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THE LAW OF CAUSE AND EFFECT

By The Ven. PIYADASSI THERA

THE Law of Cause and Effect is one of the principal doctrines of Buddhism, but only the supreme seers are capable of grasping it fully. This universal Law of Cause and Effect is an eternal verity revealed at its best by the Buddhas or the Perfectly Enlightened Ones. According to the analytical teaching of the Buddha, everything in the world is dependent on conditions. These conditions are really the basis for the growth of things, or for their development. When the conditions fail, fall and dissolve, the processes dependent on them, too, fade and vanish like the flame of an oil lamp. With the drying up of the oil, the flame goes out. The disappearance of the nutritive oil ends the flame. And, all life, too, is like that, and all life's good and bad. Hence for an understanding of life, one has to understand the power behind life's manifestations. One has to get down to the depths which nourish it.

In the word of the Buddha our own Kamma or good and bad deeds, reward and punish us. And now what is Kamma? It is the force, in virtue of which reaction follows action; it is the energy which makes it that out of the present existing life, new life in an inexhaustible stream continually flows forth. In the ultimate sense Kamma means good and bad volition (*Kusala Akusala Cetanā*).

It is the knowledge of the Law of Cause and Effect—action and re-

action—that urges a man to refrain from evil and gather good. A believer in cause and effect knows well that it is his own actions and nothing else that make his life miserable or otherwise.

“Man today is the result of millions of repetitions of thoughts and acts. He is not ready made; he becomes and is still becoming. His character is predetermined by his own choice. The thought the act, which he chooses that by habit, he becomes”.

Kamma or action is absolutely pitiless and impartial in its working. As a smooth-polished mirror gives back in its smallest detail any picture we may bring opposite its surface, so does Kamma, with equal exactitude, throw back the consequence of deed upon the doer. So long as there is will, there is deed. So long as there are deeds, so long is Kamma a grim reality, and reward and punishment no empty words. “Desire gives rise to deed; deed gives rise to result; result exhibits itself as new corporeality endowed with new desire. Deed is as inevitably followed by result as the body by its shadow. This is merely the universal natural law of the conservation of energy extended to the moral domain. As in the universe no energy can ever be lost, so also in the individual nothing can be lost of the resilient force accumulated by desire. This resilient energy is always transmuted into fresh life, and we live eternally

through our lust to live. The medium, however, that makes all existence possible is *Kamma*”. We are reaping what we have sown in the past; some of our reappings we know, we have even sown in this life. In the self-same way, our actions here mould our hereafter, and thus we begin to understand our position in this mysterious universe.

A divine hand that punishes and rewards all living beings below, has no place in Buddhist thought. According to the teaching of the Buddha, our own good and bad deeds reward and punish. We, therefore, do not hasten to blame or praise a superhuman being or a specially graced person, for the ills we suffer and the good we experience. No, not even the Buddha could redeem us from *Samsāra*'s bond—from the ever-revolving round of births and deaths. In our own human hands lies the power to mould our lives. Buddhist psychology reveals that unlimited possibilities are latent in a man, and it must be man's endeavour to develop and unfold these possibilities. Man is a mixture of good and evil Kamma or deeds. He is always changing either for good or for evil. The changing is unavoidable and depends entirely on his own actions, and on nothing else. Each living being is his own creator. By our actions we make our character, personality, individuality. We are all self-made.

We believe that :

“ Whatever a man does, the same he in himself will find ;
The good man good ; and evil he that evil has designed
And so our deeds are all like seeds, and bring forth fruit in kind ”.

The whole world is subject to the Law of Cause and Effect. The entire world is governed and controlled by this unending cause and effect ; in other words, action and reaction. We cannot think of anything in this world of sentient things that is causeless and unconditioned. According to the teaching of the Buddha the smallest living thing and the mightiest Deva or Brahma are both conditioned things.

Buddhism states that things are

neither due to one cause (Eka Hetuka) nor are they causeless (A-hetuka). The twenty four conditions as shown in Paṭṭhāna (the seventh and the last book of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka), and the twelve factors of Paṭicca Samup-pāda, Dependent Origination, clearly demonstrate that things are multiple-caused (Nānā-hetuka). And, in stating that things are neither causeless, nor due to one cause, Buddhism antedated modern science by twenty-five centuries.

It is our own thirst for life, lust for life, clinging to life which keep this endless play of action and reaction in perpetual motion. So long as we fail to see the true nature of cause and effect, the true nature of moral causation, so long as there is craving and ignorance in us, thus

long will we be fettered to this “ Wheel of Life.”

As the shadow follows the form, and as smoke comes after fire, so effect follows cause, and suffering and bliss follow the thoughts and deeds of men. There is no effect in the world around us but has its hidden or revealed cause, and that cause is in accordance with absolute justice. Men reap a harvest of suffering because in the near or distant past they have sown the seeds of evil ; they reap a harvest of bliss also as a result of their own sowing of the seeds of good. Let a man meditate upon this, let him strive to understand it, and he will then begin to sow only seeds of good, and will burn up the weeds which he has formerly grown in the garden of his heart.

THE PERSONALITY OF THE BUDDHA

By J. MALALGODA

THE pilgrim approaching Lumbini, the birth-place of the Buddha, sees an unforgettable spectacle—the lofty majesty of the Himalayas before him. Range upon range of lordly snow-capped peaks rise from the foothills of green forests. Soaring above them all is the mighty Everest, aloof as it were, from the mundane world. The true import of the comparison of the towering personality of the Buddha to the Everest recalls the beautiful verse in the Milinda Panha :

“ As men gaze at its towering peaks and judge Himalaya,
So when they see the Buddha,
Peak of Righteousness,
Serene, unmoved by passion's stormy blast
Tower aloft in wonderous calm and peace,
Where evil dies, and lust can breathe no more,
'High as Himalaya the Hero and His word'
They cry: 'How great His power to redeem from ill'.”

Although the Himalayas is associated with countless nameless Hindu yogis, the Buddha's personality has become the generic embodiment of human wisdom, not lost in the mists of antiquity or hoary mysticism.

It stands out clearly a veritable land-mark in human affairs, like the lofty mountain against the infinite sky.

Apart from the profundity of the doctrine He preached, the Buddha's personality occupies a unique position in human thought for He left nothing outside the bounds of His compassion. His teaching spells salvation not only from the bonds of existence. He decreed hatred ceaseth not by hatred, not from man's inhumanity to man, but by love. In ancient Indian Society, He freed man from the fetters of caste and slavery. Woman's emancipation was firmly established by Him, for the first time in the world's history. The common man and woman were given equal scope for self-expression and freedom of thought hitherto unknown in the Brahmin-dominated society which regarded the majority of the people as outcastes. Priestly ordinances of ritual rather than purity of action, of sacrifices to appease gods, ceased to have any meaning even to the ignorant. Animal slaughter was abandoned for ahimsa. These ideas radically altered concepts of life hitherto considered enoxorable and immutable. There was also recognised the dignity of man and the dignity of service to man.

