeds, and limiting thoughts, and circumscribing views. Break the fetter of a limited vision if you want to see Truth. Break the fetter of sound which prompts you to listen only to that with which you agree or in which you believe, that which is pleasant to your ears. Break the fetter of thought that keeps itself shut in the library of favourite volumes or the laboratory of special research. Look upon the world as a soul freed from passion and delusion, and you have become the follower of the Buddha and the Buddhas who taught Nirvana. And if the doctrine of Nirvana brings to us the true picture of the spirit, universal and impersonal, so too the doctrine of Karma gives us a true picture of the world of manifestation or matter. The mighty magic of Prakriti is performed by Karma. The magic which explains the differences of this world, why we are what we are, why sages and fools, seers and blindmen live side by side, and how they should live in peace and harmony though they don't, all that is explained in the doctrine

of Karma, which once understood enables us to radiate true love. Do you remember how the Great Lord said :

“That which ye sow ye reap. See yonder fields !
 The sesamum was sesamum, the corn
 Was corn. The Silence and the Darkness knew !
 So is a man's fate born.
 He cometh, reaper of the things he sowed,
 Sesamum, corn, so much cast in past birth ;
 And so much weed and poison-stuff, which mar
 Him and the aching earth.”

And this mighty doctrine of Karma, Gotama, the Enlightened One, did not give to the world for the first time. Bodhi-Dharma, Wisdom-Religion, is imperishable and eternal. It did not come into existence with Gotama, Sakyamuni. His great task was to re-proclaim the Dhamma, which antedates the Vedas themselves. Modern Buddhism has a tradition, especially in the Mahayana School, which speaks of the “Buddhas of Confession,” Those great Enlightened Ones who confessed Their Knowledge for the benefit of mankind. They are also spoken of as “Buddhas who have preceeded Sakyamuni.” As this Vihara must become an energetic Centre for the restoration and resuscitation of the Religion of Gotama Sakyamuni, our Lord Buddha, it must learn of the true history which preceded the season in which flowered that very Blue Lotus, whose beauty and fragrance the world has been enjoying for over twenty-five centuries. Do you remember, my friends, how when our Lord returned to his father's kingdom, clad in Bhagava robe and holding the begging bowl, the royal parent was pained and puzzled and he said : “Son, what is this? Why this strange garb? Why approach thy kingdom and thy throne, thy wife and son and thy aged father, in this unseemly garb?” And what was the reply of our Lord? “Such is the custom of my race.” “Thy race?” exclaimed King Sudhodhana, “thy race is of princes who wear not the Bhagava robe, but the jewelled crown, who

hold not the begging bowl, but the royal sceptre." And our Lord replied: "Not of the mortal race, I speak, O King, but of that Invisible Line of Buddhas, the Enlightened Ones, who wear the crown of Wisdom, who carry the begging bowl, symbol of fraternity and brotherhood, who command in the language of the soul, and who are obeyed by such souls as are willing and choose to obey. Of that Deathless Race of Immortals I speak."

So you see, my friends, in this very story about Lord Buddha we find that the ancient Wisdom-Religion and its Teachers existed before Him. Buddhism was a re-vivification and our Lord followed in the footsteps of His Illustrious Predecessors, the record of whose teachings and labours is recognised in the Mahayana Tradition. Would it be too much to hope that this Vihara may become a true unifying force between the two schools of Buddhistic tradition, the Hinayana and the Mahayana? The great title of the Lord was Tathagata, "one who is thus come." He who is like His Predecessors, and so when we exclaim "Buddham Saranam Gacchami" we must bear in mind the long line of Buddhas whose power and blessings culminated in Gotama, Sakhyamuni.

