

# THE BUDDHIST



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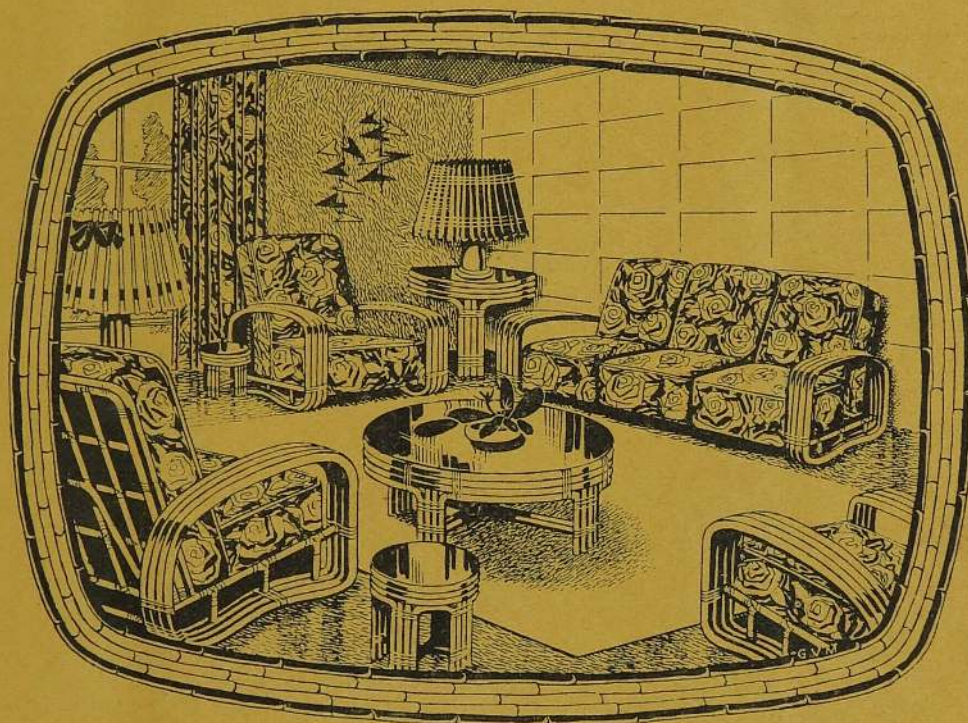
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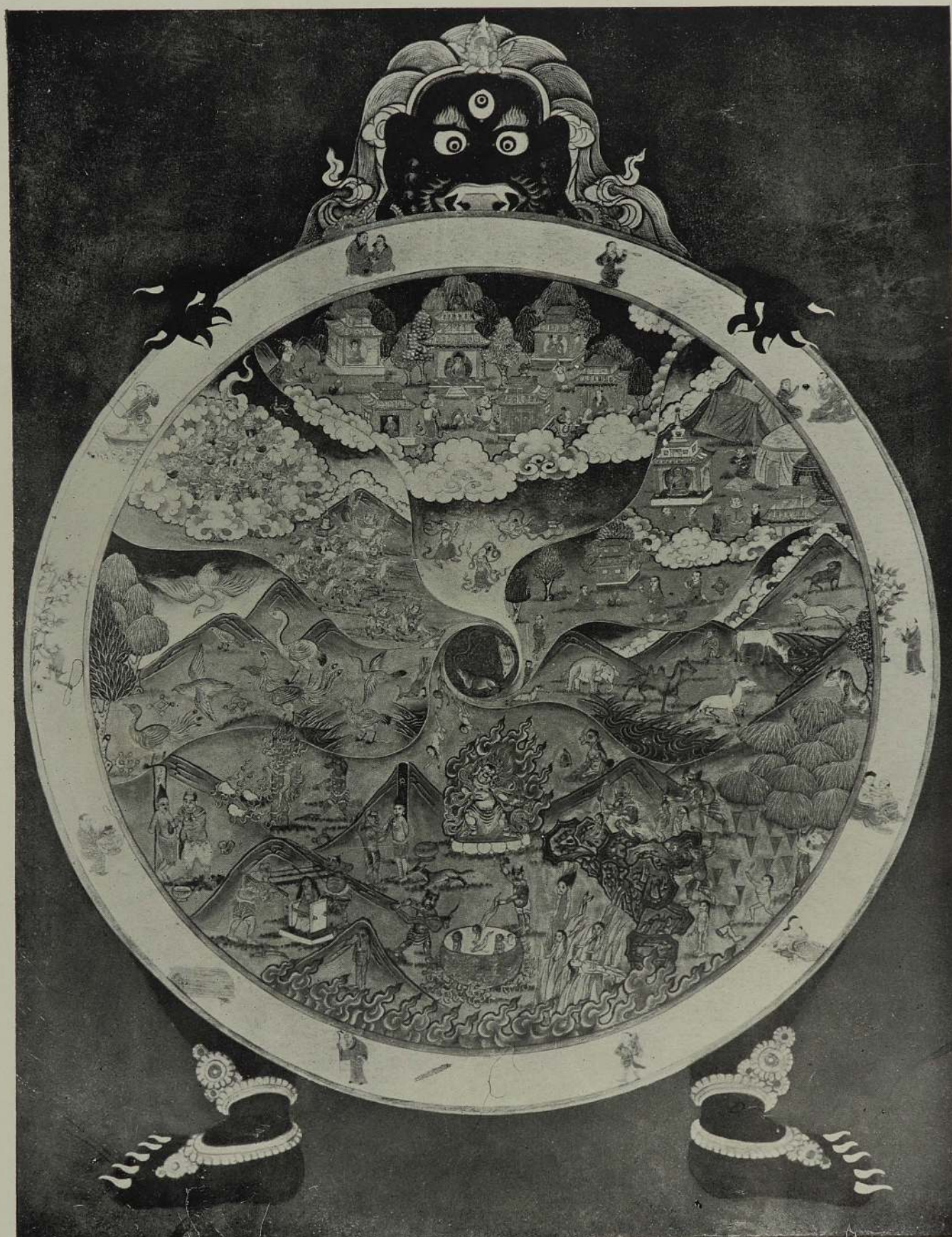
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• THE WHEEL OF BECOMING

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# THE BUDDHIST

(Organ of the Colombo Y.M.B.A.)

“*Sīla Paññānato Jayam*”

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## BUDDHIST UNITY

WHEN the Buddha preached His first sermon, after the attainment of Enlightenment, His human audience consisted of but five people, the five ascetics who had once been His companions but who later had abandoned Him because He had given up extreme austerity in order to follow a more fruitful path. It will be recalled that the Buddha continued His ministry as Teacher for 45 years. Already in His life-time, therefore, His message of Peace and Happiness had spread over vast tracts of territory and the followers of the Middle Way amounted to many hundreds of thousands, in all ranks of life. When, 300 years later, the great Emperor Asoka, after a career of conquest, embraced Buddhism and thenceforward followed the paths of Peace, he sent forth messengers carrying the Good Tidings of the Buddha-word, across mountains and seas to the lands of the then known world. From India, within a few centuries, the Dhamma spread far and wide over the whole of Asia, and today five hundred and fifty million people acknowledge the Sākya Sage as their Guide, His Doctrine as their Rule of Life and the Community of His Disciples as their Exemplars.

Five hundred million people, *i.e.*, one-fifth, almost one-fourth, of the world's total population, call themselves Buddhists. No other religion can claim to have so large a number of adherents. If numbers signify anything, this must mean that one-fifth of the whole responsibility for the world's peace and happiness devolves upon the Buddhists. How do they, how can they, discharge this unmistakable obligation? Not very effectively, as things are, if the truth were told.

Why should this be so? Because the Buddhists are unorganised, because they lack unity. They are like grains of sand, scattered on the sea-shore, great in number but having no cohesion and, therefore, possessing no strength. Mix these grains of sand with cement and water and their combined strength will be beyond measure. It is this that Buddhists need, unity and solidarity, cohesion and organisation. It is in order to supply this deficiency that the World Fellowship of Buddhists was inaugurated at the Sacred Temple of the Tooth in Kandy, Ceylon, in May, 1950. With its foundation was planted a seed which, if watered and nurtured and protected from chill blast and scorching sun, will eventually produce a wide-spreading Tree whose benign protection will cover the wide earth and shelter under its shade the groaning millions who now hunger for happiness and peace of mind.

This unity of the Buddhists, now living in many lands and many of them separated from each other often for centuries, because of political and other circumstances—this unity cannot be achieved in a day. It must be sought after with courage and determination, with wisdom and foresight, with understanding and tolerance. It can be brought about only by those who are prepared to recognise the fundamental oneness that underlies all Buddhist belief and practice and not by those who strive to accentuate the seeming, outward differences of ritual and ceremonial.

The old adage *Tout comprendre est tout pardonner* (to understand all is to overcome desire for censure) holds good in the sphere of religious

activity as it does in the realm of the emotions. It is so fatally easy and so temptingly self-satisfying for followers of one Buddhist sect to go about with nose in air, puffed with a sense of superiority, unctuous with self-righteousness, saying “Behold, we are It; the others are just mud, or even, dung.”

It is such arrogant conceit that the Buddha condemned as *māna*, the desire to measure oneself against others, as being one of the greatest obstacles on the path to Nibbāna.

The Buddha declared that each man must find out the truth for himself. This liberty which He enunciated in that famous Discourse, the *Kālāma Sutta*, is one of Buddhism's greatest glories. The Buddha levied no penalties on knowledge, the Buddhists have no proscribed literature. Attempts to lay down the law to others as to what is or is not Buddhism by those who cannot claim Arahantship are palpably absurd and should be treated with contempt. The Buddhists have no Pope and any pugnacious prelates who try to set themselves up in such a role will only succeed in making themselves look ridiculous. Happily, the authentic teachings of the Buddha are found recorded in numerous books which have come down the ages, sanctified by common acceptance. The fundamental doctrines of Buddhism are easy to distinguish, given a certain measure of intelligence and, above all, a sense of humility.

Buddhist unity has to be achieved not by hurling invectives at those who hold beliefs and follow practices in some slight way differing from one's own, but by learning more about the different Schools and seeking the highest common factors of agreement. Mutual ig-

norance and mutual recrimination are the enemies of friendship and goodwill. The removal of such ignorance and prejudice should be one of the chief objects of the World Fellowship of Buddhists and their substitution by desire to investigate and understand, without rancour and conceit, other points of view besides one's own. The forthcoming Conference of Buddhists in Japan will provide a unique opportunity for a such a

purpose and we wish it all success. There have been undisguised attempts to belittle its importance and even to prevent its being held. The followers of Māra lurk in many places but Righteousness must, in the end, prevail. The Buddhists of the world have many common problems awaiting solution. These can best be solved by a united effort and every endeavour calculated to promote such unity deserves the goodwill and the

assistance of those who have at heart the welfare of the Buddha-sāsana.

“Happy is the appearance of Buddhas in the World ;

Happy their proclamation of the True Doctrine ;

Happy the unity of the Community of Believers ;

The efforts of those thus united lead to happiness.”