“ Oh, monks,” he said “ If any one cares for me, care for the sick,” and Himself washed the stinking sores of the sick monk shunned by the rest of the monastery. It is not known generally that He gave to the world the institution of the hospital.

He was equally sensitive to the beauty of life and nature around Him, as to the existence of sorrow. The sites for welling places of the monks such as Sravasti and Rajagaha were places where nature seemed at her best. The cadence of the chant no less than the artistic design of the robe, the cultivation of the flower garden had their place in the monk's life of self discipline and congenial surroundings. You will recall incidents such as that of Panchasika who was complimented for a song composed in honour of the Buddha. To it Panchasika had added a love-ditty giving vent to his heartache for the proud maid Suriya Vacchasa who had rejected his suit.

The Buddha did not frown on the arts, or the appreciation of beauty. He preached the perfect balance of the Middle Way. To the evolved members of the Sangha the futility of worldly pleasures such as dancing

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GODS—IN BUDDHISM

By G. W. DAVID De SILVA

AS the central or pivotal link of almost all the religious systems known to mankind, an omnipotent God claims the responsibility of having created this physical world with its entire stock of life—human, animal, etc.—that lived in the past and living in the present. The future off-spring, too, is ordained to depend on the same source for its appearance and sustenance. From the misty past, in diverse phases of history, these theistic cults have been winnowed among certain uncanny types of masses under various accommodating circumstances. Not only do those omnipotents, it is said, dictate the progress and mould the destiny of the entire human family, but also definitely promise everlasting bliss in their celestial abodes if they faithfully adored, worshipped and unquestionably believed in them (gods) alone, individually. Though unsuspecting simple folk unwittingly accepted those dogmas and maintained unalloyed faith in those bizarre promises, yet the gradually emancipated beings possessing analytical bias were not reconcilable. A couple of those religions admit Karma and rebirth in their own crude way while rallying round an almighty creator. The rest speculate over one span of life for a human—*this*, the first and the last. The adherents of the latter class are expected to maintain a firm belief in a creator which alone will, after death, serve as a passport to reach their celestial portals for immortal life goaded with limitless bliss.

Amidst the din of these theistic wranglings, happily for the orderly progress of the world, a super-genius entered the arena to disclose the futility of adoring those non-existent omnipotent beings. *He discovered and proclaimed a system whereby "Godhood" was available for achievement by any human.* The type disclosed differed immensely from the omnipotents who in conduct were glaringly inferior to human beings, being injudiciously very revengeful, untruthful, destructive and jealous aided by an army of other immoral. That exposition served as a solid and an incandescent beam of hope to a world foundering aimlessly in decay and pain in their intensity and univer-

sality, and the exponent—Lord Buddha—proved the super-sentinel, the beacon in the stormy seas where frail human-boats were being tossed about heavily and helplessly, for the escape of which He promulgated the most rational system that ever rescued humanity.

The Buddha alone saw the immense problem of the impermanency of life and its anguished career from a diametrically opposite angle to that revealed in the theistic cults. It was the skilful diagnosing, as a celebrated physician would, of life's immutable subjugation and inexorable binding to uniform, imperceptible and relentless waste at every thought-moment, presenting in bold relief *aniccha* (impermanence), *dukkha* (pain) and fundamentally denying the existence of a soul (*anatta*—unsubstantiality) which were incorporated as the nucleus for the declaration of the First Noble Truth.

The causes of birth, decay and death—and then woeful rebirth—were analytically disclosed. *Lobha* (lust), *dvesha* (hatred) and *moha* (delusion) were discovered as the root causes of the unbroken chain of existence of life which formed the base for the declaration of the Second Noble Truth. This process of looking at or viewing life could have earned for Him the label "pessimist." But enlightened as He was, He released in methodical regularity as occasion justified almost all that He grasped. From that inexhaustible fountain, a panacea of the most practical and gainful order was provided to rescue life of those painful states and conditions by the performance of meritorious actions catalogued under *dana* (liberality), *seela* (virtuous conduct) and *bhavana* (meditation). For those beings who had recognised "rot" in the human system, indisputably correct redemptory measures were laid bare and it was incumbent on them to tread that Path for release. Lying dormant in them He perceived diverse mental conditions that awaited development to the highest perfection heedless of the empty patronage of the almighty gods, for His empirical system had no room for such illusory mode of win-

ning places in heaven. In His system that invited penetrative analysis and proffered instantaneous results of actions, the diligent and the energetic beings had to muster moral strength and actions to purge all inherent "rot" principally grouped under *lobha*, *dvesha* and *moha* and secure gradual emancipation through the results of those morally rich actions—*kusala kriya*. In such a system an omnipotent God was patently obsolete and superfluous.

Instead of depending on an imaginary god for one's own salvation, Buddhists are provided with various types of blissful births as rewards for good actions performed whilst sojourning in the human sphere. Births in the lower spheres are the results of bad actions committed previously, while beings of the former category, at times, find themselves accommodated in celestial planes as gods or goddesses. *In order to attain that stage it is incumbent to remember constantly those good deeds performed within this life-span and it is such a thought that should prevail finally to illuminate the mind at the final moment of passing away (chuthi) from this life.* If such a thought is caused to be reflected in the sinking mind by way of reading a "Merit Book" or gently reminding of the various meritorious actions performed in this life, the pleasant thoughts that generate at the psychological moment would result in a blissful re-birth. As this process forms an abtruse section in the Abhidhamma it is not detailed here. Out of the immense volume of merit-earning practical acts that warrant the birth in the *Kamaloka*, *dana* and *seela* form two most important items in limitless fields. Those acts performed soberly and consciously adhering to vital details would tend to be rewarded with blissful re-births either in one of the six happy states or in the human sphere as very illustrious beings. *Nurtured in the lap of luxury, it is those individuals who out-shine others in whatever fields of activity pertaining to their own welfare or that of others.* Beings in the six abodes are supposed to live blissfully enjoying fleeting sensual pleasures.