Let us look for a moment at the social and religious condition of the India to which Gotama came. Bodhi-Dharma, the Wisdom-Religion, was forgotten, corruption in philosophy and superstition in life had become rampant. Cruel animal sacrifices, and still more cruel caste rules were in vogue. Religion was a matter not of life but of priests, and they wielded great influence at the courts of kings. A Suiata believed in the god of a tree who can bless; a Kisagotami believed that man can perform miracles; an Upali was not sure that a man of barber caste could reach Nirvana; yogis practised the torture of limb, as munis that of tongue. Gotama's royal father himself fancied that he could imprison a future Buddha in jewelled palaces, or entice him with the love of a virtuous wife. I am naming these characters and referring to these events to show what kind of

atmosphere pervaded the India of 600 B.C. to which Lord Buddha came.

To a spiritually degraded, to a socially unjust, to a religiously corrupt India the Buddha came. He saw that degradation, that injustice, that corruption, and He proceeded to conquer them, and succeeded in imposing the Peace of the spirit for the individual, and the order of Brotherhood in society and state. The Buddha united the India of his days, and it was His influence that expressed itself in the Mauryan Period and made Chandragupta and Asoka what they were. And if His teachings saved India once, they can do so again today, thus making it the glorious Aryavarta that it was in ancient times. But you know that ancient history as well and perhaps better than I do!

It is very necessary, however, for the Buddhist world to take a deeper view of the Buddhistic moorings and to remember that Bodhi-Dharma, the Religion of Wisdom of the Enlightened Ones ante-dates the Vedas themselves. And so when we cry, "Dhammam Saranam Gacchami," we must bear in mind this ancient Dharma or Law which was put into motion again by our Lord six hundred years before the Christian era.

Let us now look at some of the important teachings of the Dhamma. Let us look at them from a practical view-point, with an eye to our using them for our own betterment, and especially for the benefit of India, the Land who gave the rare gift of Buddha to the world; the supreme gift, a gift higher and nobler and better than which there was not in historical times and shall not be for a long time to come in our eventful history.

"Be ye lamps unto yourselves", said the Lord. I have purposely chosen this injunction among the numerous ones the Buddha gave us because one of the great glories of Buddhism is that it has done away with priests and has instituted in their place monks, bhikkhus. These have no privilege save the grave responsibility of keeping alive the

Teachings of the Enlightened One. Theirs is a twofold function, to give precept and to set an example. But there is a higher and a nobler function of that precept and example to which I would like to draw your attention. "Be ye lamps unto yourselves, O Bhikkhus," said our Lord; the Bhikkhus are called upon to radiate the light of Wisdom for the benefit of their fellowmen. But the Lord also taught all, Bhikkhus and non-Bhikkhus, not to believe but to seek, not to accept anything passively, but to assume a virile and a vigorous position and to obtain enlightened faith, faith based on innermost conviction which comes from knowledge and a life of virtue. He said, "Reject what comes from the lips of even a Buddha if your reason rebels and your heart is not satisfied. Accept what comes from the lips of even a child if your reason is enlightened and your heart is illumined." Put these two teachings together. The Sangha of Bhikkhus brings to us a dual message, they represent and symbolize something really grand and mighty, "Sangham Saranam Gacchami", the Sangha, the Fraternity, of all the Buddhas, all the Enlightened Ones, who shine like suns and stars, the Lamps that hang in the sky of life. And They shine not for their own glory but for the enlightenment of others.

In these two fundamental teachings of self-effort and self-shining we must see the soul of all rules and laws of the great Sangha. In self-effort, in study, in meditation, in breaking the fetters of our weaknesses, as in unfolding the glories of our powers, we are not alone however. Each one is self responsible and self-dependent, each one must grow and evolve by his own efforts and his own labours, but in recognizing our self-dependence we must not forget that we are also interdependent. In our very self-effort we need not only the Buddha, not only the Dhamma, but also the Sangha. Interdependence is the spiritual soul of self-dependence. The great law giver of India said that self-dependence brought bliss, other-dependence brought misery, and it is true. Yet we must not identify other-dependence with inter-dependence. As we