## THE EXPANSION OF BUDDHISM

By S. F. de SILVA

(Principal, Government Training College)

OUR ancient texts relate the story of how the Blessed One on attaining Enlightenment wondered whether He should preach His message to the world. “Then thought I,” says the Blessed One, “Mankind is intent on its attachments and takes delight and pleasure in them. For such, it is hard to see the principle of causality, origination by way of a cause . . . hard it is to perceive the cessation of all compound things, the renunciation of clinging to rebirth, the extinction of all craving.” “But,” continues the Blessed One, “on account of my *pity* for all beings I surveyed the world, I beheld beings whose eyes were but little clouded with dust and who could perceive the truth.” And so the Buddha declared, “Open to them are the doors of the Immortal.”

His first thoughts were about His five earlier companions in the search, and He decided to speak to them. On His way He met the Ājivaka (ascetic) Upaka, who asked Him, “who is your teacher and whose doctrine do you approve ?”

The Blessed One declared that instructor and teacher He had none, and He was on His way to Kāsi, to set going the wheel of the doctrine. “In the blinded world the Drum of the Immortal will I beat.” Upaka was not impressed and went his way. The Blessed One in due course, reached the Deer Park of Isipatana in Benares. His earlier companions had thought Him a defaulter from ascetic practices and said among themselves. “We must not greet Him, nor rise in respect,

but we will set a seat for Him.” But strange to say as the Blessed One approached, they all rose in respect and greeted Him. “Give ear,” said He, “I have attained the Immortal. If you walk according to this teaching even in this life, you will learn, realise and attain the goal.” So these six (the Buddha and five ascetics) were among the first to walk the good way and came to Journey's end.

For forty years the Blessed One lived the life of a friend and helper of mankind. To His disciples He gave an inspiring message. “Go ye forth, brethren, on your journey for the profit of the many, for the bliss of the many, out of compassion for the world. Go not any two together. Proclaim the Dhamma, goodly in its beginning, goodly in its middle and goodly in its ending. Both in the spirit and in the letter do you make known the all perfected, utterly pure righteous life.”

This message was to be carried as the Blessed One Himself declared to Nigrodha—“Not desiring to win pupils, not wishing to make others fall from their religious vows, not wishing others to give up their ways of life, not wishing to establish them in wrong ways or to make them give up ways that are good. Not so ! But, Nigrodha, there are bad things not put away, things that have to do with corruption, things causing suffering, having ill for their fruit. It is for the rejection of these things, Nigrodha, that I teach you the Dhamma.

### COMPASSION

Such an attitude so characteristic of the Buddha, is the inevitable outcome of the *compassion* He felt for all. What concerned Him was the fact of humanity, rather than race and caste and creed. “Even as a mother as long as she doth live, watches over her child, her only child, even so should one practise an all-embracing mind unto all beings.” *Tolerance* and *Kindliness* marked the spread of His Dhamma. The rock edicts of the Buddhist Emperor, Asoka, are inscribed in the spirit of the Dhamma for the ruler was a most devout follower.

“His Majesty does reverence to men of all sects, whether ascetics or householders, by donations and various modes of reverence. A man must not do reverence to his own sect by disparaging that of another man . . . The sects of other persons deserve reverence for one reason or another. By thus acting, a man exalts his own sect and at the same time does service to the sects of other people.”

The Great compassion which actuated the spread of the Dhamma is treasured even by those who today are not followers. Among the Mongol shepherds this story is often told when winter drives them to spend the day by the fire. The Sakyamuni on one of his errands of mercy was met by a monster—a sky-tall terror, who on seeing the Master, bellowed out “O son of Peace, thy love shall yield to hate.” The Buddha only looked at the monster's face and calmly

replied, "Monster, even *thee* I love." Whereat this sky-tall terror changed and shrank to hand-breath size and in the form of a dove circled over His head uttering these words—

"Hate hath no harm for love—  
So sang the song,  
And peace unweaponed, con-  
quers every wrong."

Another story related of Punna also illustrates the *amity* that inspired the teachers of the Dhamma. Punna was to go into a region notorious for its evildoers. He was told that he would be abused. "Tis no matter," said he, "such men are good in that they *only* abuse me and not strike me." "But if they strike thee with sticks and stones?" "They are gentle people in that they *only* strike me with *only* sticks and stones." "What if they cut thee up and destroy thy body?" "I shall not think ill of them for they only destroy my perishable body." Nothing could daunt these men for they were true sons of the Sakyan, for had not the Master said "Wherefore, Phagguna, if anyone to thy face abuse thee, were to strike thee with fist, or stick or sword, thou must train thyself to this: My heart shall be unwavering. No evil word will I send forth, I will abide compassionate of others' welfare, of kindly heart and without resentment. Moreover though robbers or highwaymen should, with a two-handed saw, carve you in pieces limb by limb, whoso grows darkened in mind will not be fulfilling my injunction."

#### THE DHAMMA SPREADS

So the Buddha Dhamma was preached out of compassion for the world, by men whose hearts were full of compassion for others. In the Buddha's own days, after forty-five years of teaching, the Dhamma had become a force in the lives of the people of the middle Ganges. Towns such as Saketa, Baranasi, Rajagaha, Kapilavastu, had become important centres of the Dhamma. People from all walks of life accepted the Way. The teaching was not merely a way of salvation for those who had come to realise the transiency of all worldly things, it was also a guide of life for those in this world, and it taught the duties of social life not merely as a means of accumulating merit but as a moral discipline. For the Blessed One asked the

Lady Visākhā why she wanted permission to bestow eight kinds of permanent alms. Her answer was. "When I think of this (alms), gladness will arise and from gladness, joy, and with gladness of heart my whole being will be at peace, and being at peace, I shall feel happiness. This Lord, is the Blessing that I perceive in asking the eight boons of the Tathāgata." Here is testimony to the enthusiasm and moral illumination which, as a fact of history, the teaching of the Buddha inspired among the laity.

From the middle Ganges Valley, the Dhamma spread to the outer world. To the north-west, lay the great trade route to the Indian frontier and Kashmir. From the Indus Valley one could travel to the Kabul Valley, the Gandharadesa and then either to ancient Parthia or to Central Asia. North of the Indus Valley one could travel to Kashmir and by high mountain passes, to the Pamir plateau and so on to Central Asia. South-west lay the route from the middle Ganges... past Sanchi, Ujjani to Bharukaccha, the great seaport known to the Babylonians as Baveru. Across the Deccan, or Dakshina-desa, routes lead down the valleys of the Godavari and the Kishna and the ancient ports at these river mouths, enabled people to sail to Ceylon or East, to the Indies and the Malay Peninsula. From the mouth of the Ganges too, ships sailed to the coast of modern Burma, the Suvāna Bhūmi (land of gold) and then across the isthmus of Kra to Siam and Indo-China. Along these ways the Buddha message travelled, and in course of time deeply influenced the lives of millions in Central and East Asia, the South and South-East Asia. In the words of a Great French Scholar, Dr. Grousset, "It was in the early middle ages about the seventh century A.D., the Buddhist world experienced one of those favoured eras, wherein the human spirit blossomed into its fairest flowers. Darkness brooded over the western civilization. But away in the Far East, India and China were living with an intense political, intellectual, religious and artistic life. Buddhism in bringing them into contact with one another, had created a vast current of Humanism, from Ceylon to the furthest isles of the Japanese Archipelago. The human spirit lived there, a privileged hour, worthy of Athens or Alexandria."

#### ASOKA'S MISSIONS

The ascension to the throne of Bindusara, of his son Asoka is a great event in the history of Buddhism. Asoka's empire extended from the borders of modern Iran to the Bay of Bengal and throughout this realm there was great peace. For forty years he laboured for his people. In his own words "Work I must for the public benefit" and "for what do I toil? For no other end than this that I may discharge my debt to animate beings and that I may make them happy in this world. May they attain happiness in the world beyond!"

"And this is the chiefest conquest of all, the conquest of the Law of goodness and this also is effected by His Majesty in all the neighbouring realms even to where the Greek Antiochus dwells and beyond to where four kings—Ptolemy, Antigonas, Magas and Alexander and in the south, to the kings of Chola, Pandya and of Ceylon; likewise among the Yonas, Kambojas, the Andhras and the Pulindas."

Here is the first official record of missions to foreign lands, and on a full moon day in the month of June 2,260 years ago Asoka's son Arahat Mahinda, preached the Dhamma to King Devanampiyatissa of Ceylon on the summit of Mihintale. So began the history of the Buddha Dhamma in this island of Ceylon, which soon came to be known throughout the Buddhist world as the Dhamma-dipa (the isle of the True Doctrine). The Arahat Mahinda was thus one of the great lineage of the Blessed One. Himself a king's son and heir to the realm of Asoka, he renounced it for the kingdoms not of this earth but for kingship over himself. He was a true son of the Sakyan, even as he was a true son of his earthly father, for had not Asoka declared "this edict has been written so that my sons and grandsons may regard as the only true conquest, the conquests achieved by the Dhamma."

#### KING KANISHKA

Even as Asoka had given a great impetus to the spread of the Dhamma, even so another event and another king, paved the way for the Dhamma going beyond India. In the second century A.D. there was established in North India the Kushan Dynasty of Central Asiatic people. The greatest of this line was the Emperor Kanish-

ka I. His empire included the greater part of Afghanistan, Russian Turkistan and the great basin of Sinkiang. Sinkiang was the meeting place of the Trans-Asiatic routes from China to Pathia and India and *vice versa*. Buddhist settlements had grown up in Sinkiang and at Kuchi and in the district then known as Bactriana and Sogdiana, there were brave monks who faced the appalling dangers of travel on foot over thousands of miles across the desert of Central Asia, to carry the message of the Blessed One to China and the Far East. These brave sons of the "Sayka," are not known to us by name. Through them by the first century B.C. the Buddha Dhamma reached China. But it was during the first and second centuries of the Christian era that many whose names are known, reached China. To the south and north of the Tarim Desert towns had sprung up and there were monastic establishments. Their ruins have been brought to the notice of the world by men such as Von Le Coq, Aurel Stein and Waldsmicht. Along these Central Asiatic towns of Kashgar, Khotan, Dandan Ulik, Karasha and Miran, the teachers of the Faith reached the frontier Chinese towns of Tunhuang in the upper course of the Hoangho. In the fifth and eighth centuries A.D. a large number of grottos had been constructed for the use of Buddhist monks and these caves were the meeting places of Buddhist monks from Persia, Bactria, India, Sogdiana, Khotan and Kuchi. Tunhuang thus played a great role in the spread of Buddhism in China. It became a great centre of Buddhist learning, a true university where people from India, Parthia, Bactriana, Sogdiana and China met. In recent years Sir Aurel Stein discovered here, besides paintings, a very large number of manuscripts written in various languages such as Tibetan, Syriac and Khotanese.

