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A STRAIGHT TALK TO UPASAKAS

By SRAMANERA JIVAKA,
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IF there is need of revision and reinvigoration within the ranks of the Sangha, there is also need of revision and a reassessment outside it. The Buddhist laity may be divided into Upasakas and Buddhists, the latter being as nominal as the multitude of adherents to other faiths, who have been born into them and take them for granted; seldom thinking about them until some official form demands to know what may be their religion.

Upasakas are in a different category. They have no parallel in other religions because their initial duty has always been to fulfil the needs of the men who have become mendicant monks for the purpose of attaining Enlightenment. Now, because few people are good enough to do anything for nothing, in order to secure their maintenance the bhikkhus had to develop and continue the idea of the Doctrine of Merits, so that the donors could believe that they were getting something for themselves by giving. This pernicious and egoistic doctrine can certainly be drawn out of existing scriptural texts but only through failure to understand the Doctrine in its essence.

The Buddha very definitely denied that giving *as such* produced merit, — even to monks; which idea, incidentally was brought over from Hinduism and Jainism. What the Buddha said was that Merit was directly

proportional to the spiritual development of the recipient, as well as being dependent on the purity of motive of the giver. On one occasion Aggavassina had received gifts from some people and had himself made offerings to the Buddha. Of this the Lord says: “Unto them, Aggavassina, shall accrue whatever merit attaches to a recipient of gifts like yourself, not free from hate, passion and delusion. Unto you, Aggavassina, shall accrue whatever merit attaches to a recipient like myself who am free from hate, passion and delusion.” (Majj. Nik. I, 237) and again: “A gift given in the case of a virtuous person is of great fruit, not those given in the case of the wicked.” (Ang. Nik., I, 36). And naturally the worth of monks varies just as with other men.

But the important question is whether the laity should look for Merit as they would look for a return gift? Surely this is, in itself, an anomaly of true giving? Giving is supposed to emanate spontaneously from a feeling of Compassion and a desire to help because there is need; not to be a means of receiving. If it has a selfish motive it loses all its worth. The comment on giving by another Teacher may here be recalled. When speaking of the Pharisees habit of ostentatious giving with a fanfare of trumpets so that their charity should be seen by all, the Christ said: “They have their reward by Karma acts immediately
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sometimes. The rise in estimation of their fellow-men is the result of their charity and so no further merit accrues. This is the same as saying there is no intrinsic virtue in such giving.

On the other hand the Doctrine of Merit being reflectable back on the pure minded donor is one of unusual depth and (I think) not to be found in any other ethical system. It suggests that here we are approaching the realm of Cosmic Law of which Science is wholly ignorant. However space will not permit of its being re-examined here.

What is essential is that the laity should consider and reassess its own sense of values to see whether indeed, it has a Right View-point with regard to Dana, or even to its relationship with the Sangha. Is it fulfilling its duty by helping bhikkhus and sramaneras to live free of worldly cares and to devote their time to meditation and the spread of the Dharma? Or is it using them for its own ends, as little objects of minor worship and as the indispensable partner for the acquisition of imaginary Merit?

This desire for Merit seems to be uppermost in the minds of the Ceylon pilgrims who visit the Holy Places; and if it is really so, the sooner their ideas on the subject are sorted out and revised the better; for in no small measure do the shortcomings of the Sangha depend upon them.

Contrariwise, it is also due to the shortcomings of the Sangha that such ideas are allowed to persist. Let us consider the matter rationally and objectively.

Pilgrims bring with them many articles, some useful, like robes and food, some utterly useless, like table cloths, frilly mats and cushion covers, which have obviously been made with loving care, but which one would hardly give as a present to any male much less a monk. Embroidered pennants of which there must by now be many thousands in existence also come into this category. Does the laity stop at all to think of the suitability of its presents to the Buddha and his modern Sangha? Or is it only concerned with the act of giving in order to get?

I have previously drawn attention to the wrong offerings made of radios and cameras and such luxury goods to monks who should refuse them on the grounds of their being snares to tie them still more firmly to Samsara, but who, regrettably, accept them merely on the principle of accepting everything that is offered, which suggests a state of acquisitiveness that should have been shed with the initial act of renunciation.

Why do monks not state clearly their needs? Because they must not break the Vinaya Rule which forbids this. Excellent—but in order then to keep this one, they have to break (or at any rate do break) four or five other rules, all of which come under the same degree, an offence of Forfeiture. This hardly makes sense, nor does it suggest either proper respect for the Vinaya or an intelligent application of its discipline.

Now, as a *sramanera* not bound by the *Patimokka* or admitted to its recitation, I intend blantly to state what sort of gifts would be useful to *bhikkhus* living in the colder climate of North India and which, if given, will help them to keep their Vinaya rules better than at present, and which also may make life a little easier for them in a non-Buddhist country where spreading the Dharma has to precede the Practice of Meditation amidst a host of worldly pursuits which come under the category of "good works".

The most urgent need is for woollen robes, (permitted by the Vinaya) for the winter months, when early morning and evening it is

bitterly cold, and cotton skirts and cotton outer robes are hopelessly inadequate and result in the breaking of the rules of dress. Woollen under and upper-garments and a thick blanket outer robe properly cut of the right colour would be sufficient for any monk who would then conform to the rules of three robes only. What should *not* be given? Householders' garments of any type; jerseys, scarves, caps or socks. These are all forbidden, and all very much in prominence notwithstanding. The blanket outer robe can cover the head and still keep the Rule. For the summer, on the other hand, the thinnest of thin outer robes are required for the heat can be intense. And the Ceylon Sangha should have a stock of such *kathina* robes to loan to pilgrims going north.

Return to the correct *bhikkhu's* uniform is essential for the spread of Buddhism. At present *bhikkhu* pilgrims look more like scarecrows or old washerwomen than monks of a moderately ascetic order, and stand no chance in comparison with their Christian counterparts who are rigid in the matter of dress. But the fault must be shared; for half lies with the *bhikkhus* themselves for not stating their needs and stupidly preferring to break four rules in order to keep one, and half by the laity for not finding out what the needs were and not having taken steps to ensure their monks were attired in a manner suitable to the gaze of tourists and non-Buddhists.