The third category of births in the *Kamaloka* takes place in the four unhappy states earned as result of evil actions (*akusala-kriya*) performed in challenging obstinacy and ferocity, and hotly spurning at unendurable resultant consequences that follow as one's own reflection. Lust, hatred and

delusion with a host of attendant defilements take malevolent possession of the impudent being. *More or less 90% of the human order addicted to behaviour dismally far below the standard of animals who rigidly maintain better codes of inherent discipline, are born in those four unhappy and woeful states.* Some beings who lived and died within the very life-time of Lord Buddha, practising austere *Lobha* were identified as having been re-born as animals or in those unhappy states. Stories are reported, off and on, of departed beings born as evil spirits who torment human beings. To combat or counteract such situations, chanting of Pirit or at times the performance of exorcist rites have had salutary effects in disposing them. The doctrine of Cause and Effect in action is vividly portrayed in such dismal births.

While some aspire to be born in celestial planes after performing meritorious deeds, the intellectual and the emancipated class of beings who have thoroughly realised the transient nature of flesh, loathsomely shun all sense pleasures and recourse to higher forms of mind-training in Jhanic processes (ecstasies or absorptions). They have no desire to enjoy celestial bliss either in the *Kama-Loka* or in the human sphere. Those absorptions pursued incessantly and intelligently enable one to be born in the *Arupa-Plane* (Formless) as *Brahmas*. (These *Brahmas* should not be identified with *Brahma* the Creator). Though the processes of gradual progress for achievement of First, Second, Third and Fourth *Jhanas*, are definitely severe, trying, rigid and demanding unflinching perseverance, yet the path itself is sublime, clear, effective and attainable. In both *Kama* and *Brahma* spheres, beings exist for incomputable time limits, but would not achieve the *summum bonum* of deliverance in the former sphere. The latter, of course, are absorbed in the path to *Nirvanic* bliss.

There is no alternative path to the realisation of *Nirvanic* bliss than by absorbing in meditative processes in stages as detailed in Buddhist philosophy. As the process of meditation reaches or penetrates to denser altitudes, the aspirant makes rapid progress enabling him to perfect his insight, ascending stage by stage till *Arahatship* is achieved. With the passing away of the mortal body, he attains the highest bliss—*Nirvana*—the

total extinction of craving. These attainments could be experienced while being in the human sphere.

The process and the conducive factors relating to the birth as a god in the celestial plane are definitely within reach of all Buddhists practising the necessary tenets intelligently, constantly, enthusiastically, clearly and ardently. In the process of living the life as an ideal Buddhist house-holder, he is ordained to observe rigidly the five, eight or ten precepts, and in addition, exclusively refrain from committing ten *akusala kriyas* (sins) and a host of minor demeritorious actions, too formidable for cataloguing here.

Multifarious are the social obligations and etiquette to be observed as adumbrated in the *Mangala*, *Ratana*, *Metta*, *Singalowada* suttas etc., and equally important are those to be shunned for ones's own welfare detailed in the *Parabhava*, *Viyajja-pajja* suttas, etc. An ideal life lived diligently and strenuously observing those lofty virtues, tenets, advices etc., lifts the subject to almost godhood in the terrestrial orbit itself. *It is those human beings who ultimately are born as gods.* Till such position is achieved, it is said, a tendency exists among gods to spot out those super-human beings and hail them as fit for veneration. Normally, Buddhist gods have nothing in common with the human plane and seldom or never take the trouble to take stock of what is happening over here. But the odour, the sanctity, "*seela-sugandha*" generated through meritorious acts as *Dana*, *Seela* etc., have psychic propensity to spread out and ascend beyond human frontiers to be wafted even to those Pure Abodes. It is in that wake that divinities are impelled to take stock of this world and its affairs. Once those beings are spotted they are reverentially venerated in their own way. They may at times extend their moral sympathy to the virtuous in times of distress, in methods not quite perceptible but effective as in a magical process. Together with the impulsion of the divinities, it is the very meritorious deeds that come up to the rescue of the participants in time of need. By the very power of the morally rich actions performed in this life those human beings are spared of distress, discomforts, frustrations etc., for the Lord endearingly reminds: "*Dhammo Have Rakkhathi Dhammachari . . .*" Living thus he battles arduously to stamp out those deeply

rooted fetters as *Lobha*, *Dwesha*, *Moha* etc., by indulging consciously in *Dana*, *Seela*, *Bhavana* etc. By way of psychological fruits of the first two of the moral precepts in intelligent action a birth if desired so either in a Sensual Plane as a god replenished with all pleasures pertaining to sensual bliss or as a complete human being in the terrestrial plane takes place, while the third, *Seela*, energetically, incessantly, steadfastly and intelligently practised for long spells or periods or continuously if results are encouraging, would tend to be rewarded with birth in the *Rupa-Loka* (Realm of Form) or *Arupa-Loka* (Formless Realm) where "there is no *Body* but only *Mind* exists. As a rule both mind and body are inter-related, inter-dependant and inseparable. But by will-power, there is a possibility for the *Mind* to be separated from the *Body* and *vice versa* temporarily. Beings born in celestial realms and Form-Spheres are supposed to possess very subtle material Forms." . . . *Thus by means of a spontaneous (opapathika) birth another God or Goddess is added to the legions in the Kamaloka.*

After performing *kusala-kriya*, the majority of the participants aspire re-birth in the *Kama-Loka* while a few harness energy for realisation of higher spiritual bliss through higher rungs of meditation. But misadventures, at times, are unavoidable due to some alms-giving scene ousting a thought-moment relating to the much practised *Bhavana-chethana* (thought) that should have prevailed at the *chuthi* moment maintaining the mental equilibrium vital for birth in the *Arupa* or *Rupa* planes. Such thoughts effect birth in *Kama-Planes* which the *Bhavana* participants detest as the temperament in that Plane hinders further spiritual progress for long periods. No opportunity or assistance is available for the pursuit of the practice of *Bhavana* to win *Brahma Planes*. "*Dhammarata Sutra*" in the *Samyuktha Nikaya* is not an isolated example of spurning such birth much against his ideal desire for birth in the latter Plane by virtue of *Bhavana*. It is seldom that a god is conferred a chance to engage in *kusala-kriya* that generate merit. Their entire mission is consummation of bliss as liberally awarded in those spheres. Length of stay there is seldom reckoned and their calculations by our standards are too enormous for dabbling. Those planes are located so far away from all the identified universes that distances