rely more and more on the dictates within, we also recognize more and more our relationship with all others and our responsibility to the whole of the human family to which we belong. This power of interdependence shines forth in all its brilliance in the ideal and concept of the Sangha, the Brotherhood of Bhikkhus. This Vihara ought to bring to us that inner enjoyment and satisfaction because we will be singing the praises of all the Buddhas, because we will be talking about the precepts of all the Enlightened Ones. Let us learn to become true followers of the Lord Buddha that we may help to save humanity from the darkness of ignorance and selfishness. Let us discard and throw away the unnecessary habits of life and shave clean with the razor of Wisdom our heads now full of vanities, of meannesses and pettinesses, then alone we will be clean shaven. Let us learn how we are dependent upon the Buddhas for our spiritual nourishment, on the Good Law for our right conduct, on our co-disciples, co-students, and co-workers, for encouragement and help, on the great orphan humanity which gives us the sublime opportunity to preach the words of the Buddha. These are the inner marks we must all strive to secure as we go the round of our common task, fifty-two weeks in the year. From within and without the Three Jewels of Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha must be understood and it is with that insight that the three formulas must be repeated. When our lips say, that we take refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha, let us visualize the true significance of such statements.

To look within for guidance is the first step. But how to look within? By what method? Within is also Mara, the Tempter; from within also arise Trishna, thirst for sensuous existence. It is easy to say "Look within", it is very difficult to find truth and enlightenment in this corpus of flesh and blood. Ignorance, Avidya, and Illusion, Maya, what are these? Nescience, non-knowledge is ignorance, false knowledge is the father of Illusion, Maya. In this day when the school master is said to be abroad, we have to be careful and

look out for false knowledge. Our civilisation is not suffering from ignorance so much as from false or wrong knowledge. That false knowledge arises from the action of the senses. So let us be lamps unto ourselves, not by the borrowed light of priest or prophet but by the Inward Tathagatha Light ; by its power the Buddhas of Compassion live, the Buddhas of Confession labour, the Buddhas of Enlightenment help. Then comes to us, to our lips, our minds, our hearts, the Joy of Ananda, and we too become like unto the beloved disciple. [We have omitted a few sentences from this article.—EDITOR.]

THE HISTORY OF THE BODHI TREE

(Speech of Rai Bahadur Dayaram Sahni on the occasion of the planting of the Bodhi Saplings at Holy Isipatana on the 13th November 1931).

I am grateful to you for the honour you have done me in asking me to plant at Sarnath, this sapling of the great pipal tree at Anuradhapura. Tree worship dates back in India to the chalcolithic period or the 3rd or 4th millennium B. C., and the pipal tree is found depicted on seals from Harappa and Mohenjodaro. The *ashvattha* tree at Anuradhapura owes its sanctity to different reasons. It is a descendant of the celebrated Bodhi tree, seated under which the Sākya Sage reached perfect enlightenment. According to the Mahavamsa, Sanghamittā, the daughter or sister of Asoka, carried the southern branch of the Bodhi tree of Gaya to Ceylon, where it was planted in the eighteenth year of Asoka's reign. The history of the Bodhi tree of Gaya is given in great detail in Buddhist works wherein it is stated to have been several hundred feet in height in the time of the Buddha. According to Hiuen Tsang its leaves did not wither in winter or summer and remained shining and glistening all the year round but at every successive *nirvāna* day of the Buddhas, its leaves wither and

fall and then in a moment revive as before. The tree passed through many vicissitudes. When Asoka was an unbeliever he had it cut to pieces and burnt to ashes with its roots, leaves and branches. Asoka, however, repented of his crime and bathed its roots in scented water and milk and the tree sprang up as before. It was again destroyed by Asoka's queen, who was jealous of the attention and devotion paid to it by her husband. The tree, however, revived again. About 600 A.D. Sasankarāja of Bengal was hostile to Buddhism and destroyed the tree with fire. It was replanted or restored by Purnavarman, the last of the race of Asokarāja. A remote descendant of the original Bodhi tree is still worshipped at Bodh Gaya by Buddhist laity. The sapling that is being planted in the compound of your new vihara at Sarnath will now receive adoration and worship from the numerous pilgrims that flock to this place. I declare this sapling to be well and truly planted.