The second need is of the small extras of food which relieve a little the monotony of the Indian vegetarian diet which changes not day after day from year to year, and which is sadly deficient in protein. And the third need is not for *bhikkhus* but for money for publishing more and better printed books on Buddhism to meet on the demand of Buddhism going West, where the school-children are considerably in advance in their general and scientific knowledge over their brothers and sisters in the East, and who would be repelled rather than attracted by many of the pamphlets put out containing ancient superstitions and showing a total unawareness of the facts of life.

In the actual mode of giving, too, the practice of the pilgrims smacks of the egoistic. The gifts, the useful and the useless together which are brought to the temple, are then **passed from hand to hand so that all may touch them and so share in the**

merit of the giver. Is there any logic in this? Could any idea be more childish? Is there even any scriptural justification for it? The nearest would seem to be the Mahayana Doctrine of the Transference of Merit which, though containing a profound Truth, as it is stated is as futile and pernicious as the original Doctrine of Merit. The virtue of giving lies in the compassion which elicits the act of giving and nothing else. Any other form of giving is a travesty of this and so without merit. The touching of a gift made by another can in no wise be the same thing as the act of giving. Had these others had the feeling of compassion they, too, would have brought their own gift, however small. Even *bhikkhus* have the gifts held out to them so that they may also touch and share. Why, then, do they not make it clear that this is not a habit worthy of a Buddhist, much less of a *bhikkhu*? Do they want it both ways, to share the imagined merit for the gift and then to own the gift afterwards? Let the donor place his gift on the altar without the fan-fare that usually accompanies it, in humility and with the desire and hope that he will be offering something that will be useful and will not help to keep the *bhikkhu's* mind on worldly things, and let him know that he alone will reap the reward of his act, if reward there is due from it.

This covers the function of Dana which is what distinguishes the *Upasaka* from the other Buddhists. What are his other duties? There are three great virtues to be practised and developed by the *Upasaka* more than by other persons: those of sincerity, energy and kindness.

Sincerity starts with the Three Refuges which affirm the Buddha as the Master-Teacher and not as our protector as some seem to think; the Dharma as the Truth He taught in so far as it can be put into words; and the Sangha, the examples of those men who have attained Enlightenment by self-conquest, and not its modern counterpart.

Energy means no relaxation in work on oneself, and the effort to gain self-mastery takes up more time and energy than any other pursuit. It is a whole time job of concentration, remembering oneself and keeping one's mind from wandering at will and refusing to allow negative emotions of resentment, anger, self-

pity and the like to stay whenever they enter the mind.

The practice of kindness is the necessary forerunner to the development of compassion and kindness means the acquiring of a certain attitude of mind towards all living things. Some people are kindly by nature—presumably they have practised kindness in their previous lives; some are not and these can stop and think, whenever responding unkindly to a person or event and remember that as upasakas there is no room for unkindness in their

lives. There is more unkindness than kindness in the world and unkindness means more suffering and suffering is what the Buddhist should be trying to lessen, not create.

And there is one final thing an Upasaka should stop to consider every now and then; the question: "What am I here for?" We so often go through our lives being educated, getting a job, marrying, making money and dying that we forget there may be something else for us to do. But in a religion which

has rebirth as a main tenet, there can be no room for such forgetfulness. The question cannot be ignored or left to one's last moments when it will be too late. Man is here on earth to develop himself spiritually, to gain Enlightenment, in Buddhistic terms. He cannot afford to live as do those who think this is their only life and Heaven lies ahead. He has been given a mind to use on more than the best ways of increasing his bank balance or social prestige. Let him apply it now to the subject of being an intelligent Upasaka.

BUDDHISM ENCOURAGES TRAVEL

By AMARASIRI WEERARATNE

THAT Buddhism is not merely a religion but a whole civilisation is a truism. Buddhism has fostered and encouraged all activities that promote the well being of man. Arts, crafts, architecture, sculpture, painting, literature, and all that enriches the life and culture of mankind has been systematically promoted by the acceptance of the Buddha's teachings. Never can it be said that Buddhism encouraged anything baneful or detrimental to the welfare of mankind.

Travel is one of those things that are necessary to promote knowledge. It is said that homely youths will have homely wits. Travel is necessary for accumulation of knowledge and interchange of ideas. Except during the rainy seasons the Buddha was always travelling. Not that he went in search of knowledge. His was a mission of mercy. He sacrificed the comforts of the Jetavana monastery with all its princely supporters and underwent the rigours of an itinerating life in order to carry the light of his teachings to the teeming millions of India. The ideal Buddhist or the Arahant too is a wanderer. Of him the Buddha says:—

"Uyyujjanti satimanto, na
nikete ramanti te
Hansani pallalan hitva, oka-
mokam jahanti te."

"The mindful exert themselves. They are not attached to any particular abode. Like swans that quit one pond for another, they abandon

their temporary abodes and travel about."

The Buddha exhorted his Arahant disciples to travel carrying his message abroad in the famous exhortation "Wander forth O bhikkhus for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for gods and men." Generations and generations of bhikkhus who followed this injunction have enriched the world and its culture carrying the light of the saddharma abroad, like an ambrosial deluge that brings happiness and satisfaction to all.

When Asoka became Emperor of India he abolished the hunting expeditions which were then in vogue among Indian royalty, and instead he instituted pilgrimages to the Sacred Shrines of India such as Buddha-Gaya, Lumbini, Kusinara, and Isipatana. Those who followed the example of the Emperor benefited immensely both in the material and spiritual spheres. Asoka's missionaries carried the message of the Master far beyond the borders of India. To the Hindus travelling abroad constituted a loss of caste. In fact the early Indian patriots during the British period had to fight against this pernicious idea to encourage Indian youth to go to England for higher studies.

The Indian Buddhists were not hampered by such prejudices. Indian Buddhist missionaries like Kushyapa, Matanga, Bodhi-

Kumarajiva and many others braved the rigours of the Himalayan mountain passes and the Gobi desert to carry the message of the Buddha to China and other eastern lands. Thus 1016 years after the demise of the Buddha his teachings were firmly established in China. 485 years later it crossed over to Japan.