have to be reckoned on the basis of astronomical light-years. No solar systems illuminate those areas which naturally deny calculation of time that has no intrinsic value, but *deities are possessed of lights of their own illuminating wherever they traverse.* The process of existence and the composite of bodies are of orders alien to those obtained in the human sphere, being light and subtle. They keep the same youthful figure from the start to the end. Food, it is told, is freely obtained from ether. The approach of the expiration of their life-spans is indicated by a process of fading as that of a flower with the flow of perspiration accompanied by gradual discolouration of their garments. Though there is sickness among them, no external manifestation of such are visible, but as in the case of all living things, they too, fear death. *With those signs on they vanish unceremoniously from those environments and are re-born either as human, animal, spirit or in the Lower Planes as per volume of karma, good or evil, that surge forward to claim them.* This process, it seems, does not apply to the striving Brahmas who have attained the four stages of Ariyahood (Sotapanna beings etc.) for they are not or seldom re-born in the Kama-Bhumi. Unlike the gods, they strive further by continuing meditation for higher attainments. In most cases they attain Nirvana from those planes, while some await incalculable time for the birth of a Buddha to listen to His preaching and attain Nirvana. The marked difference between a Buddhist god and an omnipotent one is that the former's blissful birth is not ever-lasting or a final one. Being prey to the three great "diseases", impermanence, suffering and Unsubstantiality and governed as are all in the mundane sphere, by karma the body's artificer, they too face death, of course, after an inordinate long stay in those blissful planes.

Any emancipatory scheme of abtruse nature promulgated for the express benefit of humanity at large has to be remoulded, if desired to be placed for practical use among them, releasing the subject matter of its heavy metaphysics, abtruse phraseology etc. Though this process is resorted to in good faith, very often it turns out to be an evil necessity. For, in course of time the popular edition thus supplied tends to receive different versions, misinterpretations, distortions, amendments etc., thus nullifying the original good intentions of the philo-

sophy. It is in the Abhidhamma that Lord Buddha's complete analysis of Man and the process of his Being, *Nama-Rupa* (Mentality and corporeality) are graphically exposed and explained. Therein He points out in unique thoroughness the panacea for complete and highest release of flesh. Since Abhidhamma is too abtruse for the masses, a process of making them adhere to its ethical content is released in the form of ideal methods of adhering to Dana, Seela etc. Unfortunately most of them in practice by the laity with dust in eyes—lacking intelligence—are attended to in meagre, loose, unorthodox and haphazard measures losing a high percentage of acquirable good karma that should earn for them if executed ideally. For instance, in serving a common dana to the bhikkhus it is beneficial to analyse and see if such is performed ideally as required in the three stages of execution. How many donors accrue *akusala-kamma* (sins) by brooding even to a slightest degree of the expense involved; by a mild hatred (*dwesha*) sprung from a small negligible lapse on the part of the receiver? A quantity of *akusala* is collected by trying to find out ideal recipients. At times, clock-hands are turned back to make up the lost time for the timely partaking of a dana! Then there occurs at times the demeritorious "balancing" of the quality and the quantity of food or material to be offered. Should not such be the best and what the money separated for the purpose could unstintedly buy? The ultimate object of dana constitutes the expulsion of stains of Lust, Hatred and Delusion, whereas lapses dealt with above and numerous undetailed, *negatively* nullify the avowed object! Thus the donor is where he was, nay, even below that! But there should not be any dismay or consternation. *The unique way to emerge out of the impasse is to engage in the study of Abhidhamma wherein it is clearly and precisely detailed the correct process of conducting or engaging in not only in Dana and Seela vyapara (campaigns) but also in innumerable kindred virtuous actions with legions of their substrata that definitely accrue purest form of merits.* The advantage of such study lies in the fact that it enables the student to perform those virtuous acts most devotedly in the prescribed mien thereby generating necessary merit to warrant a *three-hetuka pratibandhi*—blissfully complete re-birth in the *human sphere.* Or if so desired as a resplendent god in one of the *Kama-Bhumi.*

THE BUDDHIST LAYMAN (UPĀSAKA)

By NIHAL De SILVA, Kalutara North

AT all times there have been bad men and good men, in the sense of those with bad qualities predominating, and those with good qualities. But one should understand, however, that apart from the bad man and the good man, there is yet another man. He is: *the Buddhist* that is, an upāsaka. The Buddhist (upāsaka) is different from both, the bad man and the good man who are not upāsakas. The bad man is one who does not know what is good and what is bad, and hence does no good. The good man is one who also does not quite know good from bad; but yet, accidentally, as it were, is engaged in good acts. The Buddhist Upāsaka, on the other hand, is one who actually *knows* what is good and what is bad. He also knows the purpose of morality, *i.e.* why really one should engage oneself in good acts. We shall come to this subject later; and let us start by trying to understand in precise manner, who a Buddhist Upāsaka is.

In short, a Buddhist Upāsaka is one who believes in the Buddha. To say something more, a Buddhist Upāsaka is one who reposes his faith in the Buddha, in his Doctrine, and in his Order of sanctified monks. That is all. Practice, for instance, has nothing to do with one's being a Buddhist Upāsaka, in the strictest sense. It is entirely a matter of intellect, of conviction, of understanding.

Suppose there is a man, utterly harmless and very virtuous in his nature. He is kind, generous, restrained, truthful and tolerant. Why so? Because he thinks thus: "This life is but short. At death, my soul will reach extinction. So why should I, within this brief lifetime, be a burden to others?" And suppose, there is another man, whose nature is quite the reverse. He commits murder, robbery and adultery, and indeed all the atrocious crimes on earth. In spite of his unexampled behaviour, he feels thus: "We all are subject to repeated birth and death. No escape is normally possible from this Suffering. However, the Buddha has shown a way of release—in fact, the only way possible. This is by the gaining of Nibbana. And only those who have gained Nibbana, have overcome Suffering."

Now, of these two people considered, the former is called a better man morally than the latter; but the latter, whatever one may say to the contrary, is certainly a Buddhist, in spite of his impure character. The former is no Buddhist at all, since his views are diametrically opposed to what has been preached by the Buddha. He believes emphatically in a soul, the existence of which the Buddha denied unequivocally. He does not believe in rebirth, which is one of the basic premises in Buddhism. But take the latter. He has implicit faith in the Buddha and in the Dhamma; for he believes that nothing but the Buddha's Doctrine can lead to the Deliverance from All Suffering. He also has faith in the Sangha, for he believes that only those who have gained Nibbana are his true exemplars. And that is all that matters. He has confidence in the Three Refuges, and hence *is* a Buddhist Upāsaka. The former has no such confidence, and hence is *no* Buddhist at all.

This has made one point clear, *viz.*, in the scope of merely taking refuge in the Triple Gem, that is to be one who has mere confidence in the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha, that practice is not essential for one to be a Buddhist Upāsaka. For one may commit all the worst crimes on earth, but yet if such a one is fully confident that the Buddha's Doctrine is the sole way to end all Suffering, he is then, *ipso facto*, a Buddhist Upāsaka.