#### CHINA, KOREA AND JAPAN

Slowly and steadily Buddhism spread in China and reached its glorious period under the great Tang Dynasty. It then spread to Korea in 372 A.C. and finally into the Japanese Islands by 552 A.C. The temples of Nara and Koryugi are monuments of the artistic impulse given to the people by the new Faith. The Mongols of the plateau of Mongolia also accepted this new Faith

Overseas too, the Buddha Dhamma

spread from India to Ceylon. From the coasts of Andhra-Desa, from ports at the mouths of the Godaveri and Kistna, Buddhist monks set out to the Malay Peninsula. The Malay Peninsula was on the great sea route to the East. Ancient seafarers touched at Kedah and travelled overland to the Bay of Bandon. From here, ships sailed to Thailand and the kingdoms of Champa, Cambodia and Annam in further India. In the seventh century A.C. a state named Sri Vijaya existed in South-East Sumatra and dominated the Malay Peninsula as far as Ligor. In 775 A.C. the Sri Vijaya kingdom was absorbed by the great empire of the Sailendras whose powers in the eighth century spread over further India and the Isle of the East Indies. The Sailendras have left one of the greatest monuments to Buddhism in the Great Stupa at Borohudur in Java, where the carved stone relief if sketched in a line, extends to three miles.

Buddhism entered Burma in pre-Christian days and Thailand in the third century A.C. From that day to this, Buddhism has flourished in this realm. In further India, Buddhism flourished in the kingdoms of Champa and Cambodia. In the 900 A.D. the Buddhist king, Indra Varman, set up at Don Duang, the first Buddhist shrine. At Angkorvat there reigned a Buddhist monarch, Jaya Varman the VII, who built the world-famous Ankor Thom or Bayon.

#### BUDDHIST ART

By the tenth century A.C. Buddhism has reached a very large world of Eastern and South-East Asiatic people. Wherever the Dhamma prevailed there arose a Buddhist art and literature. These centred around the personality of the Blessed One as the Teacher, or round the ideal of the Boddhisatvas, helpers and friends of mankind. The artist created worlds out of his imagination and peopled them with shining ones—Devas. Over all this art there is a tender humanist spirit, of man the sufferer, man the victor. The human figure becomes the vehicle of spiritual expression. Nowhere, says Prof. Grousset, has the "poetry of human hands been so well brought out as in Buddhist art. Hands of compassion and kindness, of tender appeal or sane arguments, are represented in stone and fresco paintings by Ajanta, Bagh and Tun-

huang are centres of Buddhist art while in Tang China there lived the greatest of Buddhist painters, Wu taotse. Nara and Koryugi are celebrated for great paintings of Japanese Buddhists—and in all these there glows the great compassion for all living things that Buddhism inspired in the human heart.

Not only in colour and line did men express their faith in the Buddha and the graciousness of His teaching. Human hands wrought in metal and stone and the Buddha image is one of the greatest creations of the human genius. Witness the famous image in the Abhayagiri Vihare in Ceylon, or the Buddha image of Saranath, or the celebrated images at Borobuddur. The eyes are full of compassion and the hands, now express fearlessness, or goodwill and blessings; or they unravel some thread of thought or call the earth to witness His great search for truth. Wherever the Dhamma went the image of the great Teacher too went with it, not as an object of worship but as an object of meditation and reverence. "I know nothing," says Keyserling, "more grand in this world than the figure of the Buddha. It is an absolutely perfect embodiment of spirituality in the visible domain."

#### BENIGN INFLUENCE

Buddhist art also served to teach. Thus in the temples, the walls were used to preach to the illiterate the need to practise the good life, in body, spirit and mind, how one reaps as one has sown and that the way to the immortal lies open to all who desire to tread it, even to the worst sinner and feeblest.

Wherever Buddhism prevailed it raised man to higher levels. It denounced caste. It laid stress on inner purity not the laying of fires on altars but the quenching of fires within. It preached and practised, compassion to all things that live and the earliest known hospitals for man and beast were established in Buddhist lands. It preached and practised toleration so that no blood was shed in the name of the Compassionate One. In the words of Sir Edwin Arnold "It made the proudest assertion ever made of human freedom", freedom to think, to act, and believe, freedom from fear of gods and demons, the freedom to make or mar our own selves and freedom from bondage to powers above. It taught that the world can be understood,



"Coming to be, coming to be, at that thought there arose in me a vision into things not called before to mind and knowledge arose, insight arose, light arose." Not uncaused and casually nor by the fiat of Ishvara, Indra, Soma, Varuna, Brahma, did events happen, painful or otherwise. Events came impelled by preceding causes and conditions which man could by his intelligence and goodwill, study, govern and intensify." Here is the knowledge that casts out fear.

Finally the Dhamma gave to every man a grand vision, noble and inspiring, of man setting out to reach the Supreme bliss.

"*Straight* is the name that Road is called and *Free from fear*, the quarter whither thou are bound.

Thy chariot is the Silent Runner named, with wheels of Righteous effort fitted well, Conscience the leaning board; the Drapery is Heedfulness; the Driver is the Norm. I say, and Right Views, they that run before, and be it woman, be it man for whom such chariot doth wait, by that same car unto Nibbana's presence shall they come."

Our minds naturally turn to those whose love and courage brought Asia. "light which still is beautiful." The Arahant Mahinda is forever remembered by the Buddhists of Ceylon along with his royal sister, Sanghamitta. They worked and died here and millions have paid homage to their memory. They can see today the very ashes of the Royal Apostle of Buddhism which were once enshrined on the summit of Mihintale.

#### SOME TEACHERS OF THE DHAMMA

One of the earliest of the Missionaries of the Dhamma was a Parthian Prince known by his Chinese name Ngan-She-Kao. Another was a monk from Sogdiana (modern Russian Turkestan). He too is known by his Chinese name Seng-hui, which means Sangha bhadrā.

When the Kushan Dynasty held sway over Central Asia, Buddhist Missionaries of the Yuchi went to China in the second and third century A.C. One was Dharmaraksha and he spent his days in China translating the Buddhist texts into Chinese. Yet another of these early Missionaries was a monk of Kuchi—the famous Kumarajiva. He studied the Dhamma at Kashmir and then returned to Kuci. He lived and worked in the towns of Khotan,

Yarkand and Kashgar in Chinese Turkestan. In 383 the Chinese occupied Kuci and Kumarajiva was taken, a precious captive to China. Here, till his death in 413 he worked and gained an unparalleled reputation as a teacher of the Dhamma. On his death-bed he told his disciples "Accept my work, but do not take me as your ideal. The Lotus grows in the mud, love the Lotus but not the mud."

Kashmir too, had her teachers and for many years was the centre of great Missionary activity. Buddhayasa and Vimalaksa spent their days in North China and in 1413 the latter left Changan for South China where he passed away teaching the Dhamma.

A more notable Missionary from Kashmir reached Nanking by sea after a sojourn in Java. He was a Prince of the Royal Family of Kashmir. His name was Gunawarma. His grandfather was expelled from Kashmir for his harsh rule and Gunawarma became a Bhikkhu in his twentieth year. Tradition states that he visited Ceylon and then proceeded to Java reaching Nanking in 431 A.D. He died in 442 A.D. full of years and honour.

Central India too, sent out her sons—some over land and others over seas. One of them was Dharmakshema. He met a martyr's end being murdered by a local chief in the desert of Central Asia. Two others of note were Gautama, Pragnaruci and Gunabhadra. The latter came to Ceylon and then sailed to China in 435 where he lived to the end of his days. From the famous city of Ujjani came Upasunya and Paramartha. From the north-west of India came three—Buddhabhadra, Vimokshasena and Jinaputra. The first named went on foot across Burma and Thailand reaching Tonking, from where he sailed to Canton. Vimokshasena was a prince of the Sakyan family and the three went to China at the request of the people for teachers of the Dhamma.

Political power in China passed in 267 A.D. into the hands of Taitsung the most celebrated King of a celebrated dynasty. In his day Nalanda had become the Athens of the East, and drew to her men from all parts of the known world. Hitherto Kashmir was the centre of learning, but Nalanda outshone all others. Most noted of Nalanda's teachers to visit China was Prabhakara

Mitra, the son of a royal family of Central India. He had heard at Nalanda, of the savage Tibetans and so he decided to take the Dhamma to them. With ten disciples he travelled North and took up residence with the chief of the Western Turks. He was then summoned to China by the Emperor. He reached Changan in 626 and died in 633.

Another celebrated Bhikkhu was Bodhiruci. He was the son of a Brahmin family in South India and had mastered the philosophy of the Sankhya, medicine and mathematics. In 692 a Chinese envoy had come to the port of Chalukya and invited Bodhiruci to China. He set sail in 693 and reached Changan in 706. He was the head of a board set up to translate the texts. This consisted of Chinese and Indian Bhikkhus. Bodhiruci himself translated 53 volumes of texts and died a very old man in 727 A.D. Another son of the Sakya who went as a Missionary was Subhakarasingha. He claimed descent from an uncle of the Blessed One. He set out for Central Asia and reached the Land of the Eastern Turks. He reached Changan in 735 and died at the age of 99.

The last of the great Missionaries to go to China were Vajirabodhi and his disciple Amoghavajra. Vajirabodhi was the third son of King Isanavarman of Central India. After studying at Nalanda, Vajirabodhi set out for South India and lived at Kanchi as teacher to the Pallava King, Nara Singha Potavarman. He left Kanchi for Ceylon and then accompanied a Mission sent by the King of Ceylon to China which reached Canton in 720. Vajirabodhi died at Layong in 732.

Amoghavajra was born in a Brahminical family settled in Ceylon. Converted to Buddhism by Vajirabodhi, he accompanied his teacher to China. In 736 he left China and returned to Ceylon where he spent three years. In 746 King Silamegha sent an embassy to China and Amoghavajra accompanied it. He remained in China, worked incessantly, teaching and translating the texts into Chinese. Amoghavajra died in 774 A.D.

Some idea of the majesty of the work achieved, may be gained if one considers first, the great physical hazards braved by the Missionaries. Whether by land or sea the dangers and trials were alike. Overland,

vast mountains and deserts had to be crossed and we can get some idea of the courage of these men from the records of Fahien and Hiuentasang. Overseas, the way between the Malay Peninsula and China were often swept by typhoons and many ships met with a sudden end. Pirates too, infested the seas, but nevertheless the Missionary in his zeal for his Dhamma, braved all

the terrors of land and sea. If one considers the enormous extent of land brought under the influence of the Dhamma, one can justly appreciate the grandeur of the achievement. These monks gave Asia light; they helped millions on the upward way. They sought no reward whether in this world or in the next. Like the Blessed One, they worked out of compassion for all men. They suffered hardships and

endured pain and privation, so that they might show the way to all beings. They had only heeded well the Master's Message.

“Go ye forth, my brethren, for the profit of the many, for the bliss of the many, out of compassion for the world. In the spirit and in the letter make known the all perfected, utterly pure religious life.”