The travel records of the Chinese monks who came over to India in search of Buddhist learning are the first of their kind in history. The records of Fa-Hian A.C. 410, Sung Yun A.C. 518, Hiuen Tsang A.C. 629 and I'tsing A.C. 671 serve as silken chords that bind in friendship the peoples of these two great nations of Asia. Hiuen Tsang's Ta-Tang-Si-Yu-Ki—"Buddhist Records in the Western World", has been called by European scholars "a treasure house of accurate information". It has been invaluable to students of Indian history and archaeology and has shed immense light in the identification of Buddhist shrines and centres of learning. It is on record that Sinhalese Nuns visited China in A.C. 429 to establish an Order of Bhikkhunis there, as previous to that no Order of Nuns existed in China. Monks from Japan and Korea travelled to China to study the teachings of the Buddha. We have a beautiful portrait of the Japanese monk returning to his homeland delineated by Ch' Ui Chi, a distinguished poet during the Tang period in China. It is as follows:—

“By vocation he came to the Superior Empire

His journey resembled a dream
Arriving from the distant ocean
did he sail in the skies ?

Light is the boat in which he
returns, but heavy with
doctrine

The immensity of the ocean and
the limpidity of the moon
evoke the virtues of the
Buddha,

The fishes and the dragons will
come out of the water to
hearken to the Indian
prayers,

Is not the light of this lamp
sweet that lightens the eyes of
the world ?

John Fryer an authority on
Mexican history is of opinion that a
Buddhist monk Hui Shen wrote the
first account of the new land. Hui
Shen's report states that the dis-
covery of this land was made by
five Buddhist monks from Kabul in
A.C. 458.

Excessive attachment to one's
country to the detriment of other
peoples is the result of an illusion
(desha māyā). Man is born today

in one country and after his death
he may be reborn in another, no
one can say where. Travel helps to
establish mutual understanding and
eliminates prejudices and fallacies
with regard to foreigners. It pro-
vides the best antidote to the evils
of jingoism. A Buddhist is a
citizen of the world, and to him all
are his brothers and sisters. For
has not the Master taught us that
there is no one in this world who
has not been a father, mother,
brother, sister or wife to us in the
long round of rebirths, that we call
Sansara ? Indeed truth is stranger
than fiction. Vishnusharman was
a Buddhist when he wrote :—

“Ayan nijahh parevati ganinā
lagu chetasām
Udāra charitanānsu, vasudaiva
kutumbikam.”

“Small souls inquire, “Belong
this man
To our own race or class or clan,
But the larger hearted men
embrace
As brothers all the human race.”

On the advantages of travel an
ancient Sanskrit writer says :—

“Yo na sancharate desān
Yo na sevetha panditān
Tasya sankuchitā buddhir,
Rita bindu rivamhasi.

Yastu sancharate desān
Yastu sevetha panditān
Tasya vistaraitā buddhir
Taila bindu rivamhasi.

Vyaparantara mrutsrujya
Vikshamane vadumukham
Yo gruhasyeva nidrate
Daridrāti sa durmateh.”

“He who does not travel abroad
He who does not wise men seek
In wisdom daily does he shrink
Like a drop of ghee in water cast.

He who travels in distant lands
And wise men who does oft
contact
His knowledge and wisdom ever
expands
Like a drop of oil on water cast.

Who abandons work and
industry
And sleeps away idly at home
Admiring his wife's facial beauty
Will be a fool and a pauper too.”

BUDDHIST MEDITATION

By The Ven. SHANTI BHADRA,

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BUDDHISM speaks of Kama-loka
(Sensuous world), Rupa-loka
(the Fine-Material world) and Arupa-
loka (the Immaterial world). These
three Lokas comprise of 31 spheres
of existence which are all subject
to the universally operative laws of
Anicca (Change), Dukkha (Dis-
harmony) and Anatta (Soulless-
ness)—We may not believe in some
of these spheres of existence because
we cannot see them or understand
what they mean, but that is no
proof of their non-existence. It
must be realised that there is much
more in the universe than what our
limited and narrow philosophy can
see or show. The evidence that the
Psychical Society is daily gathering
re-discovers for us some of these
states of existence which are closed
to our ordinary senses.

The aim of the Buddhist is to
cross over this Ocean of Samsara
(the 31 spheres of existence) and
reach Nibbana—a state of perennial
peace and happiness. This state is
beyond our sense-limited and mind-
bound understanding. The Buddha
and the Arahats who had attained
that state had described it as Ananta
(Infinite), Asamkata (Incomparable),
Anuttara (Supreme), Anupameya
(Incomparable), Tana (Safety),
Khema (Security), Siva (Happiness),
Kevala (Unique), Analaya (Abode-
less), Akkhara (Imperishable), Visud-
dha (Absolute purity), Lokuttara
(Supramundane), Amata (Immort-
ality), Mutti (Emancipation), Santi
(Peace), etc. It is rather illogical
to say that there is no such thing
simply because we do not perceive
it with our senses. It is beyond the

senses and the dust of worldliness
debars us from getting a glimpse of
it.

This state has to be realised here
and now and what is that bars us
from attaining it. How are we to
attain this state of enlightenment ?
Obviously by the dispelling of dark-
ness. In this case here, light and
darkness are related to our mind.
The removal of all barriers that
obstruct the light is the only way to
enlightenment. All obstacles origi-
nate and have for their basis Lobha
(Greed), Dosa (Hatred) and Moha
(Ignorance). When reduced to one
common factor, they signify the
illusion of separateness. Our
disease, our mental blindness can be
diagnosed as springing from this
illusion of Egohood. It is through

Bhavana, meditation, that this illusion could be uprooted and destroyed.

Bhavana means producing, acquiring, mastering, developing (one's own mental faculties), meditation. To use the words of Dr. Paul Dahlke, it is inner progress. It is something productive. That is to say, some good is produced in us, be it in thought, word or action. Every good action, and every good action has some element of renunciation in it, is a kind of Bhavana. To be liberated in mind is to be great but that greatness can come only through meditation. The ever-repeated advice of the Buddha is "These are the roots of trees, these are empty houses. Meditate, be not slothful: be not remorseful later. This is our instruction to you."