SANSKRIT BUDDHIST TREATISES

Maha Vastu.—Third Century B.C. The final redaction probably dates from the 6th or 7th century B.C.

Lalita Vistara.—A.D. 221, 308, 420, 683.—Translated into Chinese four times. Its parts may be assigned to the 3rd century B.C.

Saddharma Pundarika.—Translated into Chinese A.D. 255.

Sukhavati Vyuha—Translated into Chinese A.D. 148.

Asvaghosha's Buddhacharita and Saundarananda Kavya, First Century A.D.

Pragna Paramita—Translated into Chinese A.D. 179.

Vajracchedika.—Translated into Chinese A.D. 400.

Divyavadana—Oldest portions date from the 2nd Century B.C.

Dasabhumika Sutra—A. D. 265.

Mahayana Sutralankara—A.D. 270-350.

Bodhisatvabhumi—4th Century A.D.

Lankavatara Sutra—Translated into Chinese in 443.

Samadhiraja Sutra—Translated into Chinese in 450 A.D.

Svarnaprabhasa—A.D. 397.

Karunapundarika Sutra—Translated into Chinese in the 4th Century A.D.

NOTES & NEWS

DR. RABINDRA NATH TAGORE.

The seventieth birthday of the "Poet Laureate of Asia"—Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore fell on the 25th of Vaisākh last and during the last Christmas holidays, septuagenary celebrations in honour of this prince of poets were held at Calcutta and many places all over the country. The message of Ven'ble Sri Devamitta Dhammapala which was read on the occasion of the celebrations at Calcutta is being published elsewhere. As an interpreter of the human mind with its varied vastness, Dr. Tagore undoubtedly occupies a unique position in the modern world of Letters. The results of his wonderful studies of man and Nature have appeared in different forms at different times. Poetry, stories, dramas, and essays have come from the pen of that mastermind for about half a century and have been a never-failing source of intellectual pleasure to the whole world. And whatever be the form, all his writings have a dignity and splendour scarcely to be found in contemporary literature and have a tendency to stir up the minds even of those who cannot always see eye to eye with him in his philosophical theories. Moreover, Dr. Tagore's philanthropic activities for world-peace and his noble efforts to unite the East and the West by facilitating a cultural and intellectual co-operation have made his name familiar to persons of all nationalities on earth—who believe in the coming "Parliament of Man and Federation of the World." The readers of the Mahabodhi had the privilege of

perusing some of his inspiring poems on the Lord Buddha which he so kindly contributed to the Journal. On behalf of the Mahabodhi Society and readers of the Mahabodhi we offer the poet our most sincere regards on the occasion of his completing the seventieth year of his life and wish him a long life, good-health and all happiness enabling him to continue the glorious mission of his life.

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HINDI TRACTS.

As announced in the November and December issue the first Hindi Tract, prepared by Pandit Benarasidas Caturvedi, came out on the 19th December and was distributed all over India. It deals with the life of Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Foster whose first death anniversary fell on that date. It is a matter for great satisfaction to the Society that many letters of appreciation and promises of help have been received for this purpose. Mr. Ganga Charan Lal of Cawnpore has kindly promised to bear the cost of 5 Bulletins at different intervals. May we request other friends also to help us to continue this useful series of tracts.

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OUR HOLY ISIPATANA.