## BUDDHA'S FIRST SERMON DHAMMA-CAKKA

### THE WHEEL OF THE DHAMMA

*Translated by the Ven. Paravahera Vajirañāṇa Maha Thero (Director, Dharmaduta Ashrama Vidyālaya, Colombo).*

IT was on the full-moon day of the month of Esala, (July-August) two months after His enlightenment, that the Buddha delivered to the Five Ascetics, at Benares, the Discourse known as the Dhamma-cakkappavattana,—setting in motion the wheel of the Dhamma, as his first sermon. With this the Buddha inaugurated his mission of disseminating the Doctrine of Nibbana for the benefit of gods and men.

The discourse contains the Four Noble Truths realized by the Buddha, by Himself, for the first time in the history of religious thought. It is the Four Noble Truths that remain fundamental throughout the whole of the Buddha's teaching and every word he uttered during the period of 45 years is linked with the theories of expounding these cardinal facts which are not found in any other system of thought. It is the realization of these Truths that constitutes the Path which leads to the purification of heart of mental defilements and taints making it possible to attain Nibbana, final deliverance from all the ills of life. Hence the name “Dhamma-cakka.” Dhamma means Truth; Cakka means the moving, the Noble, the Path, the Purity.

The discourse runs :—

“Thus is my hearing (says Ananda, the Treasurer of the Dhamma) :—

“At one time Blessed One was sojourning at Benares in Isipatana

(Hermitage) in the Deer Park. There the Lord addressed the Company of five Bhikkhus :—

“These two ends (extremes) monks are not to be practised by the Pabbajita (one who has gone forth from the worldly life). What are the two? That indulgence in sense-gratification, low vulgar, common, ignoble, perilous, and that conjoined with self-mortification, painful, ignoble and useless. Avoiding these two extremes the Middle Path, which tends to produce the eye of insight, knowledge, and tends to calm, to higher knowledge, enlightenment and Nibbana, has been realized by the Tathagata.

“And what, monks, is the Middle Path which...has been realized by the Tathagata? It is this Noble Eightfold Path, namely, Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right Concentration. This, monks, is the Middle Path which...has been realized by the Tathagata.

(1) “Now this, monks, is the Noble Truth of suffering: birth is suffering, old age is suffering, sickness is suffering, death is suffering, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress and despair are sufferings, to be conjoined with the unpleasant is suffering, parting with the pleasant is suffering, not getting what one wishes is suffering; in short, the five grasping-groups (Five Khandhas, physical body, feeling, sensation, mental compounds

and consciousness which form the individual) are suffering.

(2) “Now this, monks, is the Noble Truth of the cause of suffering: the craving which produces rebirth, combined with pleasure and lust taking delight here and there, namely, the craving for sense pleasure, craving for existence, craving for non-existence.

(3) Now this, monks, is the Noble Truth of the cessation of suffering: that is the complete cessation of craving, the relinquishment, forsaking, release, non-attachment.

(4) “Now this, monks, is the Noble Truth of the Path leading to the cessation of suffering; It is this Noble Eightfold Path, namely, Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration.

(i) “This is the Noble Truth of suffering.” Thus monks, of the doctrines un-heard before, insight, knowledge, science and light arose in me.

(ii) “This Noble Truth of suffering, must be comprehended.” Thus, Monks, of the doctrine un-heard before, insight, knowledge, science, light arose in me.

(iii) “This Noble Truth of suffering has been comprehended.”.... light arose in me.

(iv) “This is the Noble Truth of the cause of suffering.” Thus.... insight, knowledge, science and light arose in me.

(v) "This Noble Truth of the cause of suffering must be abandoned." Thus...light arose in me.

(vi) "This Noble Truth of the cause of suffering has been abandoned" Thus...light arose in me.

(vii) "This is the Noble Truth of the cessation of suffering." Thus...light arose in me.

(viii) "This Noble Truth of the cessation of suffering must be realized." Thus...light arose in me.

(ix) "This Noble Truth of the cessation of suffering has been realized." Thus...light arose in me.

(x) "This is the Noble Truth of the Path leading to the cessation of suffering." Thus...light arose in me.

(xi) "This Noble Truth of the Path leading to the cessation of suffering must be practised." Thus...light arose in me.

(xii) "This Noble Truth of the Path leading to the cessation of suffering has been practised" Thus...light arose in me.

"As long as in these Four Noble Truths with three turns and twelve aspects my insight-knowledge was not well purified, even so long,

monks, I, in the world with Devas, Maras, Brahmas, with the mankind including Ascetics and Brahamans, had not declared to be Fully-enlightened-One.

"And when, monks, in these Four Noble Truths with...my insight-knowledge was well purified, then monks, I, declared to be the Fully-enlightened-One."

"Knowledge and insight arose in me that the release of my mind is complete, this is my last existence, now there is no re-birth."

Thus spoke the Blessed One, the five monks were delighted at and approved the utterance of the Blessed One.

And while this exposition was being uttered there arose in the elder Kondañña the pure and spotless insight of Dhamma that "whatever has origination all that has cessation..."

Thus when the wheel of Dhamma was set turning by the Blessed One the Earth-Devas raised a shout "This Supreme Wheel of the Dhamma has been set forth by the Blessed One at Benares at Isipatana in Deer Park, a wheel which cannot be set forth by any Ascetic, Brahaman, Deva, Mara, Brahma, or by anyone in the world.

Hearing the shout of Earth-Devas the Devas of the heavens of the Four-great Kings...the Devas of the heaven of the Thirty-Three... the Devas of Yama...the Devas of Tusita...the Devas of Nimanarati...the Devas of Paranimmita Vasavatti raised a shout "this wheel of Dhamma has been set forth by the Tathagata...which cannot be set forth...by anyone in the world."

Thus at that moment at that second, a shout went up as far as the Brahma world. And this ten thousand world system shook, shuddered and trembled, and a boundless great light appeared in the world surpassing the Divine majesty of Devas.

So the Blessed One uttered: "verily, Kondañña has gained the knowledge"...Thus "Añña Kondañña" ("Kondañña who has gained the knowledge") became the name of the elder Kondañña. The end.

\* Here knowledge means the realization of the Dhamma—Four Noble Truths by the insight of transitory nature of the things and the attainment of the state of Sotapañña, the first fruit of Ariyan Path whereby Nibbana is seen as one sees an object through the flash of lighting...

## KAMMA

THE doctrine of Kamma, which is simply that of Causality, is common to all Indian philosophies. Before the time of the Buddha it had already been the subject of long and subtle controversies among the Brahmins, and each of the philosophical systems of Indian origin has elaborated special theories on the subject of Kamma, its nature and its working.

It seems that there was a time in which the doctrine of Kamma formed part of an esoteric teaching. It was then probably opposed to the popular beliefs which attributed the important events that occurred in the world to the will of the gods, as also the minor happenings which concerned each individual. A man was born deaf, blind, weak, or strong and, without physical

defects because a god had been pleased to produce such a being. Again, prosperity or poverty, success or failure, fortunate or unfortunate incidents, and, in fact, all the aspects of the life of the individual, depended on the will of the gods. The reasons on which this will was grounded, or which caused it, remained mysterious and inexplicable; at the same time, it was neither absolute nor unchangeable. The god might be won over by adoration, by signs of respect, by offerings; hence the ceremonies, rites, and clergy needed for their celebration. In short, these good people believed that there existed means to induce a change of mind in the god who wished them ill, and to awake the desire of benevolence in the mind of a god who was indifferent. In all ages and in all civilisations the mass of man-

kind has thought in this manner, and such dealings with the Divinity form the effective part of all religions.

It was so in India, then, before the time of the Buddha. But among the thinkers doubts arose. They asked themselves whether the facts of which they were the witnesses were, in reality, the results of an arbitrary will arising *without a cause*. This seemed inadmissible. The will, the manifestation of desire, must be produced by something, and, consequently, if it has a cause, this cause itself must have one. . . . A door was thus opened on the infinite.

In an oft-quoted passage of the *Satapatha Brahmana* we find confirmation of the esoteric character of the doctrine of Kamma among the ancient Brahmins. As con-

By ALEXANDRA DAVID-NEEL

stantly happens in discussions among Orientals, the answer given to the question propounded in the dialogue which has come down to us seems to be irrelevant. We shall see presently, however, that it ignores, perhaps expressly, the ideas on which the question is based, because these, in the opinion of the respondent, are incorrect, so that he substitutes another view for them.

Artabhāga asks the renowned sage Yājñavalkya: "When a man dies his voice goes into the fire, his breath into the wind, his eye to the sun, his thought to the moon, his ear to the heavens, his body to the earth, his ego to the ether, the hair of his body and his head to the plants and the trees, his blood and his seed flow into the waters. But where, then, dwells the man himself?"

Yājñavalkya, to this very direct question, answers: "Artabhāga, this knowledge is for us two alone. Not a word on this subject to the people." And Yājñavalkya "having taken Artabhāga by the hand, the two of them drew aside and talked together. And they spoke of actions (Kamma); by pure acts man becomes pure, by evil acts he becomes evil."

This secret knowledge, the possession of an élite of thinkers, which they were disinclined to proclaim openly, Buddhism proceeded to make the basis of its teaching, proclaiming: *Ye dharmā hetu prabhavā*: All things spring from a cause.

This apparently simple formula gives rise, when one studies it, to numerous complications. But before proceeding to a summary description of some of the aspects of Kamma, let me say that the Buddhist multitude hardly considers this latter save under the form of moral retribution. The desire for justice which is instinctive in the great majority of men has made them imagine, as the causes of the evils which afflict them or others, evil actions which have been committed either in this life or in a previous life by the person who is now suffering. According to this artless conception, good deeds, on the contrary, must necessarily lead to happiness, either in this life or in a future life, for the man who has performed them.

This conception of automatic and impersonal justice appears, to most Buddhists, infinitely superior to that which attributes to the arbitrary will of a god the misery or happiness of the beings who are in that case merely his playthings.

In fact, according to this theory, no one is wronged. If we are born healthy in mind and body, in circumstances favouring a happy future, it is because we ourselves have produced, in previous lives, the causes which have brought about our birth in these conditions. On the other hand, cruelty, avarice, sensuality, intemperance, and other vices, if unrestrained during our previous lives, will ensure a birth under unfavourable conditions.

A work which enjoys great popularity among Hinayāna Buddhists is *The Questions of King Milinda*,<sup>1</sup> in which we read as follows:—

"The king asked Nāgasena: Why are not men all alike? Why are some of them short-lived and others long-lived? Why are some ugly and others handsome? Why are some powerful, others rich, others poor? Why are some born in lowly social conditions and others among the upper classes? Why are some stupid and others intelligent?"

"Nāgasena answered: Why are not all plants the same? Why have some a sour taste while others are salt, or bitter, or acid, or astringent, or sweet to the taste?"

"It seems to me, said the king, that these differences come from the difference in the quality of the seeds.