Meditation gives a guiding hand to everyone onwards towards Nibbana but it is only the Tihetuka-Patisandhika who could attain Nibbana through meditation in this life provided, of course, other necessary conditions meet harmoniously. Beings are classified according to nature of Patisandhi-vinnana (Rebirth consciousness) into three groups, namely, (i) Tihetu-patisandhika "a being born with three noble root conditions. Such a being could be found among men and higher heavenly beings." (2) Dvihetu-patisandhika "a being born with only two noble conditions i.e. Greedlessness and Hatelessness." (3) Ahetu-patisandhika "a being born without root-conditions, is a being whose consciousness at the moment of rebirth was not accompanied by any of the noble root conditions, namely, Greedlessness, Hatelessness and Undeludedness." If such beings are born in the sensuous sphere, as humans, they will be crippled, blind, deaf, mentally deficient etc." Again the Tihetu-Patisandhika is grouped into three according to the ability of acquiring insight. The Ugghatitannu is capable of immediately understanding and realising truth. Such a person's mind is fully prepared and any chance occurrence may help him penetrate the truth. The Buddha's foremost disciple, Sariputta, was such a one. The Vipacittannu can penetrate the truth after detailed explanation and a few attempts. The Neyya requires guidance. He comes to realise truth through advice and questioning, through wise consideration, and

through frequenting noble-minded friends and through long practice of Sila.

The subject of meditation has to be chosen befitting one's temperament and Buddhism recognises six different types. They are the lustful, the choleric, the ignorant, the incredulous, the credulous and the wise. Everyone, in some way, is an amalgam of all these but it is necessary to know which predominates and governs one. In Buddhism there are forty subjects of meditation, namely, ten devices (kasinas), ten impurities (asubha) or corpses in various stages of decomposition, ten recollections (anussati), four sublime states (brahma vihara), four formless states (aruppa), the perception of the loathsomeness of food (ahare patikula sanna) and the analysis of any compound into the four elements (catudhatuvavatthana).

Bhavana (meditation) is divided into two, namely, Samadhi Bhavana (concentration development) and Vipassana Bhavana (insight development). Now let us take an example of Samadhi Bhavana (concentration development). In ancient Ceylon kasinas (devices) were used for this purpose but now the tradition is lost and few resort to the kasina method. Patavi-Kasina (earth device) is a circular disc of a certain size made of earth. Looking at it the Yogi (one who practises meditation) contemplates mentally repeating Patavi (earth), Patavi (earth). When one has contemplated long in this manner the earth device will photograph itself in the mind as if it is really seen by the eye. This mental image is called the Uggaha nimitta. When meditation is continued further this object will gradually develop and assume a brilliant and crystal-like appearance. This is called Patibhaga nimitta (counterpart image). This is the stage when the mind of the Yogi becomes free from the five Nivaranas (Hindrances). These are Kamacchanda Nivarana (Sensuous lust), Vyapada Nivarana (Ill-will), Thina-middha Nivarana (Sloth and torpor), Uddhacca-kukkucca Nivarana (Restlessness and worry) and Vicikiccha Nivarana (Doubts). This state of mind now liberated from the hindrances is called Upacara Samadhi (Neighbourhood concentration). When concentration is further continued, a state is reached where the mind, to all appearances and purposes, sinks into the object

and remains fixed in it. This is appana Samadhi (attainment concentration)—a state of fixedness and steadiness of mind. The four kinds of Appana Samadhi are described by the Buddha as follows: "By getting rid of these five hindrances which are defilements of the mind and weakening to intuitive wisdom then, aloof from the pleasures of the senses, aloof from unskilled states of mind, he enters and abides in the first meditation which is accompanied by initial thought and discursive thought, is born of aloofness, and is rapturous and joyful. He drenches, saturates, permeates, suffuses this very body with the rapture and joy that are born of aloofness: there is no part of his whole body that is not suffused with the rapture and joy that are born of aloofness. Monks, as a skill bath attendant or his apprentice, having sprinkled bath powder into a bronze vessel might knead it together with drops of water until the ball of lather has taken up moisture, is drenched with moisture, suffused with moisture inside and out, but there is no oozing—even so monks, does a monk drench, saturate, permeate, suffuse this very body with the rapture and joy that are born of aloofness: there is no part of his body that is not suffused with the rapture and joy that are born of aloofness.

And again, monks, a monk by allaying initial and discursive thought, with the mind subjectively tranquillised and fixed on one point, enters on and abides in the second meditation which is devoid of initial and discursive thought, is born of concentration and is rapturous and joyful. He drenches, saturates, permeates, suffuses this very body with the rapture and joy that are born of concentration: there is no part of his body that is not suffused with the rapture and joy that are born of concentration. Monks, as a pool of water with water welling up within it, but which has no inlet for the water from the eastern side, no inlet for the water from the western side, no inlet for the water from the northern side, no inlet for the water from the southern side, and even if there were no showers from time to time, yet a current of cool water having welled up from the pool would drench, saturate, permeate, suffuse that pool with cool water: there would be no part of that pool that was not suffused with cool water. Even so monks does a monk drench, saturate, permeate,

suffuse this very body with the rapture and joy that are born of concentration there is no part of his whole body that is not suffused with the rapture and joy that are born of concentration.

And again, monks, a monk by the fading out of rapture, dwells with equanimity, attentive and clearly conscious and experiences in his person that joy of which the Aryans say: "Joyful lives he who has equanimity and is mindful" and he enters on and abides in the third meditation. He drenches, saturates, permeates, suffuses this very body with the joy that has no rapture: there is no part of the whole body that is not suffused with the joy that has no rapture. As in a pond of white lotuses or a pond of red lotuses or a pond of blue lotuses, some white lotuses or red lotuses or blue lotuses are born in the water, grow up in the water, never rising above the surface but flourishing beneath it—these from their roots to the tips are drenched, saturated, permeated, suffused by cool water. Even so, monks, a monk drenches, saturates, permeates, suffuses this very body with the joy that has no rapture: there is no part of his whole body that is not suffused with the joy that has no rapture.