In our last issue we drew the attention of our readers to the various problems awaiting solution in connection with the scheme at Sarnath, and if we revert to the same subject in this issue it is because we feel that the future of Buddhism in this country depends to a large extent on our success in the plans evolved for Isipatana. No movement, however high its ideal may be, can hope to achieve success unless its spirit is dynamic. It will have to be a living, growing and advancing movement with ample freedom for expansion. Many a fine movement has met with a disastrous end as this principle of

growth had been overlooked. Therefore, if we are to see the fulfilment of the cherished desire of our venerable founder that Isipatana may regain its past glory, we shall have to make it a living institution where the spirit of advancement, which is so characteristic of Buddhism, will be the guiding principle. The first essential for the success of such an institution is the sympathy and co-operation of all Buddhists whether they are in India or outside. Above all, it should receive the moral support of every Buddhist, so that it will derive sufficient strength to face obstacles boldly. Buddhist brethren should awake to a sense of their responsibility towards this great enterprise. The unparalleled interest shown throughout the length and breadth of India on the occasion of the historic opening of the Vihara, has filled us with fresh hopes and we look up to our fellow Buddhists in India, Ceylon, Burma, Siam, Japan, China, Cambodia, etc., to help us to fully utilise the unprecedented interest shown in our cause. Let us all feel that Isipatana is our own, as, whatever vicissitudes it may have passed through, it will ever remain sacred to all Buddhists as an *acala ceti* hallowed by the feet of all Buddhas. It has had a glorious past and let it not be said of us by the future historian that we, fully conscious of its greatness and given ample opportunities, failed to do our duty.

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MAHA BODHI FREE SCHOOL AT ISIPATANA.

We are glad to hear that the District Board of Benares has at last sanctioned a grant of Rs. 10/- per month for the free school which is now in its 29th year. We are thankful to the authorities of the District Board for this help. This has encouraged us to appoint an assistant teacher and the present total monthly expenditure for the school comes to about Rs. 40/- Children are now and then entertained with clothes and sweets. At the suggestion of the Ven. Sri Devamitta Dhammapala, who was moved to see the little children shivering from cold,

orders were given to supply them with woolen shirts. Accordingly on the first death anniversary of Mrs. Mary E. Foster, who always thought of these children, we had the joy of distributing the shirts and the smile that they brought to their faces was ample recompense for the gifts.

We hope our readers will help to maintain this very useful school.

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OBITUARY.

On the night of the 19th January last, the mother of our esteemed friend and co-worker, Rev. Ottama of Burma expired. She was 74 years old at the time of her death and was a highly religious-minded lady.

Mr. J. E. Gunasekhara, Principal of the Mahabodhi College of Ceylon died in November last. He was well-known in Ceylon as a good teacher and a public worker. He served the college for a long time and was popular with the staff and students alike. By his untimely death, the Mahabodhi Society in particular and the Buddhists of Ceylon in general loses one of their leading educationists.

Mm. Haraprasad Sastri, the renowned Bengali litterateur and the distinguished scholar of Buddhism died on the 17th of November last. His activities in Literature, History, Oriental Classics and Philosophy secured for him in his life time a permanent niche in the temple of fame and we are sure the brilliant work he did will long survive him and be a source of inspiration to future workers in his lines.

We offer our condolence to the bereaved families.

FINANCIAL

MULAGANDHAKUTI VIHARA OPENING CEREMONY,

Receipts and Expenses (Continued).

RECEIPTS.			EXPENDITURE.		
	Rs.	A. P.		Rs.	A. P.
Total receipts published in Nov.-Dec. issue ...	1,421	1 0	Total Expenses published in Nov.-Dec. issue	2,960	5 6
Received from Colombo Maha Bodhi Society for high Priest's Passage ...	795	0 0	Grand Hotel for volunteers food ...	25	0 0
Deficit ...	2,467	6 9	Engineer, Benares Hindu University ...	7	8 0
			Munnalal Govila for lorry exp. ...	188	0 0
			M. L. Govila for straw huts, bath rooms etc.	116	0 0
			White washing free-school building, Jain Dharmasala, making paths etc. ...	120	6 0
			Fixing lamp and light posts, making triumphal arch ...	76	4 3
			Return, passage for High priest, & parties	1,070	0 0
			Benares District Board	120	0 0
			<i>(due about)</i>		

Rs. 4,683 7 9

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MAHA-BODHI JOURNAL.