"Thus it is, O king, with the differences that you have noticed among men, the reason for which you asked me. All beings have each their own Kamma; they are the heirs of their Kamma. They have their Kamma for ancestor, for family, and for supreme Lord. It is Kamma that classifies them in all sorts of categories."

And elsewhere:—

"My deeds (Kamma) are my riches, my deeds are my inheritance, my deeds are the womb which bore me. My deeds are the race to which I belong, my deeds are my refuge." (Anguttara Nikāya).

We will return to these statements, and examine the explana-

tions which have been given of them.

Having been born under conditions determined by his past deeds, it is for the man to overcome the difficulties caused by his mistakes, and to prepare better conditions for his present life and his future lives. In the same way it is important that he who is enjoying a happiness which he owes to his virtuous conduct in the past, should beware of committing evil deeds that will involve him in suffering in the near, or distant, future.

Pious and simple people have embroidered on this theme *ad infinitum*, and have even elaborated codes which classify and show the exact nature of the rewards and punishments which follow each sort of virtuous or evil deed.

This tendency to perceive in the Kamma a sort of retributive justice, and to see it working as such in all the events of life, naturally gave rise to criticism. It is absurd, many Buddhists think, to establish a direct relation between the neuralgia or the intestinal troubles from which a man suffers, and an evil deed which he once committed.

Milinda, in the work already quoted, interrogates Nāgasēna on the subject of various accidents and illnesses from which the Buddha suffered. Given the belief professed by Nāgasēna, this was to attack the most difficult side of the problem. What Nāgasēna really believed was not only that the Buddha was unable to do any further evil, since he had attained enlightenment, but also that all the consequences of such wrong acts as he had committed in the past were exhausted. How then was it possible for him to be ill, or how could he be hurt by a fragment of rock which his envious cousin had dropped upon him with murderous intent?

Evidently Nāgasēna could regard these facts as the action of Kamma—of retributive justice—and as he could apparently envisage Kamma only in this form, he denied that Kamma was a general law.

"It is not true," replied Nāgasēna, "that all suffering comes from the Kamma. The bile, the fluids of the body, their combinations, the variations of temperature, the action of external agents, etc.,

1. The king here called Milinda is a historical personage, one of the Greek kings who reigned over Bactria, to the west of India, after the conquests of Alexander the Great, 200 B.C. His name was Menandros or Menandrou.

can produce suffering. Thus those who affirm that the Kamma is the sole cause of suffering uphold an error."

The king, who in the course of these dialogues often shows himself more subtle than his interlocutor, is by no means satisfied with this answer. Nâgasêna has referred the question back, but he has not answered it. All these details: bile, temperature, external agents, have a cause; their presence in the individual's organism, or in his environment, is it not attributable to the Kamma?

Nâgasêna can only move yet another step backwards: "The bile may be troubled by cold, by heat, by wrong food." In such cases, the suffering would be the result of the cold, of the heat, or of unwholesome food. "The number of events which are produced by Kamma is small in comparison with those which other causes engender."

Passing on to the accident of which the Buddha was a victim, Nâgasêna recalls the fact that Devadatta wished to kill his glorious cousin, of whose renown he was jealous. The rock which he rolled down the slopes of the mountain should, according to his calculations, have crushed the Buddha, who was seated lower down, but in rolling downwards the rock struck two others, and was deflected from its course. The shock broke off a fragment of stone which flew towards the Buddha and struck him on the foot. The pain felt by the Master as a result of this wound must have been an effect either of his own Kamma, or of causes unconnected with him and his actions. Nâgasêna knows of no causes outside these two categories, and, as, according to him, the cause of the painful accident could not be attributed to the Kamma of the Buddha, he declares that it was "external." This conclusion is feeble, and not in accordance with the spirit in which the king asked the question.

We should perhaps see in this dialogue the desire to react against the idea which made people see in the sick, the unhappy, the victims of any sort of ill-fortune, guilty individuals who were expiating their past faults.

This conception has not disappeared in India. One still meets orthodox Hindus who hold to it. With the utmost seriousness they will declare that to build hospitals, to give alms to the poor, or in any way to relieve suffering, is to go against the Law of Kamma which produced this suffering. Some will even go so far as to affirm that such well-doing is harmful to those relieved by it, because in mitigating their sorrows or freeing them from suffering we retard the effects of their expiation.

To these unenlightened bigots one may object—and Buddhists do not fail to do so—that if one admits that the sick, the poor, and the unfortunate are suffering the automatic penalty of old faults, one must also admit that if the automatic result of this same Kamma (their past deeds) has brought them into contact with doctors or generous persons who are willing and able to help them, it has done so in order that they may profit by such aid. If according to this theory, their ills ought to continue without alleviation, the force of their Kamma ought presumably to have led them far from any possible source of help.

This logic will hardly convince those who are obstinately attached to their cruel beliefs. It is a singular fact that one meets individuals who apply this barbarous faith to their own persons. Without being able to guess what crimes they may have committed in their past lives, without knowing for certain that they have ever committed any, these victims of a stupid dogma insist on believing themselves guilty when stricken by physical or moral suffering, and without reacting they submit to their torments, seeing in them the expiation of faults of which they are ignorant.

The manner in which Buddhism envisages the person does not fit in with the ideas of a strictly individual retributive justice as they are generally understood in the West. But in all countries men are readily illogical. The most vehement defenders of the idea of personal responsibility must, however, admit the law of heredity, which "visits the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation."<sup>2</sup> On the

other hand, although they believe that the person is an aggregation of unstable elements, and that no soul or durable *ego* can transmigrate from one life to the next, or be reincarnated in a new body, a large number of Buddhists continue to be haunted by the longing for individual retributive justice.

Let us return to Milinda. His dialogues with Nâgasêna epitomise the most orthodox Hinayânist and semi-popular doctrine on the subject of Kamma.

Milinda asked Nâgasêna:—

"What is it which is reborn, Nâgasêna?"

"The Name and Form (the personality) is reborn."<sup>3</sup>

"Is it the same Name and Form which is reborn?"

"No, but by this Name and Form actions are accomplished, good actions or evil actions, and, as a result of these, another Name and Form is born."

"If it were thus, would not the new being be freed from his evil Kamma?"

Nâgasêna replied: "Yes, if he were not the product of a rebirth, but as he is such a product, he is not freed from his evil Kamma."

After which, Nâgasêna applies himself to proving that the new being, although different from the previous one, is its consequence, its prolongation.

A man taking a meal on the upper floor of his house allows his lamp to flare up too high, and set fire to the thatch of the roof. The whole house catches fire, and the fire passing from house to house, all the village is burnt.

The man is arrested, and they say to him: "You have burnt the village." But he replies: "I have not burnt the village. The flame of the lamp which illuminated my repast was one thing, the fire which burnt the village was another."

Nâgasêna, agreeing with Milinda, concluded that the man was to blame and should be punished, because the fire that destroyed the village came from the flame of his lamp.

2. Exodus xx,6.

3. It agrees better with the meaning of the term to put the verb in the singular, for the couple forms an inseparable unity. We must remember that the *Name* represents those manifestations which constitute the mind; while the *Form* is the physical part of the person.

In the ensuing discussion he propounds several comparisons of the same kind. I will note two of them :—

“Imagine, O king, that a man pays a marriage-price to the parents of a little girl, intending to take her, later, as his wife; and then he goes elsewhere. In his absence the little girl grows up. Then another man pays a marriage-price to the parents, and marries the maiden. However, the first man returns and says: ‘Why have you married my wife?’ But the new husband replies: ‘It is not your wife that I have taken . . .’”

The first man had chosen a little girl, the second has wedded a maiden of nubile age. In every way, physically and mentally, this latter differs from the little girl for whom the traveller had paid the price. Yet she was still herself.

“Imagine that someone buys a jug of milk from a cowherd and goes away, leaving the jug in his care, saying: ‘I will return tomorrow.’ And the following day the milk is curdled. When the buyer returns he is offered the curdled milk. He refuses it, saying: ‘It was not curdled milk that I bought from you; give me my jug of milk.’ But the cowherd replies: ‘With no intervention on my part, your milk has become curdled.’”

Let us note, in passing, that in these two last comparisons Nāgasēna seems to incline toward the doctrines that consider the changes which have happened, whether to the milk or to the young girl, as representing the natural and continual evolution of a thing which still preserves a sort of basic identity. The curdled milk, the butter, the cheese, are only different aspects of the milk, as the little girl and the maiden are the successive aspects of the same woman.

This view was necessarily disputed by those Buddhists who held that the elements are not transformed, but disappear. I have heard it stated that these two

opinions are not irreconcilable. It is, I was told, the serial succession (*santāna*) which causes the illusion of an individual thing. The nature of the elements which appear and disappear instantaneously determines the nature of those which will follow.

Whatever may be their value, all these theories, and the comparisons made to illustrate them, do not in fact reach to the bottom of the question. They may show the succession of causes and effects, but they do not in any way explain what these good people long to know: namely, that the mechanism of an equitable retribution gives our deeds a moral sanction by the harvest which we shall reap from them in future existences. Neither do they in any way prove that the happy or painful circumstances of our present life represent the result of our *personal* activity in the past.

This last idea is not found in Buddhism. When we meet it there we must attribute it to the lack of understanding, on the part of those who uphold it, of the Buddhist teaching. There can be no room for absolutely individual retribution in a philosophy which denies the permanence and reality of the individual.

Retribution can exist only in a collective form in the general *Kamma*, just as the action which set it in motion was itself accomplished with the co-operation of the general *Kamma*. Nāgasēna, in any case, could not fail to be aware of the intertwining of the currents of *Kamma*.

Among the questions put by Milinda is one which concerns one of the numerous legends touching the previous existence of the Buddha (the *Jātakas*).

At this time, it is said, the future Buddha was a young Brahmin named Jotipāla. As Jotipāla, he insulted the Buddha Kassapa, one of his predecessors. Invited to go and listen to his preaching, he replied to those who asked him: “How can it benefit us to visit this good-for-nothing monk?”

Whence came the evil disposition that suggested these words to him? Here is what Nāgasēna said about it :—

“The conduct of Jotipāla was due to his birth and to his family surroundings. He belonged to a family of unbelievers. His mother, his father, his sisters, his brothers, his male and female relatives and his servants, were worshippers of Brahma, followers of Brahma. Convinced that the Brahmins were the noblest and most honourable of men, he scorned those who had adopted the religious life without belonging to their caste. It was under the influence of what he had heard said around him that he replied, when the potter Ghaṭikāra invited him to visit the Master: “How can it benefit us to visit this good-for-nothing monk?”

The effects of education, according to Nāgasēna, here prevailed over the good tendencies which the Bodhisatta possessed as the fruit of good actions which he had accomplished in previous lives.

Even more complicated combinations appear in what follows :—

“Just as the best potion is bitter when it is mixed with poison; just as the coldest water becomes hot on contact with the fire; just as the hottest fire loses its heat at contact with water, and is changed into cold black cinders, thus was it with Jotipāla. In spite of the faith and knowledge which had been his (in previous lives), when he was reborn into a family of unbelievers he became as if blind.”