And again, monks, a monk by getting rid of joy and by getting rid of anguish, by the going down of his former pleasures and sorrows enters on and abides in the fourth meditation which has neither anguish nor joy, and which is entirely purified by equanimity and mindfulness. He, having suffused this very body

with a mind that is utterly pure, utterly clean, comes to be sitting down: there is no part of his body that is not suffused with a mind that is utterly pure, utterly clean. Monks, as a monk might be sitting down who has clothed himself including his head with a white cloth, no part of his body would not be suffused with the white cloth. Even so, monks, a monk, having suffused this very body with a mind that is utterly pure, utterly clean, comes to be sitting down: there is no part of his whole body that is not suffused by a mind that is utterly pure, utterly clean."

With the successful termination of the fourth stage of meditation, the nivaranas (hindrances), namely, sensuality, anger, sloth and torpor, flurry and worry and scepticism are completely undermined. In short this refers to the state of Jhana (absorption). Though this state is still mundane, yet it is supernormal. This keen absorption-mind, this mind "composed, quite purified, quite clarified without blemish, without defilement, grown soft and workable, fixed, immovable" can now be turned on to penetrate the nature of things as they really are by means of the meditations on Anicca (transience) Dukkha (suffering) and Anatta (non-self). When this is continued sufficiently long there is the possibility, in a fleeting moment of insight (vipassana), to have a glimpse into the Supramundane (lokuttara). The practiser becomes a Sotapanna *i.e.* one who has entered the stream leading to Nibbana. This is the real stage of

conversion into Buddhism: it is at this stage that one becomes unshakeable in one's confidence as regards the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha. At this stage three of the ten Samyojanas, namely, false views, doubts and belief in rule and rite is completely overcome. His steps are now certain. He has now experienced something that never can be translated into words. The books say that it is "greater than emperorship, than god-state, than overlordship of all the worlds".

The next stage in the ascent to Nibbana is called the Sakadagami (once-returner). Sensual lust and ill-will are thinned out, *i.e.* their grosser form is overcome. When one reaches the Anagami stage the five fetters, false views, doubts, belief in rule and rite, sensual lust and ill-will are completely uprooted and destroyed. The final stage is the stage of Arahathood. The remaining five fetters, namely, Craving for life in the World of Pure Form, Craving for Formless World, Pride, Agitation and Ignorance are weeded out and completely destroyed. He is now free and perfect. He is completely liberated from the leaden weights of Lobha (Greed), Dosa (Hatred) and Moha (Ignorance) that kept him bound to Samsara. Something radiates from him that illumines the world and shows us a way to come to an understanding with life and to rise above all petty distractions, fragmentariness, uncertainty and futility of life. Such a one teaches without words and is useful without action.

THE EIGHTFOLD PATH

By S. J.

THERE comes a time in every man's life when he needs to stop and take stock of himself instead of allowing the ceaseless flow of events to sweep him onwards amid unchanging scenery and with a monotony that signifies circular instead of progressive movement. At such a stocktaking he must needs ask himself certain questions of a fundamental nature, indeed, so fundamental are they that for the most part they are passed over in his humdrum existence as being of no importance.

What am I? Why am I? Have I a purpose and, if so, am I fulfilling it? Why are there religions, are not ethics enough? What does my religion mean to me? Is it the same as it means to other people? Is my idea of it the same as that of its Founder? These and many more equally fundamental questions should concern us but they do not until forced upon our notice; so here we shall consider those two which are primary in premises: What does my religion mean to me?

And is my idea of it the same as its Founder's?

Perhaps religion, mine or anyone else's, means nothing to me. Perhaps I am one of these modern intellectuals who regard man as the measure of all things (an ancient Greek idea, incidentally) and scientific progress as making for superman; while talk of an Infinite, except in a mathematical sense, of a God, of divine retribution or of Karma, of Prophets, Saviours, or of my Self as being non-existent, moves me

not at all, unless it be to laughter. If I am one of these, however, it is unlikely I shall be reading this article.

Hence we must assume that I am "religious", that is, that religion means more to me than to the moderns who feel they can dispense with it so light-heartedly. So we are back at the crucial question: What *does* it mean to me?

The word 'religion' comes from a Latin word *religio* meaning 'something binding on one' 'a yoke' (A similar origin has been given to the word 'yoga'). But then the ancient Romans worshipped "the ashes of his fathers and the temples of his gods", and his religion was combined with a fierce patriotism so that irreligion became identified with treason. The same idea held sway in ancient Greece. Socrates' attempt to "overthrow the gods", the charge on which he was tried and condemned, and to find a high moral code for living, was interpreted as an assault on the government and the State.

Now in theory religion and ethics cannot be divorced from each other; a deep spiritual sense must produce right conduct, and ethics demands recognition of something above and beyond man on which depends the sense of "ought" and "ought not", utilitarianism and hedonism being contradictory within themselves. But as things are today—and as they have been through historical times, religion and deep spirituality are only identical in theory; in practice they are poles apart; and the illegality of utilitarianism and hedonism is not admitted.

Within the confines of whatever religion you like to consider, you can find devotees, punctilious and conscientious in their religious observances, devout apparently who, when it is not the moment for performing their rites, are despoiling their fellowmen, making profits out of big business with utter unscrupulousness; seeking only pleasure and the money wherewith to purchase it, perhaps not even stopping at violence or the promotion of wars and revolutions to attain their ends, the meanwhile loud in their condemnation of others less punctilious but perhaps more scrupulous.

No wonder it is time to take stock of what we mean, of what the world means, by religion.

Now religious observances and devotional practices have abuse, for there are some people who need this stimulus to their emotions to assist the deepening of their spiritual sense; but they are not, cannot be, an end in themselves, for whither do they lead? Indeed, it is significant that the Buddha does not seem anywhere to have instituted any form of ritualism or religious observances, but He concentrated instead on showing people the road to Right Living and the means of mental development towards final Enlightenment or the perception of Reality while living in a world of illusion. *Puja* has developed since His death, even as in other religions ritual and forms of worship developed with insufficient reference to the Teaching of the Founder, and in due course they have tended to become substituted for that Teaching.