*Statement of Receipts and Payments for the months of
August, Sept., Oct., Nov., and Dec., 1931.**August 1931.*

RECEIPTS.		EXPENSES.	
			Rs. A. P.
Subscriptions ...	42 11 0	Stamps ...	6 0 0
		Blocks ...	16 7 3
		Printing bill for April	121 10 0
		Paper ...	38 8 0
		Advance for paper and making envelopes ...	10 8 0
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	42 11 0		193 1 3

September, 1931.

Subscriptions ...	12 5 0	Press bill (May-June) ...	227 2 0
Advertisements ...	2 8 0	Making & Printing enve- lopes ...	11 4 0
		Stamps ...	20 11 0
		Cooli ...	0 6 0
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	14 13 0		259 7 0

October, 1931.

Subscriptions ...	73 11 0	Blocks ...	24 3 0
		Press bill for July	183 12 0
		Paper ...	121 4 0
		Stamps ...	20 0 0
		Cooli ...	0 7 6
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	73 11 0		349 10 6

November, 1931.

Subscriptions ...	33 2 0	Press bill for Aug. & Sep.	255 10 6
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	32 2 0		255 10 6

December, 1931.

Subscriptions ...	63 5 0	Blocks ...	31 15 0
		Stamps ...	40 4 0
		Cooli, etc. ...	1 4 0
		Proof reading ...	2 0 0
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	63 5 0		75 7 0

MAHA BODHI SOCIETY.

Statement of Receipts and Expenditure for the month of
December 1931.

RECEIPTS.		EXPENSES.	
<i>M. B. S. Donations.</i>		Rs. A. P.	
T. Pandita Gunawardhana	20 0 0	Book Agency a/c. Purchase of Books	65 8 6
Mrs. H. M. Gunasekhara	2 0 0	M. B. S. a/c. Postage & Telegrams	23 6 0
Mrs. E. Hewavitarne	50 0 0	Charity to 2 poor women	2 0 0
S. de S. Samarasingha	3 0 0	B. house a/c. advertisement	4 9 0
Mrs. W. D. Fernando	5 0 0	M. B. S. a/c. presents to Dr. Nandi	12 14 0
Upasika Wisakha	2 8 0	Miscellaneous	27 2 9
R. A. Davith Perera	10 0 0	Furniture a/c. Almirah	173 0 0
Nimasring	1 0 0	Sarnath Vihara a/c. marble Tablet	140 0 0
W. A. Silva	10 0 0	Sarnath a/c. M. O. to Sarnath	31 3 0
Mr. & Mrs. A. W. Suraweera	10 0 0	Secretary's Journey to Sarnath	16 5 0
A Ceylonese	15 0 0	Sarnath a/c. ...	14 4 6
Mg Saw Hlaing	5 0 0	Mr. Devapriya a/c. ...	3 6 3
Mg Saw Hlaing membership fee for 1932	5 0 0	Library a/c. Purchase of Books & newspapers	8 6 0
Rent of hall	25 0 0	Binding books	30 4 0
Interest from Sk. Abdul Gunny (Oct.)	250 0 0	Electric bill	18 11 6
Book Agency a/c. sales	79 2 0	Telephone bill	17 14 2
Sarnath Vihara a/c. Recd. from Mr. S. C. Mookerjee, Bar-at-Law Calcutta for marble Tablet	140 0 0	Madras a/c. water connection	76 0 0
		Roof Repair	22 0 0
		Servants for Nov.-Dec.	12 0 0
		Priests monthly allowance	50 0 0
		Train fare, etc.	30 0 0
		Foster anniversary a/c.	16 9 0
		Wimalananda a/c.	14 4 0
		Salary & allowances	114 0 0
		Repair a/c.	17 14 0
		Painting a/c.	33 9 9
		Food a/c.	144 0 6
		Remington Co. final payment	40 0 0
		Loan a/c. U. K. Saranankara	10 0 0

632 10 0

1,160 13 11

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	Rs. 1,112 13 9		

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