Nevertheless, underneath this sort of blindness the good characteristics acquired in the course of past lives remain, and are only waiting for a chance to show themselves. It is thus that Jotipāla, having in the end gone to visit Kassapa, and having listened to his preaching, immediately understood the truth of his teaching, became his disciple, and acquired higher powers of clairvoyance and concentration of thought.

## THE BUDDHA AS A PRESENT-TIME PROBLEM

By MARTIN STEINKE, Berlin

NOTHING is so characteristic of the present day as the attitude of the masses towards intellectualism. The highest effect

of human thought and sagacity to control and overcome nature produces only the magical illusion of progress: it has till now not

shown itself to be the great benefactor of mankind. The blinding light of millions of watts, which lights up evening after evening

is not the magic lamp of Aladdin lighting the path to unknown treasures, but only a dim flash into the darkness of life's cave, which oftentimes is but a hell.

The effort with which the modern man seeks to master the problem is at once heroic and tragic, but all his struggle and striving is shattered at imponderables, the origin of which is closed to his eye and knowledge. That this is so, he knows. Since he cannot alter it, there remains the meagre comfort to him of "labouring and not despairing," and he tries to make it more savory by the motto: selection of the fittest. Shrugging his shoulders he faces the fact that this selection only makes the tension of life's struggle sharper instead of diminishing it, but as long as he is happy, this question is not a burning one. When it does become burning, then one sees that all sagacity, all thinking, becomes weary and dull with the weight of facts, because the wheel of action produces ever "new" life with new tensions for even stronger struggles. That which once gave rhythm and buoyancy to his life, his intellect, his thinking, becomes a valueless and worn-out coin for him. He underlies in the battalions of those bound by destiny. The excellency which was once his glory is now but a dim remembrance without the pulsating life of the present.

A heavy price for former greatness, but not too heavy, if out of it the knowledge arises that thus it is not possible to master life's problem, that the way of one-sided intellect is only the way to illness, age and decay. And yet too dear, if such knowledge only leads to resignation, to passivity or even to despair.

If the crisis of his life becomes a spur to deal with life's problem in a different way, then man will occupy himself, according to his faculties, either with ethics, morals or religion, or philosophy. In most cases at first with the emotional mixture of the three.

#### RELIGION AS HELP

All spiritual teaching promise him their help, and hold their promise according to his faculties and power of cognition. The more modern the cloak in which it is clothed, the more willing ears it finds, and sometime is necessary before man learns to distinguish the merely external from the essen-

tial. But the essential of each spiritual teaching does not appeal to each individual, although all of them have the same aim: to bring help.

Life's struggle, as man is accustomed to lead it, brings him into a relation of mutual lack of consideration, which arises as a natural result out of an absolute misconception of life's force. The occasional agitations of compassion and so-called selflessness, are only a stimulus, but no real remedy, which at best influence his character without being able to give clear sight about life.

But this is for him *the* sore point that he has no clear sight about the most important thing for him—his life, that he must take it as an existent factor, which whenever and wherever he puts it into his calculation, always ends in the unknown . . . nay, in the certain, deadly certain, and makes thereby all his reckonings illusional.

"Highness, honour, power and glory are vain.

A world conquers proud head,  
And a trembling head with  
pilgrim's stick  
Covers with its darkness the  
grave."

A cognition as old as man himself, without any other value than the statement of facts which underlie the law. Because the facts are in accordance with the law, the possibility exists to recognize them, when the law is recognized.

Many spiritual teachings try to mediate the cognition of this course of law. The question is, do they fulfil their task? The answer can only be given by each individual himself. Is the solution found according to actuality, that means through self-experience, then there can be no burning questions in life any more. All problems of life cease to be. Life, the restless, unquenched and unrestrained, grasping, thirsting, seeking, pushing and being pushed, nourishing and being forced to feed, comes to rest. Man finds peace as the conclusion of the lawful course. And there, where till now all was unrest, rest and peace rule, namely, in man.

#### LIFE IS A BATTLE

Life is a battle, and this battle has two fronts: one of them is the outward, the other the inward.

The outmost battlefront of the first front is intellectualism of all epochs. If its strength is exhausted, then man draws back to the second front and seeks to fight from there anew. The mental stream of all epochs marks this battle line.

As each epoch has its own stamp, it is quite natural that man doubts that the solution for the present should lie in the past. And he is right when doubting, if he sees life as a problem of masses and collectively, if he sees, figuratively speaking, the building as a whole and not the single bricks. Mankind, seen as a mass, is a body in constant convulsions and spasms. The striving to get the mastership of these states is a characteristic mark of each epoch. As the mass of men is not homogeneous, this fact is a proof for those who can see that all attempts to come to the goal on such a way must be shattered, because the structure of the mass is different in its single parts, and that the wishes and hopes of the mass never can be balanced collectively. Man as a single being always seeks well-being, just as does the whole mass, and only reaps disappointment, as long as life is not recognized. The natural result arising from this fact is that there must be a turning away from the collective problem to the individual problem.

At this point of cognition the person of the Buddha, and with him his doctrine, becomes a problem to be deliberated on by everyone at the present time.

#### THE BUDDHA'S SOLUTION

The Buddha sought and found the solution of life's problem "in this six-feet-high body." He liberated the work from all external accessory part, whatever name it might have.

He determined the means of work, limited the realm of work, and showed the work method.

The only useful means of work for the solution of the problems is the power of clear consciousness of man. By way of such cognition he withdrew and removed the whole out of the sphere of the mystical, the dim, the emotional, of confused thinking, into the light of clear cognition.

By means of subtle inquisitive work, clear only to those who follow his steps with his whole heart, who literally come to absolute renunciation of "self," the Buddha

ascended after many years of hard striving to the point of acting process led by reason, called man, where the force of cognition is manifested in full clearness. All that can be experienced through such cognition he puts into the following words: "suffering arises only where something arises, and suffering disappears only where something disappears." As long as such cognition does not predominate in life, it is impossible to bring to cessation the lawful acting process called man. The law by means of which the acting is nourished is called deed, Kamma. Man, as he is in body or form, rūpa, and mind, nāma, is the result of his deeds. As long as full cognition, full wisdom are not attained, all deeds of man are pregnant of acting Kamma. "Heirs of their deeds are the beings," is the concluding sentence of such cognition.

This shows the direction for all striving, should it be successful in the sense of the *Dhammā*, namely in the direction of mastering and curbing of deeds. Since all deeds of man are of a threefold kind, so also the striving must be of a threefold kind, namely in thoughts, words and bodily deeds. There is no other field of working for the solution on life's problem. It embraces the whole realm of experience of human strength. Conscious acting, super or under, inner or outward of men, it is always produced by deeds, dependent on earlier acting. Such cognition makes man literally the creator, master and ruler of his world, of his destiny. It ennobles him, as it makes this work an absolutely free one, it preserves him his dignity of man, and his responsibility, but also puts claims on him that transgress every average of the so-called comfort.

Every deed of man in a common sense has a special sign in the sense that it can be recognized by himself, namely the impulse with which it acts. The more impulsive the deed, the greater the effect to both sides, to the positive and the negative, to the good and bad. The sum of all impulses was called by the Buddha *tanhā*, or life's thirst, that which brings forth suffering. As long as there is no clear cognition, so long the impulses find new food in the uncurbed and unrestrained mode of life, it is being oppressed by states and processes of opposition, till an explosion comes. Everyone can see by objective observation that that which leads to the explosion are the violent likes and dislikes, and jerky

false thinking. The impulse gives the possibility of recognizing that life is suffering, because every impulsive process in the last analysis ends in suffering. This is the actuality, existing in itself and through itself, because, after each impulsive deed, the play begins anew.

Thus the work is concentrated on striving and attempting to uproot this impulsive acting to prevent its re-occurrence: "Whosoever conquers thirst, which is difficult to conquer, his suffering falls down like dew drops from the lotus leaf."

Such cognition creates the possibility of elimination from the task out of all timely fetters. Man's suffering is no time problem, neither is it an eternal problem, but dependent on suppositions, summarily called food for acting (water does not boil always after 10 min., but is dependent on what we call 1000 C.). As long as food for acting exists, so long acting exists. In dependence on it, it is there. Buddha shows us in 12 forms of appearance, known under the name of *nidana* chain, the whole food for acting, and with it the whole process of actuality.

#### THE CAUSE OF ACTION

The observation of impulsive moments of life leads to the cognition that the impulse constantly receives new food through the action of the organs. "The loved, enchanting, corresponding to craving forms, tunes, colours, tastes, contacts and ideas," are the nourishers and augmenters of the passionate likings, the unloved of dislikes and hate, and the indifferent of the indifference. Observation gives clear sight that the springing up of emotions deprives one of the possibility of control because of their suddenness and force. The less one holds oneself in check, the more the states of emotion and character predominate, beginning with hidden desires to tormenting states of depression. One experiences that the restraint which breaks the force of these states embraces all deeds in thoughts, words and bodily deeds. Observation shows furthermore that in impulsive moments the thoughts hasten and hurry so that they literally skip, that the breathing stands still, the heart works spasmodically, the members tremble, a fainting spell sets in, or an ice-cold hatred cramps the whole man, so that all life leaves him and he becomes like a mask. The longer

and more careful the observation, the clearer and more certain the cognition that here lies the centre of life's battle, that the point is found from where it is possible to struggle successfully against the need of time, which really is the need of each single one. If it is possible to master these states, to hinder their arising, and if arisen to bring them to cessation, then ceases the hurry-flurry play of thoughts. The mind becomes quiet and clear. All fear, care, need, doubt and sorrow disappear under the clear sight, just as snow under the warm springtime sun. Since the centre of the whole battle lies here, one understands that the work must be more difficult and more strenuous, the stronger and the more vehement the impulses. The whole *Buddhadhamma* is useful for the successful removal of these impulses.

Whatever the cause of these impulses may be, how manifold their food may be, their germinating, arising, is always an inner process. Whether the eye is attracted or repulsed by the forms, the ear by the tunes, the nose by the odors, the tongue by the taste, the body by contact, the mind by ideas, whether emotions and feelings impress and stimulate the character, whether breath or speech stimulate it or are stimulated by it, whether consciousness processes are torn between weal or woe, whether one seeks to excuse it through the sense of duty or ardour, through fear or fright, through folly, it is and remains the creator of suffering and sorrow, because it dims the cognition, makes dull the sight, weakens the strength instead of making it strong, pushes one from one foolish action to another. From an angry thought to a hard or scornful word, from there to an offending deed, is just a step. If one recognizes the arising of impulses, then there exists a possibility of working successfully against it. One perceives that help is possible only through altering of the whole mode of life. The unrestrained, unconscious mode of life nourishes it. The more consciously one lives, the less food it finds, the less it is nourished, the weaker becomes its strength. What it absorbed of strength till now, remains, and therefore it is possible to win new cognition.