Puja is obviously a secondary consideration in Buddhism, it is a means to an end, the end of quietening the mind and stopping the ceaseless activity of a teeming brain and thereby inducing a few moments of peace in a storm-shattered life. Make it an end in itself, set undue store by placing offerings upon altars, on prostrations and obeisances, or ritualistic rules and you lose the essence of the Buddha's Doctrine.

For the Dharma can be summed up quite simply even if the practice of it is far from simple. He taught that the first essential for man is Right Living and this means the purification of the mind. With a relatively purified mind, (and not without) we can begin to practise Meditation, Right Living and Meditation lead ultimately to Enlightenment, if not in this life, at least in some future one, if we continue steadfastly to raise our level of being through this practice. Enlightenment is the Purpose of Man on Earth.

Of all the deep and involved philosophy contained in the Sutras, there stands in contrast the First Sermon at Saranath, in which the Four Aryan Truths are enunciated and the Eightfold Path is given, and that anthology of Buddha's sayings, the Dhammapada, which two writings give between them all that one needs to practise Right Living, Right Viewpoint, Right Aspiration, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness,

Right Concentration—these are the Rules for Right Living, the paving stones of the Eightfold Path. The Middle Path as Buddha Himself called it in His Sermon: "This, O Bhikkhus, is that Middle Path which is found by the Tathāgata, which gives vision, which gives knowledge, which tends to peace, higher wisdom, enlightenment and Nirvana." It is the path between the extremes of a life of pleasure-seeking and that of self-mortification and over-asceticism.

Now, analysis of this Path will reveal that all the other Rules of Right Living depend upon the first: indeed, if we can develop the first, Right Viewpoint, the rest will follow perforce. For Right Viewpoint means a proper sense of values—and does not the idea of a middle path not imply that a right sense of values has been reached?

What the world needs above all today is a readjustment of its sense of values. To individuals and to nations those things seem all-important that have no intrinsic or ultimate value in themselves, yet men spend their lives in pursuit of them and destroy the lives of other men in the process if they stand in the way. On the other hand those things which are vital to mankind are passed over as being unimportant or unrealistic—because they do help anyone to augment his income or improve his position or give his country supremacy among the nations.

Many are the Teachers who have pointed out the worthlessness of material things: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt and thieves break in and steal," said One. "Death will capture and bear away that man whose mind is intoxicated with his attachment to his sons and cattle, even as a flood will sweep away a sleeping hamlet," is a verse occurring in the Canto of the Path, in the Dhammapada, but one of many illustrating the same point.

"The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
"All that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
"Awaits alike the inevitable hour,
"The paths of glory lead but to the grave."

thus the poet Thomas Grey in his Elegy on a Country Churchyard.

It does not require a very deep intellectual capacity to perceive that what you have to leave behind you in this world when you go out

of it, cannot by any stretch of imagination be of fundamental importance. And no material thing, no material achievements can you take with you. All you can take is your Being, and the effects that material things may have had on your Being, and your Being thus fashioned is your Karma, that continuum with which you are born over and over again.

What can raise your level of Being, therefore, is the only thing of fundamental and ultimate importance. And what *can* raise your level of Being ; Only self-conquest, conquest of the attractions of matter, which is mental purification. The Dhammapada is full of good advice on the subject of self-con-

quest, and self-conquest is obtained by the application of the Rules of Right Living. But an appreciation of the value of the Eightfold Path depends on our having a Right Viewpoint.

If we have a Right Sense of Values, one that coincides with the Buddha's, that is, which were right *par excellence*, then it is likely that our idea of his religion is the same as the Founder's, and that we are less likely to confuse means with end or substitute an easy devotional practice for the difficult practice of self-subdual, "for the Self is very difficult to subdue".

The Eightfold Path is the Path along which a man must walk through life in virtue of his being

Man. Animals cannot walk it; they are not expected to. Man is expected to; it is implicit in his very nature and evolution, But man is not doing so; instead of progressing as he fondly believes he is doing with all his scientific discoveries, which he cannot take with him when he dies—he is reverting nearer and nearer to the animal world. Even as animals live only to fulfil their desires without thought of higher things, so man is also tending to live solely to fulfil his desires and higher things are falling more and more into disregard and disrepute.

"Man is a rational animal" said Aristotle. One begins to wonder . . .

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FORT Y.M.B.A.

I AM a worker in the Fort and have been looking forward for many years for the Y.M.B.A. in the Fort. From the day the foundation stone was laid for the building, I have visited the spot weekly and prided myself on the steady progress made with the construction. The first stage is now complete. I am overjoyed. I shall continue watching the progress of the building till the next stage is ready for the benefit of the members.

Am I correct in saying that but for Sir Cyril de Zoysa we would still be a long, long way from the goal ?

HENRY PERERA.

Kandy.

You are very correct. At the same time may we suggest that you and your friends give Sir Cyril what help you could?—*Ed.*

BUDDHISM AND YOGA

I AM very sorry to see that you have refused me the elementary right to reply to criticisms of an article which you thought fit to publish. I trust that this is not an example of the tolerant spirit of Buddhism of which we hear so much. But how do you square it with your sense of journalistic ethics or even your sense of fairplay? You have evidently overlooked all these considera-

tions because you have got to uphold orthodox Buddhism at all costs. My personal opinion is that orthodox Buddhism as we have it today is a fraud concocted by the priests to explain why they cannot produce a single Arhat today. Whether it is better to perpetuate this fraud when the original teaching of the Buddha can still be traced is a question which time will decide against you.

You say that Krishnamurthi's borrowings from Buddhism have not done it any good. How wrong you are in making this statement is easily seen if you will re-read the article entitled "What the Buddha taught" in the December issue of the "Buddhist". You will find all the leading points of Krishnamurthi's teaching in that article. The writer of that article may not have been aware of it but these ideas were given to the world by Krishnamurthi several years ago. His new and up-to-date ideas can shed a new light on Buddhism, which is what I have been trying to point out. But one important point has been overlooked in that it was from the original teaching of the Buddha that Krishnamurthi borrowed and not from orthodox Buddhism. Thus the article contradicts itself on several points.