It also implies another point, which however, may not be so obvious. That is, that a Buddhist Upāsaka has to be intelligent to some degree. No imbecile or mutt could ever be really called a Buddhist Upāsaka; for according to the above definition, a Buddhist Upāsaka has to actually understand certain basic principles. What these principles are, we shall come to, presently.

It has already been said that a Buddhist Upāsaka is one who places his faith in the Three Refugees. Take the second Refuge—the Dhamma. In very simple terms, the "Dhamma" means the Buddha's Teaching. And what is the Buddha's Teaching? In brief, it comprises the Four Noble Truths. So that, a Buddhist Upāsaka must necessarily understand and believe the Four Noble Truths, at least generally. These are the Four Noble Truths: firstly, that we are all subject to repeated birth and death, and that this ever-recurring process is inextricably bound up with misery, or Suffering; secondly, that the cause of this recurring Existence is our own thirst, or craving for life, thirdly, that the end of Suffering is synonymous with the absolute conquest of this said Craving; and lastly, that this conquest of Craving can be achieved *only* by the 3-fold training taught by the Buddha. One who understands these 4 principles cannot but have faith in the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha. Thus, it all boils down to this: one who understands the Four Noble Truths *is* a Buddhist, and one who does not understand them is *not* a Buddhist.

To say something further, let us suppose there is a man who believes in the following manner. "There is no such thing as continued rebirth, there being only a single everlasting existence to follow this current life. All misery here is conditioned by the wrath of God. Happiness consists in going to Paradise. The only way to Paradise is by pleasing God through prayer and devotion." It will be seen that these views basically disagree with the Four Noble Truths. Therefore, however morally noble such a one may be he cannot be called a Buddhist Upāsaka. But one who intellectually understands the Noble Truths, and takes refuge in the Jewels, whatever be his practice, is a Buddhist Upāsaka. He knows the right path from the wrong one, although his practice belies his conviction.

○ All that has been said so far has pointed to this: that the essential condition for one's being a Buddhist, is some knowledge of the Four Noble Truths, and consequent faith in the Three Refuges; and that moral laxity does not actually make one cease to be a Buddhist Upāsaka so long as one continues to take refuge in the Jewels.

Let us, however, not overlook this fact : no Buddhist Upāsaka is worth his salt, unless he keeps to the moral vows of abstaining from killing, unworthy gain, sensual immorality, falsehood and intoxicants. The observance of these 5 moral vows is indeed obligatory on every Buddhist Upāsaka (lay disciple of the Buddha). In this connexion, let us remind ourselves that the whole purpose of the Dhamma, and hence the greatest duty of every Buddhist, is to put an end to all Suffering. The procedure towards this end is in 3 stages : morality, mental development, and wisdom. The first step is morality ; and the minimum degree of accepted morality for a layman is the observance of the 5 moral vows. The Buddhist layman who does not observe them, is not progressing towards the Path of Deliverance. As such, he cannot be really considered to be active in the Buddha Sāsana. To put it in a different way, he is like one at a bus stand, who very well knows which bus he should board ; but does not do so because he knows that he must part with his money if he is to travel !

Such a person, in spite of his being a Buddhist Upāsaka is yet not mature. One may understand the whole theory of Buddhism, and perhaps be a very clever exponent of the Dhamma ; but if he does not at least guard the 5 moral vows, then, in spite of all his wisdom, he is very backward. Nevertheless, he is superior to the non-Buddhist, who knows not right from wrong in intellectual appreciation of the Truth of the Three Jewels. Whereas the non-Buddhist is yet groping in darkness, the immoral Buddhist Upāsaka sees clearly to some extent. The knowledge he has acquired here, even though not currently utilized, may come in handy perhaps during a future Buddha-period, if not earlier. The non-Buddhist has not yet made even that acquisition.

Now, what we have been saying here is that observance of the 5 moral vows is binding on every Buddhist layman. But it must be said that only one who has reached the First Stage of Sanctity is incapable of breaking them. Still, every Buddhist Upāsaka, who realises his status will do his best to keep the precepts intact, because every failure to keep the five precepts is derogatory of his position as a Buddhist layman and a human being.

The fact that moral lapses are no disqualification to one's being a Buddhist Upāsaka does not mean that a Buddhist Upāsaka can afford to be morally lax. There must always be the honest attempt to preserve 100 per cent purity. The aim should be moral perfection, and there should be genuine endeavour to reach it.

We have here been stressing the need for every Buddhist layman to observe the 5 moral vows, or so-called "precepts." But one may be tempted to ask this question : "Is that all ?" That is, whether it is sufficient for a Buddhist layman merely to observe the 5 moral vows. If this question is to be satisfactorily considered, we need appreciate, first of all, the difference between the Dhamma and all other religions. That is, the Dhamma on the one hand, and all other religions on the other—excepting, of course, nihilism and materialism, which, however, hardly fall into the class of religion. (We are here considering only those teachings that believe in a hereafter, a life after death.)

Whatever various differences there may exist between the Dhamma and the other religions, they are all based on the difference in the goal. It will be seen that all other religions teach their adherents to reach a state of perfect life. This may be called "Paradise or any

thing else, but in essence they are all the same. They are all forms of sentient existence, existing or imaginary. The Dhamma alone says that sentient existence can *never* be perfect, and hence would make a very poor goal. This is because any form of sentient existence, however intrinsically happy it may be, is yet unsatisfactory because it cannot last forever. Buddhādhamma therefore has as its goal, a state of complete cessation of the process of life ; viz., Nibbāna, which as a word, is very familiar to all of us. The Buddha saw the truth of the Supermundane, because of his Supreme Enlightenment. What all other religious teachers could see was mundane happiness. It is like the crossing-over to the farther shore, and the running-about on the hither bank. Only the Buddha understood and taught how to get to the farther shore.

Therefore, let us not forget, that as Buddhists we follow no ordinary world-teacher ; but a fully-enlightened or a teacher of men and deities, and indeed a unique being. Let us also bear in mind that the teaching we profess is one that leads not to mere heavenly happiness within the Cycle of Existence, but to Supermundane Bliss, to Nibbana, entirely outside the Cycle of Existence. Now, as followers of such a unique teacher and of such a unique doctrine, is it right for us to be content with merely observing the 5 moral vows ?