The mystery of life's processes gives way to natural cognition that already in the generative act the impulse lives and acts, that without it a generation is impossible in the



world men, that in a normal case new life arises out of the simultaneous meeting of three processes of impulse. This life generated by impulse can only be one that has all attributes for the development and full unfolding of all possibilities of the impulse, all facilities and natural tendencies. A life free from impulses must be free from all tendencies and faculties, because they are no more needed through the overcoming of the impulse, as its purpose if fulfilled, namely, to nourish and augment the experience that suffering arises where it arises, and suffering ceases where it ceases.

With such cognition begins the work of removing of the oppressing, hindering and fettering states. These are the mind processes, dear through habit, and constantly seeking satisfaction, extension and success. They whirl the emotions and ideas in a confused play for forces, bind man to the current band of restless work of cognition, which is interrupted by short moments of longed-for rest, and is a constant grasping and seizing. It becomes a Sisyphus work with the torments of a Tantalus, when one awaits all help from the one mental quality, called thinking.

From time immemorial nothing has been altered, despite speculating, brooding and inventing. The dominant law remains that where men are born, they must decay, age and pass away.

#### THE NATURE OF THINKING

What is thinking? The activity of an organ teaches not only the Buddha, but is proved by life to everyone. Is the organ something that became or not? Does that what came to be underlie the law of decay or not? Can the activity, bound to an organ dependent on it, remain when the organ does not exist any more?

But thinking is there, and what is there has some purpose, and as long as the purpose is not fulfilled, there exists no cognition, and without cognition it is possible neither to fulfil nor to gain the purpose. The purpose of thinking is to collect experience so much and for such a long time, till it is possible for the cognition to arise that "thinking is to be ill," because it cannot lead to the goal, being conditioned and dependent on acting. The cognition that suffering arises where something arises, proves right especially concerning

thinking, as thinking is a constant unsatisfied and unsatisfying arising and passing away.

After the arising of such cognition it becomes clear that thinking exists in dependence on a certain mode of life, and the state of being free from the compulsion to think, in dependence on another. Where there is thinking, there is impulse, there is the state of being bound and fettered: where the thinking is tranquil, there is freedom.

But how must a mode of life be, which is free from thinking? Thinking lifts man above the animal, thinking has created man's language, it gives him strength to exist in life's battle. Undeniably, in thinking lies the seed of destiny. First of all, it is important to know how man thinks, which is the direction of his thinking, its contents and its results. Man's thinking knows no boundaries. With his thinking he can grasp and transform all that may exist, if he creates the needed conditions. In this possibility lies the never-dying stimulus for thinking, lies lust, satisfaction and disappointment.

#### THE BUDDHIST ATTITUDE

The way a Buddhist thinks makes him different from all other men. The difference does not lie only in the fact of the threefold control of all his deeds in thoughts, words and bodily deeds, with regard to one's own harm or weal, mutual harm or weal. This is the purifying thinking, which is the foundation of coming to a clearly conscious life. The further he goes on, the sooner he comes to the point where he sees that there is still more to be done, as the cognition about the whole life's process cannot be reached thus. Such thinking remains necessary for the Buddhist as long as the goal is not reached, because it gives the possibility of secluding life's energy, when the concentration of mind, the meditation, can be brought so far that the state of dwelling without thinking can be reached, and still more the state of extinction, which is absolutely free from suffering.

The non-Buddhist takes all he can grasp mentally for the starting point of his thinking; "he takes thinking for an existing factor, makes out of the existing thinking an object of thinking, he thinks thinking, it determines the duration of thinking; he thinks about thinking, it determines its value"; he thinks "mind is thinking and its

result," and he "rejoices about thinking." (*Majjhima Nikaya* 1). A Buddhist as a fighter for the goal of elimination of suffering also "takes thinking as a given factor," but he does not make out of it an object of thinking, does not determine the direction of thinking, not its duration, not the value and not its result. And why? So that he should recognize this process.

Whilst the non-Buddhist gives way to all impulses, to lust, which springs up in all and out of all, the Buddhist keeps distance to these processes. Only thus he learns to penetrate and to recognize them. He learns to understand that *it is not the eye and the forms, etc., not the mind and the ideas and conceptions that are the fetters, but that it is lust that springs up through them.* One only can get free from thinking in overcoming the pleasure of it, which again can only be overcome when it has nothing more to offer, when it is recognized as a constantly delusive and illusive process.

Then man goes step by step the way of turning off, which is not a way of despairing and resignation, but a way of lightness, because the burden is laid down. And what is the burden? The five groups of clinging (*pancupādāna-khandhā*), form, sensation, perception, mind-activity and consciousness processes. And what is the laying down of the burden? Resignation, turning away from lust.

How is this possible? Through getting one's body, emotions and character in one's power, through beginning there, where the impulse is the most troublesome. The strongest form of impulse is in restlessness. Numberless are the precepts and methods taught by the Buddha for gaining quiet, but one they all have in common, when correctly applied, and this is that they lead to full clear cognition that man is creator of himself through his deeds in thoughts, words and bodily deeds, and that all deeds of man germinate suffering, that means that they are Kamma acting, so long as impulses and lust are not dead in him. For the overcoming of them very careful and proper work is needed.

It is not only the modern man, but every other man, so long as he has not attained such cognition, seeks salvation not in himself, but in others, and through others awaits an improvement from the whole world, never for himself. The

modern man has learned to sharpen the one faculty of mind, called intellect, and to use it in cutting everything into bits and synthesizing them again. This play is full of lust and desires. And even if many millions of men, to whom he himself belongs also, are victims of this game, he still has nothing else to put into its place but the meagre comfort that it is an unchangeable law that one must age and die, and the uncertain hope for a better next world, a heaven full of happiness, which will put an end to all torments and all suffering.

The Buddhist knows it because he has recognized according to reality, which means in his own process of acting called life, that there is a possibility of eliminating all suffering when he learns to turn away from impulses. Such an occupation liberates all forces and

faculties, called in one word, reason. Reason is his support, his stick. Reason shows him that it is foolish to await something from other people, foolish to take from them their faith or to try to force upon them one's own cognition. If one lives according to one's cognition, then this is proof and work enough. Thus a Buddhist avoids all quarreling. Earnest striving, earnest insight means for him to work at the cognition that this is suffering its arising, its elimination and the way to it. If this is recognized, then it can be accomplished. When it is accomplished, what else is there to do? The life of purity is lived, nothing hereafter.

#### MANKIND'S PROBLEM

This is *the task, the problem of mankind. Timeless.* Whether a man sharpened his intellect at the pyramids of the Nile, whether he

cultivated the jurisprudence in Rome's empire, whether he cultivated vine in the era of Noah, whether the Asiatic mankind cultivated in its way the social concept or political science or religion, whether in the present time thinking is led by chemistry or technique, whether in future times his thinking will be attracted by the stratosphere, whether Buddhas will appear or not, the problem "man" is and remains the same forever, his own problem. Only through him and by him can it be solved.

Whosoever has recognized this, understands that the Buddha is and will remain a problem of the present because he or his doctrine, his Dhamma, is timeless, because he has found a reasonable solution for the timeless, which can be understood by men, a solution leading over well to the cessation of suffering.

## THE WHEEL OF BECOMING

THE illustration given as the Frontispiece in this number of *The Buddhist* is a pictorial representation of the Wheel of Becoming or *Samsāra* as found in Tibetan paintings. It also illustrates the teaching of the *Paṭicca-samuppāda* or Dependent Origination, which is one of the fundamental doctrines of Buddhism.

The illustration is in the shape of a Wheel, symbolising the endless cycle of Life (*Samsāra*), of which each rebirth is a revolution. The Wheel is held in the clutches of a Monster, who represents, according to some, Impermanence (*Anityatā*), according to others, the hideousness of Clinging to Life.

The nave or centre of the Wheel is occupied by the three evils, *Rāga* (Lust), *Dosa* (Ill-will) and *Moha* (Stupidity or Delusion), which lie at the core of Rebirth, Lust in the form of a Dove, Ill-will in the form of a Snake and Stupidity in the form of a Pig, appropriately coloured red, green and black respectively.

The body of the Wheel, which is considered to be in continuous revolution, is filled with pictorial details of Life in its several forms, representing the six Destinies (*gati*), which await the Being in *Samsāra*—the hells (*niraya*), the animal world,

the world of the pretas or tantalised beings, the human world, the world of the Asuras and that of celestial beings.

In the lowest sector of the picture are the hells, into which sinners are hurled at death. In the upper part of this section, Yama, the God of Judgment, is judging the sinners and passing sentence upon them. They are shown subjected to various tortures. In the lower part are the hot hells, in the centre and left, and the cold hells on the right. Above the hells is the realm of the Pretas, who are always tantalised with hunger and thirst. They are sometimes shown as beings with large bellies and very small mouths and surrounded by various terrifying forms.

In the middle sector is the animal world, of birds and beasts and fishes. Above that on the right, is the world of human beings, represented by birth in a cottage, children at play, village scenes, labour, etc. In this section is also a figure of the Buddha, dwelling amongst men. On the left of this sector is the realm of the Asuras, who are the eternal enemies of the Devas or Gods. They are shown as being put to flight by the Devas. Immediately above it, on the left is shown a

fight between the Devas and the Asuras. The upper sector represents celestial beings in their various abodes. Between the world of the Devas and that of men are various apparitional beings, flitting about.

The broad tyre of the Wheel is occupied by representations of the twelve Items (*Nidāna*) of the *Paṭicca-samuppāda*. The order in which these are depicted varies with different artists. In the one published here, the order, starting from the bottom and proceeding clock-wise (right to left) is as follows: (1) Blind man with a stick (*avijjā* or ignorance); (2) An empty house, the six-sense organs (*salāyatana*); (3) The *saṅkhārā*, aggregates, compounds or activities, as they are called, a potter fashioning a vase on his wheel, sometimes also represented by a potter with a wheel and pots and pans; (4) Consciousness (*viññāna*), a monkey climbing a flowering tree; (5) *Nāma-Rūpa*, Name and Form or Mind and Body, a ship steered by a man, who is consciousness. (In some illustrations, the ship carries four passengers, the four mental factors, *i.e.*, feeling, perception, mental forces, and consciousness, with consciousness at the helm); (6) The next item is not clear. It probably

represents a pregnant woman, consulting a physician, the pregnant woman representing *Bhava* or Becoming (Conception). In other examples, this is shown simply by a pregnant woman, whose condition is unmistakably depicted ; (7) Feeling (*vedanā*), a man with an arrow in his eye ; (8) *Taṇhā* or Craving, a woman offering a drink to a man ; (9) Grasping (*upādāna*), a man gathering fruit from a tree ; (10) *Phassa*, contact, a man and a woman embracing ; (11) A woman giving birth to a child, *Jāti* (Birth) ; (12) Old age and

Death, a man carrying a corpse (*jarā-maraṇa*).