For instance, in this article we are told how to attain *Yathabhuthagnana* without Digamistingy, *Thana*, *Falld*, *Surely* this is noolaham.org | aavanaham.org

not orthodox Buddhism of which *Jhana* is the corner stone. This article ignores *Jhana* completely, thus giving the lie direct to the contention of the Mahanayaka Thero of the Vajirarama that you cannot become even a Sovan without attaining *Jhana*. Again the teaching of the Buddha is summed up by saying that all our sorrow is due to internal conflicts which can be resolved by the simple process of tracing these contradictions to their source. This is a very good summary of Krishnamurthi's teaching but where does orthodox Buddhism say so. According to Buddhagosha our sorrows are due not only to internal contradictions but also to external contradictions which are all caused by *Thanha*. We can therefore get rid of these contradictions only by eradicating our *Thanha* for which he has laid down a specific method in which *Jhana* is a *sine qua non*. I repeat that Krishnamurthi's ideas can help us to get a better understanding of Buddhism, provided they are applied to the original teaching of the Buddha from which they were borrowed.

D. B. JAYASINGHE.

We publish this letter in order to prove to our readers that the views we have expressed on this correspondent's new fangled ideas are the more acceptable to those without any bias.—*Ed.*

DEVA WORSHIP

THE string of letters you published in the last few issues of the *Buddhist* have proved very illuminating. But I wonder how many Buddhists, even of the educated class, you have been able to convince. According to daily newspaper reports some of your very estimable members are prominent in Devale ceremonies—Kavadi-carrying; ash-applications, etc.

Did you see that photograph during the last Vel procession in Colombo where a VVIP was seen worshipping the horns of a bull!

A. DEVADASA.

Panadura.

This correspondence is now closed.
—Ed.

"B...Y BUDDHISTS"

THE particular Naval high-up is a first class bounder who has been pitch-forked into his present position by fortuitous circumstances and with the unholy aid of a pre-1956 Government. If he does not keep his b—mouth well guarded he will soon get what he deserves. This is not a threat; it is a promise.

You are apt to be too *maitreic*. That will not do, Sir, when political King-Kongs and upstarts hide under every cassock.

CAPTAIN DIANA.

Cinnamon Gardens.

P. DE S.

MR. P. de S. Kularatne has let us down again.

In the forties he thought it a mighty achievement to enter State Council, so he let down Ananda.

Then, after many vicissitudes, and after transferring his loyalties from one political party to another, he has now given up the presidentship of the Buddhist Congress for the prospect of a parliamentary seat.

What's the matter with him?

PATRICK SILVA.

Ambalangoda.

UNBUDDHISTIC PRACTICES

MR. (or Mrs. or Miss) Thusita Dissanayake has very opportunely drawn the attention of some readers to the utterly meaningless practices observed by Buddhists at their ceremonies. But of what good? How many who have read the letter will even stop to ponder over what has been pointed out? Madhe

Pannasecha Nayaka Thera has written numerous articles in the Sinhala Press on the ludicrousity of the *dakshina* done at Buddhist funerals. What I cannot understand is why the revered Maha Nayaka should officiate at funerals where the wrong thing is done.

W. SUNANDA.

Hiripitiya.

NIRVANA

I READ an article in the November, 1959 issue of a magazine, by name "High", that men in Bombay visited licensed houses "to enjoy the sexual bliss of Nirvana". The writer states that every Indian some day hopes to go to Nirvana where they could enjoy sex orgies in heaven. This writer adds that the nearest thing to Nirvana on earth are the brothels of Bombay.

I am rather surprised that the vigilant Department of Cultural Affairs has permitted the sale of this magazine in this country.

A. D. P.

CATHOLICS

WHY waste your space over Catholics? They are now cocks-of-the-walk in Sri Lanka. What they dared not do in British times they are doing with impunity now. They were pampered by D. S. They silenced Dudley at Wanathamulla. They mesmerised John Lionel. They cajoled Banda. They placed the magic wand under Daha. And now they are waiting again for one of the D's.

The situation cannot improve unless there is a change. If no change comes, Buddhist may as well openly call for the benign protection of the Holy Father.

F. W. LIONEL.

Wadduwa.

CATHOLIC TOLERANCE AND JUSTICE

THE Rev. Fr. F. Cavelli, S.J., in the Journal of the Society of Jesus, La Civiltà Cattolica, April 3rd, 1948:—

"The Roman Catholic Church, convinced, through its divine prerogatives of being the only true Church, must demand the freedom for herself alone, because such a right can only be possessed by truth, never by error. As to other religions the Church would certainly never draw the sword. But she will require by legitimate means they shall not be allowed to propagate false doctrines. Consequently, in a country where the majority are Catholic, the Church will require that legal existence be denied by error, and that if religious minorities exist, they shall have only *de facto* existence, without importance or legal status."

In some countries Catholics will be obliged to ask full freedom for all, resigned at being forced to cohabit where they alone should be rightfully allowed to live. But, in doing this, the Church does not renounce her Thesis, which remains the most imperative of her laws, but merely adapts herself to *de facto* conditions which must be taken into account in practical affairs."

Pope Leo 13th in Encyclical "*Libertas*" 1888:—

"Justice therefore forbids and reason itself forbids, the State of Godless, or to adopt a line of action which would end in Godlessness, namely, to treat the various religious alike, and to bestow upon them promiscuously equal rights and privileges."

If we Buddhists now reverse the procedure and do the things the Catholics would do themselves if they were in a majority, the Broad minded Buddhists and others would call those who advocate such policies, "fanatics".

The "fanatics" of the past are the national heroes of today. Go ahead your present day "fanatics"; serve the cause of the country and save this island from mental enslavement. The future generations would worship you; and erect statues in your name.

DHARMAPALA.

II.

A BUDDHIST boy was getting married to a Roman Catholic girl. The Archbishop tried his best to convert the boy to Catholicism. When he failed, the Archbishop wanted the children of this marriage to be Catholics. To this too, the boy objected.

The priests who knew this boy were asked to persuade him to get married in Church. Once again the boy objected saying that if he was to go through with the marriage it had to be done according to Buddhist rites. The Archbishop then wanted to know what really happened during the Poruwa ceremony. The boy explained the procedure.