We started by mentioning the superiority of a Buddhist Upāsaka when he is compared with other believers. There are various other instances, where a Buddhist is at an advantage over non-Buddhists. A very special instance is with regard to his knowledge of Kamma and Rebirth. What is a great problem to one who knows not these doctrines, is but a trifle to a Buddhist (who knows them). For example, a person may feel baffled and frustrated, because in spite of all virtue, he is always unfortunate. Or, he may be perplexed and worried, that someone is displeased with him for no valid reason. But, to a Buddhist who well knows the subject of Kamma, these are easily understandable in that light. Bernard Shaw was a man of immense wisdom, by any worldly standard ; but was it not he who said that it is dangerous to be too good ? An understanding Buddhist, however, knows that no harm ever results from good ; and that any harm that occurs is the result of a bad action that is not readily apparent : just as much as a child is no "freak" if he does not resemble his parent, for this difference is only an expression of similarity to some grand-parent.

Even from a much more worldly point of view, one who has read Buddhist stories such as the Jatakas, is very well informed in worldly matters. If a Buddhist receives a slap from another person, he will not reciprocate, for the simple reason that he knows that by doing so he is only defiling his own mind, and thereby placing a further obstacle in his path to Deliverance. If a close relative of a Buddhist dies as a result of a doctor's carelessness, he will not curse the doctor, saying that the death could have been easily prevented. He knows that the death took place *because it was inevitable*. In all these ways, therefore, a Buddhist will be a very mature person. Consider a science exhibition, where scientific models are displayed in very interesting fashion. Even a child who attends it will not fail to be taken up by the exhibits. A student of science, however, will have the additional pleasure of *understanding* the working of the models. Similarly, *whatever anyone can understand, a Buddhist will understand better, fuller.*

We conclude this by considering the "policy" for the ideal Buddhist layman. To begin with, he should have a fair knowledge of the Four Noble Truths. Being an aspirant to Nibbana, he should scrupulously observe the 5 moral vows, as such observance forms the first step in the Path to Deliverance. Meanwhile, he should make use of every possible source to widen his knowledge of the Dhamma. Whatever good act he performs, he should wish that it should help him in his battle against the passions. He should maintain constant

vigilance over his own mind, and continually strive to dispel bad thoughts and cultivate good ones. At every available opportunity he should engage himself in the observance of a higher morality and in mental development. And most important, he should always have at the back of his mind, the intention of going forth into the homeless life, for the purpose of intensive mental development. For, as an old master has put it: "Take to the homeless life at an early age. Would a man enjoying fruits on a tree remain thereon, until it is felled?"

Is There a Survival of the Dead?

By M. A. THABREW

THERE is much speculation even among the Buddhists whether there is any scientific evidence to prove the theories of re-birth, the existence of a creator of the Universe etc. Therefore it is feasible to examine some of the opinions of Western writers relative to these aspects of Buddhism.

The Buddha has said that the starting point of saṁsāra cannot be seen, that it does not tend to a close, that it has not been created by an Almighty God, and that outside this earth there are many realms in which beings exist.

Mr. J. P. Grantham in his book "Universe we live in—Theories old and new" says:—"The idea that every thing started at one place and expanded from there does not fit in with the observed knowledge of the recession, speeds, the ages and the general structure of the galaxies. It is also suggested that rather than consider a beginning and end to the Universe which does not seem to fit in with the general pattern of continuity observed in the Universe as a whole. It would be more reasonable to consider no sudden change, but that the inter-galactic gas is being continually created at a rate that exactly equals the amount being used up in the formation of new Galaxies. This new suggestion is that the Universe goes on for ever into the future and went on for ever into the past. Another detail of general interest is the probability of life elsewhere than on the earth . . . From the biological point of view, life is almost certain to exist in some form on every one of these planets and the chances of its developing in much the same way as it has been on the earth seems to be fairly high. It does look, therefore, as if we are not unique creatures, but that we are something of a rarity."

"A generation ago man believed in all seriousness that the Universe was created 4,000 years before the birth of Christ. Nor has this belief vanished totally in the modern age, though there is much scientific evidence about the changes registered in the strata of the Earth's surface had taken millions of years to accomplish the task."

Buddhism has expounded the theory of re-birth. It says that beings are reborn again and again in various states such as the human, animal, and heavenly abodes according to their Kamma or deeds, till they ultimately

attain salvation from rebirth viz. Nibbana. There are many facts that suggest the survival of a living being. Some of these are: spiritual communion with the dead through mediums, authenticated recollections of past lives by certain individuals, the existence of geniuses, telepathy, clairvoyance, and other mental phenomena, which are gradually gaining scientific recognition and which can reasonably be explained by the theory of rebirth.

In a "New Survey of Science" Mr. W. M. Sheppard says: "that the phenomena of telepathy has been granted scientific status due to the work of D. Rhine of Duke University, U.S.A. Telepathy is the exchange of thoughts between two persons without material aid. No one can even suggest an explanation yet along the lines of ordinary physics."

"Dr. Rhine tackled the problem on a statistical basis and supervised the performance of some 1,000 critical experiments. Telepathic messages were sent successfully for distances varying from a few yards to 250 miles and in one series of 2,500 tests 869 satisfactory results were obtained, i.e. 419 more than would have resulted from pure chance."

"This work was followed by some other prominent scientists. Dr. S. C. Soal of London University repeated Dr. Rhine's experiments but under even stricter conditions in order to verify or disprove them. These demonstrated, the truth of telepathy and pre-cognition. It seems that science must now accept both these phenomena."

"Some remarkable test of phenomena similar to clairvoyance (seeing at a distance) were made in London in 1936 by a group of scientists which included Professor Fraser Harris, A. M. Low and Dr. Nandor Isedor. A London businessman, Mr. Theodore Kelb, deemed to be able to see with eyes shut and was willing to submit to any tests the scientists could try. His eyes were shut and they were plastered with sticky dough and then bandaged tightly so that the most hardened sceptic would admit that Mr. K. was unable to see. He was then handed some passages of print which he could not have seen before and he at once read them accurately. He also correctly described some pictures held before him and traced over without hesitation or error outlines of some impromptu sketches made by the Professor."

"This is by no means the only case of its kind on record. In 1935 another group of investigators including Dr. C. E. M. Joad performed a similar test with the Indian, Kuda Bax. The eyes being bandaged with dough, the blind man read easily from any book handed to him from an extensive library. He played an excellent game of billiards blindfolded and easily rode a bicycle in London observing traffic signals."

"Critical examination of certain mental phenomena indicates that we possess and unconsciously use faculties capable of operating independently of space and time and no one can tell where this science may lead us. The field of dimly perceived knowledge is being entered today by the so-called Borderland Science. This science has already been recognised by the establishment of chairs in many Universities."