In the Pali books, the Nidānas are given in the following order : *Avijjā*, *Sanṅkhārā*, *Viññāna*, *Nāma-Rupa*, *Salāyatana*, *Phassa*, *Vedanā*, *Taṇhā*, *Upādāna*, *Bhava*, *Jāti* and *Jarā-Maraṇa*. This order is quite often followed in Tibet as well, but sometimes, as here, the artist has been more concerned with the design rather than fidelity to the correct order.

The tradition in Tibet is that the

Buddha himself originated the illustration of the Wheel of Becoming, by drawing it in diagrammatical fashion with grains of rice, from a stalk which He had found while teaching His disciples in a rice-field. The introduction of the pictorial details is ascribed to the famous Indian monk, Nāgārjuna.

The illustration published here was copied from a painting belonging to the American Upāsikā, Dhammadinnā, of whose courtesy we hereby make acknowledgment.

## SERMONETTES

By ERNEST DESLANDES

### LESSONS FROM NATURE

THE Spirit's blessings often stress  
Soul to be stilled, so as to bring  
It valued truths ; like birds-a-wing  
Which speed food to nests, actionless.

Deep-rooted trees withstand the blast.  
If man's true character endures  
By wise rule over life's allures,  
Priceless rewards are for him cast.

As laden branches suffer strain  
When the storm's fury is unleashed.  
If trees bear well, strength is increased  
To give its luscious fruit again.

Birds seek their mates with plumage  
preened ;  
Flowers lure honey-bees to feed  
On nectar which supplies their need ;  
Thus Nature's ways are subtly screened.

A snake may shed its withered slough,  
But still retain its poisoned fangs.  
If in man's heart there slumbers pangs  
Of hate, one life is not enough.

The ice and snow on lake or mart  
Will linger long, cling fast and stay  
Till sun's warm rays melt them away ;  
A lesson man should take to heart.

The swallows build their nests and cling  
To sheltered eaves till Autumn's time  
Beckons them seek a warmer clime.  
Their return herald's th'oncoming spring.

All those who trust false faith or creed,  
Are like beggars who tightly cling  
To crumbs which passers-by will fling ;  
They too from them will sparsely feed.

The waves which beat 'gainst rock or shore,  
Recede, leave faint traces behind.  
Sages, philosophers oft find,  
Great truths impress mankind much more.

### MESSENGERS OF MANKIND

THROUGHOUT the ages have appeared  
Those earth-free souls who brought  
the Light.

When tasks were done, they passed from  
sight,  
That followers give truths they heard.

Whenever mankind falls from grace,  
And nations grow provocative,  
Then by a wise prerogative,  
Brave men emerge to teach the race.

For as the higher urge elects,  
A man to toil as pioneer,  
Yet few hail him as messenger,  
E'en 'midst disciples he selects.

The rule for those who dedicate  
Their lives, to bear a humble mind,  
Choosing such worthy ones they find,  
And with whom they may dissertate.

Whoever strives emancipate  
Humanity, must be prepared  
To meet hostility unspared  
From those he aims to liberate.

When noble souls wished to uplift  
People from customs they preferred,  
Then they despised the thoughts inferred,  
Hated the giver and the gift.

Broadminded thinkers all agree  
That sacrifices by which saints  
Suffered as victims for men's taints,  
Did not merit such penalty.

Who minds that when evil is rife,  
Compelling a faith to be born,  
Brings joy to some, others to mourn  
The unforeseen course of its life,

FOR to survive in order they  
May give their solemn messages,  
Must heed their inner presages,  
Lest their lives go the martyr's way.

Sometimes a vivid truth is flung,  
Which makes great citizens of men ;  
Such thoughts expressed by word or pen  
Must raise souls to a higher rung.

Some sayings whose simplicity  
Were unaccepted in that age ;  
Yet later on men quote that sage,  
To increase their veracity.

In stillness, man conserves his strength,  
Till his abstract ideals mature.  
If his teachings mean to endure,  
The race accepts those truths at length.

For rest assured when those who reach  
The over-brooding formlessness ;  
From that premise they give and bless  
The secret doctrines which they preach.

Who " finds " himself, can well afford  
To have good reason when he dares  
Take up his burden and then declares  
To serve mankind without reward.

Unfolding the mind's latency,  
At-one with Being, birth, death ends ;  
Peace comes to him as the mind rends  
Earth's tentacles and sets him free.

Pure souls with lofty ideals can  
Give thoughts to those who tread the Path  
Indiff'rent to the aftermath,  
They become messengers of man.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The Editor,

*The Buddhist.*

As Chairman of the Gandhi National Memorial Trust, I write to invite the co-operation of all those individuals and corporations in different parts of the world who may have received letters from or on behalf of the late Mahatma Gandhi. The Gandhi National Memorial Trust is an organisation which helps and promotes numerous activities particularly in social, economic and medical fields in which Mahatma Gandhi was interested. The Trustees include some of the leading men and women of India. One of the objects of the Trust is the preservation of places and articles associated with Mahatma Gandhi and particularly his correspondence. He was an exceedingly good and regular correspondent and throughout his life he wrote and replied to thousands of letters in his own hand. It hardly needs stressing that this great

volume of correspondence should be preserved for posterity. The Gandhi National Memorial Trust has arranged for making microfilms and photostats of the letters. A large number of letters and documents available in India have already been microfilmed and photographed. This appeal is addressed to those outside India who may possess letters from Mahatma Gandhi. There is no compulsion.

Those who have letters and are willing to help may kindly send them by Registered Post to the Secretary, Gandhi National Memorial Trust, 5, Mansingh Road, New Delhi (India), with words superscribed on the envelopes as "Gandhi Letters." Microfilms and photostats will immediately be taken of the letters and the originals will be carefully returned to their owners. Letters donated to the Gandhi National Memorial Trust will be gratefully accepted

and in all such cases the photostat copies of the letters will be sent to the owners at the earliest possible opportunity. But, where the Trust has not been asked specifically to keep the letters, the originals will be returned.

Mahatma Gandhi's letters were always a source of inspiration and comfort to their recipients. Their publication, therefore, in some form or other, would be of great public benefit. The Gandhi National Memorial Trust may, therefore, decide to share them with the world public. But the wish of the owners who may not desire the contents of their letters to be made public will be scrupulously respected.

GANESH VASUDEO MAVLANKAR,  
*Speaker,*

House of the People,  
Indian Parliament.

New Delhi.

## COLOMBO Y.M.B.A. NEWS

### MUSICAL EVENINGS

BY arrangement with Radio Ceylon monthly musical evenings will be provided at the Y.M.B.A. Hall for the benefit of the active members and their families. Accommodation for the present is limited to 350. Admission will be by tickets obtainable on application to the Hony. General Secretary not later than three days before the date of the show.

Each member will be entitled to a ticket for himself and two ladies or children's tickets for his

family. Applications will be dealt with in the order in which they are received and those who fail to obtain tickets for a particular show will be given preference in the issue of tickets to the following show.

V. S. NANAYAKKARA

*Hony. General Secretary.*

### NEW MEMBERS ELECTED ON

28.7.52 : Gerald Anandappa, 543, Galle Rd., Colombo 6 ; M. M. A. Usuf,

23, Floor's Passage, Dematagoda, Colombo ; W. Herbert de Silva, 3, New Road, near Bagatalle S.P.O., Colombo.

4.8.52 : R. C. Perera, 42, De Alwis Place, Dehiwala ; U. D. H. B. de Silva, "Ariya Niwasa" 37, Albion Lane, Dematagoda ; Lambert Abeysekere, 'Pennan Lodge,' 3, Maitland Crescent, Colombo ; Malcolm Vanderzil, 533, Pita Kotte, Kotte ; D. H. S. Amarasekere, 'Rosao Villa,' Fife Rd., Colombo 5 ; K. Nithianathan, 116, Ward Place, Borella ; Y. Yogasundram, 2, Hildon Place, Bambalapitiya.

### RESIGNATION :—

Mr. H. B. Weeraratne.

## NEWS AND NOTES

### REPORT ON A MEETING OF THE BUDDHIST COMMUNITY IN COLOGNE

By ERWIN PREIBISCH

IN the last meeting of the "Freie Gemeinde um Buddha" where half of the attendants were Esperantists we had a discussion about the topic "Is the Dhamma at the beginning, in the middle and at the end perfect or only excellent?" All agreed, that the Dhamma is perfect, but not the Buddhists. Here in the West only few get perfectly free from the influence of the Christian education. Most of the western Buddhists tend to mystical conceptions. The orator E. Preibisch thought it advisable to spread the truth, that the Buddha was the first rationally and free thinking man and therefore He ought not be ignored by the freethinkers but always honoured as the first and greatest freethinker and the greatest teacher of Humanity. The second freethinker was the Greek Epicure who is treated even worse than the Buddha but whose

teachings get more and more admirers and adherents. It is not true that Epicure taught a life of luxury, but he taught a true life free from suffering and excitement. He turned against the illusion of a belief in gods. Worth mentioning is the greatest philosophical work of poetry in hexameter, the most beautiful poem of all, the epicurean poem "De rerum naturae" by Lucretius Carus. Goethe praised it very much and now it ought to be taken as the most important book for education instead of the fabulous Odyssey or the Iliad by Homer. Followers of Buddhism, especially young ones who renounce all worldly joys of life but suppress all agreeable feelings are not good examples for propagating Buddhism. So our great German Buddhist Dr. Dahlke did not preach fasting too much and sleeping on a hard bed of wood. Ascetism is ridiculous to the modern man and is not the Middle Way taught by the Enlightened. The orator referred to the Radio talk by Sri Devapriya Valisinha in which he said : "Right is that which does not increase suffering but adds even in a

small measure to the sum total of the happiness of our fellow beings." Emphatically the leader of the discussion spoke against the vivisectional medicine which ought to be refused by every thinking Buddhist. He recommended natural cures, homeopathic and biochemical remedies. As an example he treated the biological diagnosis and treatment of tuberculosis which can be cured successfully by fat, yoghurt, by taking daily 100 grams of yeast or by the Steven-cure with an African plant. It is to be hoped that the oriental students and physicians are critical to all European Medicine which is in a crisis as it is refused by millions of naturally and rationally thinking adherers of natural cures. Buddhists must not be indifferent to this very important question.

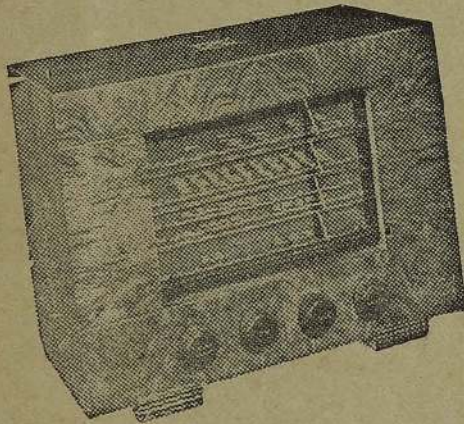
Some words were spoken about the value of the brother-language Esperanto as an unsurpassable means for training of logical thinking.

The meeting was closed after the pancasila and singing of some Buddhist songs.

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