The Archbishop next wanted to know whether one of the Catholic priests could perform the Poruwa ceremony. When this too ultimately failed, the Rector of a Catholic school was asked to dismiss the brother of the bridegroom unless the marriage was solemnised according to Catholic rights. How generous of the Catholic hierarchy?

ROTCOD.

We do hope that the young man will be ever vigilant of the traps that will be laid for him. We do hope that the young woman too would show her true mettle when faced with dire punishment to her family.—Ed.

COLOMBO Y. M. B. A. NEWS

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HEALTH SCHEME LECTURES

THE following lecture series have been arranged for 1960 :-

February 5.—The Problem of Infectious Diseases. By Dr. P. Rajasingham, D.D. (PHS)—Department of Health; **February 19.**—Environmental Sanitation and Health. By Dr. B. K. de Silva, S.M.O.H. (E)—Department of Health.

March 4.—Dental Health. By Dr. I. L. P. Samarasinghe, F.R.C.S., Orthodontic Department, Dental Institute, Colombo; **March 18.**—A Balance Diet for Good Health. By Dr. (Mrs.) B. V. de Mel, M.O., Nutrition, M.R.I.

April 1.—Mental Health—A Community Responsibility. By Dr. G. P. S. Fernando, Psychiatrist, Department of Probation and Child Care Services; **April 15.**—The Growing Menace of Cancer. By Dr. B. K. Rustomjee, President, Ceylon Cancer Society; **April 29.**—Tuberculosis—Public Enemy No. 1. By Dr. J. H. F. Jayasuriya, President, C.N.A.P.T.

May 13.—The Health of Our Children. By Professor C. C. de Silva; **May 27.**—The Health of the Mother and Child. By Dr. V. T. H. Gunaratne, S.H.S., Colombo.

June 10.—Planning a Family. By Dr. (Miss) Chinnatamby, F.R.C.S.; **June 24.**—The Problem of Disability. By Dr. Francis Silva, F.R.C.S.

July 8.—The Problem of Social Diseases in Ceylon. By Dr. (Mrs.) E. D. C. Pereira, Superintendent, V.D. Campaign; **July 22.**—Filariasis—Facts We should Know. By Dr. Abdul Cader, Superintendent, Filariasis Campaign.

August 5.—Preventable Blindness. By Dr. K. J. de S. Deva Aditiya, Surgeon in Charge, V.M.E.H.; **August 19.**—'The Dangers of Alcohol.' By Mrs. Dora Godlieb, Hony. President, Christian Temperance Union.

September 2.—Skin Diseases. By Dr. T. Chelvarajah, Skin Specialist, General Hospital, Colombo; **September 16.**—Lecture on Neuro Surgery. By Dr. S. A. Cabrel, Neuro Surgeon, General Hospital, Colombo; **September 30.**—Social Problems and Social Services. By Mr. P. D. Uduwela, Director, Social Services.

October 14.—Community Organization. By Mr. Paiva—Director, Institute of Social Work; **October 28.**—The Role of Social Worker in Community Development. By Mr. J. E. D. Madawala, Deputy Director R.D. & C.I.

November 11.—Lecture Demonstration on Simple Techniques on First Aid. By St. John's Ambulance Brigade; **November 25.**—Seminar on pen.

N.B.—Lectures will begin at 6.00 p.m. at the Y.M.B.A. Hall, Borella. Most of the lectures will be supplemented by Educational films.

FORT BUILDING FUND

THE following contributions are acknowledged :-

Forbes & Walker, Ltd. Rs. 200; Mr. R. D. Amaradasa 5; The Proprietor, Ranjani Cabs 100; Messrs. Wijayasiri Stores 13; The Finance Co., Ltd. 250; Henderson & Co., Ltd. 75; The Associated Newspapers of Ceylon, Ltd. 150.

NEW MEMBERS

21.12.59: C. Lawrie de Soya, 96, Dematagoda Road, Colombo 9; D. Karunadasa, C.T.M's Office, Colombo; P. J. Fernando, 31, Deal Place, Colombo 3.

18.1.60: B. S. Ranatunge, Maha Vidyalaya, Kuruwita; Dr. H. M. P. Gunaratne, "Sisira", Moratumulla, Moratuwa.

OUR M. M. C's

THE following members of the Y.M.B.A. were elected to the Colombo Municipal Council at the polls held in December :-

Mr. George S. Jayasuriya (Cinnamon Gardens); Mr. G. B. Perera (Borella South); Mr. V. A. Sugathadasa (Kotahena South).

Acknowledgments: "World Buddhism"; Yana—Magazine of early Buddhism and Religious Culture, published by the Buddhist Publication Society, Colombo. The Old and New Ceylon Community.

Y.M.B.A. COLOMBO

THE 61st Annual General Meeting of the Young Men's Buddhist Association (Incorporated), Colombo, will be held on Saturday, February 27, 1960, at 3 p.m. at the Association Hall.

AGENDA

1. Notice convening the meeting.
2. Minutes.
3. Annual Report and Accounts.
4. Election of—
 - (a) Office-bearers.
 - (b) Seven members of the Board of Management.
5. Appointment of an Auditor.
6. Resolutions of which due notice have been given.

Nominations for election of office-bearers and seven members of the Board of Management should reach the office of the Hony. Gen. Secretary not later than 6 p.m., on Friday, February 5, 1960.

Notice of any resolution to be moved should reach the office of the Hony. Gen. Secretary not later than 6 p.m. on Friday, February 12, 1960.

D. L. DISSANAYAKE,
Hony. Gen. Secretary.

NEWS AND NOTES

BUDDHIST CONGRESS

THE forty-first annual sessions of the All Ceylon Buddhist Congress was held in December, 1959, in Amparai.

Mr. P. de S. Kularatne presided and there was a large gathering of delegates.

Dr. G. P. Malalasekera, of Moscow, addressed the assembly.

Shortly after the sessions Mr. Kularatne resigned from the office of President to which he was re-elected. Reason: To contest a parliamentary seat.—*Cor.*

A CORRECTION

In Mr. T. H. Perera's article in the January issue, P 189, Col. 3 the first line should read "is neither elated at their rise nor depressed at their fall."