"How is it that during times of War the proportion of boys to girls born in the belligerent countries automatically rise as though the race itself was making an effort to maintain its numbers? The figures from 1914 to 1915 were as follows:—For every 1,000 girls the number of boys rose from 1,055 to 1,068 in Germany—1,045 to 1,054 in France—1,051 to 1,089 in Holland—1,039 to 1,048 in England. The figures returned to normal a few years after the war." How could this phenomena be explained except by the Buddhist theory of re-birth, thousands of soldiers who died during the war being reborn in these countries?

"Very strange phenomena sometimes crop up in our mental hospitals which suggest the occurrence of a continued mental existence far more fundamental than inherited instinct. There are for instance, records of patients writing pages and pages of mysterious characters which have been found more or less identical with the undeveloped script of the ancient Mayan Civilization of Central America. Cases are continually cropping up of people who are convinced that they have lived before and who demonstrate an increasing knowledge of places they have never visited." Two authenticated recent cases have occurred in India; one, a girl recollected her past birth and she was taken to the village mentioned by her and was able to recognise her relatives and the places she associated with in her past birth.

Alfred Still in the Borderland of Science states that "the extraordinary performances of Mathematical Prodiges or calculating boys as these usually very young people have been named, are a revelation of genius. Sources of information concerning this remarkable phenomena have been reported in several countries. The following is extracted from the account of a calculating boy who was only six years old. On one occasion when

this boy was out walking with his father, he said, "Oh! Papa, at what hour was I born? He was told 4 a.m. and what o'clock is it at present? He was told 7.50 a.m. After walking a few hundred yards, the boy announced the number of seconds he had lived. His father noted the figures and made the calculation after he got home. He told his son that he had missed the correct amount by 172,800 seconds. The child promptly replied, "Oh! Papa, you have left out two days for the leap years 1820 and 1824, which was true. The brother of this infant prodigy possessed similar powers which remained with him all his life."

"Michael Faraday was in the habit of recording much information in his note book. In one of these he refers to the mathematical prodigy Zerah Colburn, with whom he had an interview in 1816. He says of this boy that he is about 13 years of age, nothing very striking in his countenance. He had some instruction in Algebra, but says he does not find it assist him in his calculations. He has not, it is said, been taught common arithmetic regularly. Yet this boy was able to extract the cube root of such numbers as 20,368, 783,891 mentally."

The recent arrival of an Indian lady Sakunthala Devi who was able to answer mathematical problems mentally is known to many of us. How could the case of these prodigees be reasonably explained otherwise than by re-birth. Persons who have shown any talents in previous lives are usually said to be born with these talents in their future births. Sometimes even twins born of the same father and mother exhibit different characteristics and talents during their lifetime.

If any one cares to read the reports of the Psychical Research Society he would come across many remarkable and authenticated cases of communion with the dead by the help of mediums. Sir Oliver Lodge was one of the scientists who believed in the survival of the dead and after communicating with his dead son, who died in the first World War, wrote a book called "Raymond" in which he gave detailed descriptions of the communications received from his son and others.

In Ceylon too, there are many authenticated cases of spirits taking possession of human beings temporarily and remarkably answering questions and foretelling of future events.

To the seeker after truth and to the rational thinker there is ample evidence to believe in rebirth and to the Buddhists, specially there is in addition the word of the Buddha who has seen the phenomena of rebirth through his divine wisdom and has explained it to us in no unmistakable terms.

COLOMBO Y.M.B.A. NEWS

NEW MEMBERS

20.4.59 : A. S. Wijesekere, 57, Koswatte Road, Nawala, Rajagiriya; M. G. de Silva, 37, St. Anthony's Road, Colombo 9; D. A. Piyasena, Ittapana, Matugama; Dr. C. Dahanayake, 53, Training School Road, Colombo 4.

11.5.59 : D. P. Ranasinghe, Messrs. M. Y. Hemachandra & Co., Ltd., Talawakelle.

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CONTRARIES

BY SRAMANARA JIVAKA, M.A., M.B.Bch., B.A.O.,

Triyana Vardhana Vihara, Kalimpong)

TO those who have studied formal logic the Law of Contraries is familiar, to those who have not, when it is enunciated, it will appear as a self-evident truth. For it states simply :

“Of two contraries (A or not-A) both may and one must be false.” X cannot be both A and not-A at the same time. A flower cannot be both white and not-white simultaneously.

Self-evident truth? Obviously!

Now it will be remembered how Einstein's theory of Relativity shook the basis of Euclidean geometry when he announced his discovery that all Space was curved, for Euclidean geometry applied only to linear or uncurved space. Had, then, Euclidean geometry suddenly become valueless? Not so. If you consider a large sphere, or the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral, for instance, and you stick a postage stamp upon it anywhere, you can then proceed to treat all measurements within the area of the stamp as if they were linear and as if the surface was not curved, for the reason that the area measured, relative to the whole, is so small that it can be treated as if it were not curved at all, treatment which could not be given to a stamp stuck on a tennis ball, on the other hand. Thus Euclidean geometry still is, as it always has been, valid for terrestrial surveying in a limited range. But if you require to extend your measurements to the earth as a whole then spherical trigonometry has to be used, as for instance in the art of navigation.

How does all this concern us? Or how do the conclusions from

the mathematical argument affect those of the logical?

Quite simply! The level of truth for which formal logic holds good is comparable to the small area of land, a field, or an estate, which can be treated as being flat, because its relation to the whole is so small. The level of truth of the world of orthodox philosophy and formal logic is so low, relative to the whole truth (which is beyond conceiving) that laws such as that of Contraries are applicable to it. But suppose you desire to go beyond this level, to widen the scope of your vision and grasp of reality, what then? Is it likely that the rules of logic and philosophical discussion will still hold good, any more than Euclidean geometry can be used to measure the Universe?

Beyond a certain level the Law of Contraries is itself false. At a certain level a thing can have an attribute and the negative attribute at the same time, two contrary statements can both be true.

For instance, it is equally true to say: There is no Present, only the Future and the Past, because even while I am saying the word Present, it has already become the Past and before that it was the Future. And yet: There is no Past or Future, only the Present, for the future does not exist until it is the present and the past had existence only for that moment when it was the present. Both statements are true though utterly contrary. (This is but a single example. It could be multiplied and many of the famous Buddhist paradoxes, as well as those of ancient Greece, are of this type).

The ability to appreciate the co-existence of opposites, nay even more, their necessity, shows an ability to go beyond the limits of everyday thinking, which is needed to grasp anything at all of the Reality which lies above the world of illusion.

The doctrine of the Self and the Non-Self, is difficult to grasp. Yet it is easier if one can understand that the annihilation of the Self means the realisation of the Self, that the two are not contrary except at a certain level of thinking; that the putting out of one's Self into the whole world, means not only the loss of the individuality which we term "Self" but the absorption of the whole world into ones Self (to the limits of our extension) for the augmenting of the Self. Another Teacher put the same thought in other words: "He who loses his life shall find it.", using the term "life" in its widest sense.

If the Absolute is beyond comprehension it is because it is the meeting place of opposites, It is the All and yet the Nothing, the Point that has position but no magnitude and the Whole. It is divided yet indivisible, Time yet timelessness. Yet words are inadequate and therefore the Absolute cannot be discussed by man at his present level, which perhaps is why the Buddha refused all questions on It. The nearest perhaps has been attained by Tennyson who showed a remarkable insight into the secrets of the Universe, in that poem where occur the words:

“Boundless inward in the atom,
boundless outward in the
Whole.”

THE PERSONALITY OF THE BUDDHA

(Continued from page 102)

and music would have been plain, in any case. The layman, however, had not renounced the world and was of it, yet. The Buddha was not unaware of the part played by art in one's education even as mathematics or logic impart a certain mental discipline.

The Hindu school of thought holds that aesthetic emotion is the twin brother of mystic experience. One is said to be able to attain communion with the Source of all Truth, all knowledge and all strength by yoga as well as boga which is the acme of aesthetic development in man. One may be inclined to dismiss it as an attempt to rationalise

the presence of erotic sculpture, comparable to the modern trend to explain away the unedifying side certain practices as that of the Devadasis. The Buddha's attitude is pure and aesthetic. It is reflected in His injunction, "Whatsoever things are just and noble, whatsoever things are lovely and praiseworthy, if there be any virtue, think

on these things." The Digha Nikaya says "Whenever one reaches up to Nibbana, called the Beautiful then he knows what Beauty is."

Anesaki, the Japanese authority, says in his "Buddhist Art," "The ideal of the unity of all existence is the source in the Buddha's life and teaching from which Buddhism and Buddhist Art derives its profoundest and most enduring interpretation." The Buddha may therefore be regarded not only the originator of the supreme art of living He was also the incomparable artist. It is not strange that the personality of the Buddha has given rise to an unsurpassed volume of art spread around many lands ranging from Persia to Japan. The background of this creative force is His teaching, the widening of the intellectual outlook and co-relating abstract idea and spiritual vision with human conduct and the realities of life. The great mystery of life and death

had been pondered over by many an Indian sage from times immemorial, but it was the Buddha who, as observed by Prof. Max Muller "was the embodiment of all the virtues He preached. During his successful and eventful ministry of forty-five years he translated into action, all his words, and in no place did he give vent to any human frailty or any base passion. The Buddha's moral code is the most perfect which the world has ever known."

To every one of us alike He had a message. To those ready for the intellectual struggle, He offered the Eight-fold path which begins with right ideas and goes on to ecstatic contemplation. To the less instructed, the lay householder He offered a way of part time devotion: to morality of a simple kind, such as the occasional keeping of poya days and mild asceticism. The latter it was who required graphic and feel-

ingly rendered illustrations of moral precepts taken from His Message itself and the previous lives of the Buddha. One can visualise people treading the three mile length of the stone galleries containing the reliefs of the shrine at Borobudur in Indonesia or the processional paths around the Stupas at Sanchi. The lovely carvings infused ideas of morality. The central features of these illustrations was the Buddha image.

In the Hinayana tradition, the contemplation of the Buddha Image arouses the joy known as the "Buddhalambana priti" since those virtues associated with His personality are recalled and emulated. It serves not as a mere aid to concentration but a mode of contemplation of these attributes, inspiring the preparation for the higher life where serene penetration by the intellect into reality or the true nature of things, is the way of attaining wisdom.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

MY REFUGE

I HAVE read somewhere that a coward dies many times before his death. I realized the truth of these words lying ill in a hospital non-paying ward several years ago. Surrounded by patients moaning, groaning, dying, for the first time in my life I was faced with sorrow "pain," illness and death.

Little did I realize that it was in reality some good karmic force that led me to that ward.

Fear of illness and death gripped my heart to such an extent that it was this fear alone that made me repeat endless stanzas that I had learnt during my childhood. It was the fear of death alone that kept me, automatically, repeating the three refuges all throughout the day and night. I felt the comfort of those words creeping into my mind and body. As a picture placed before me I beheld the vista of precious wasted years. The useless pleasure-seeking lives of the idle rich—ignorance as its root, and its surrounding evils.

The realization that each individual is responsible for his own birth under good or bad conditions by the accumulation of his own karmic activities entered my mind, and with it a fear of the evil. For there does not exist in this world anywhere, a place where one could free

oneself from the evil which one has done. The law of karma does not act on us from outside; it is in himself that each of us bears the causes of the effects which he experiences.

For the first time I looked at my fellow-patients without any fear. There is good inherent in the worst of us. All that was good and unselfish in me welled out, and it was possible for me, at last, to look at my sorrow-afflicted companions with compassion.

Since then I have never failed to send loving thoughts of goodwill daily to all beings and I am glad these genuine thoughts of loving kindness radiating from my heart have been very effective in cases of suffering and illness in dispelling illwill and producing thoughts of metta in others; in keeping dear ones away from evil ways and producing faith in the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha in their minds.

One pure thought of loving-kindness, straight from my heart one day, sent out with the deepest compassion cured a suffering dog when all other medicines had failed, and the animal was almost dying.

I left hospital two weeks later a changed person. Still sick, but with the determination in my heart to put to some sort of use my so far useless life. Listening with confi-

dence to the Ven. Sugatha Maha Thero of Burma, three years ago, helped me resolve practising the Vipassana Bhavana at some future date.

I had my first lessons on Vipassana Bhavana at the All Ceylon Women's Buddhist Association and at the Y.M.B.A., Colombo, two popular Buddhist centres where this good work is carried out for beginners by the Ven. Vangeesa Thera, of the German Dhammaduta Society.

Well now both in mind and body I say with a heart full of boundless thanks and gratitude that I have found all that I searched for. The Dhamma which can be seen by oneself only, is to be seen by anyone who finds the necessary confidence and courage to practise Vipassana Bhavana under proper guidance.

The Tun-Sarana springs from my heart to my lips a million times a day still, but with a different meaning and in deep gratitude to the Great Master who has placed in my heart peace and content.

I hold in the deepest respect the Ven. Sugatha Maha Thera of Burma, and the Ven. Vangeesa Thera who honour their Master and Great Teacher by dedicating their lives to rescuing human beings from Sansara.

MAITREYA.

Ratmalana.