

Bennett, Allan
Buddhism as a Religion
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in poetry as *Avalokatisvara* (the Lord who Looks Down from on High); its various other aspects have received innumerable other names. Nirvana has been symbolized as the Lotus-land; and the way of Emancipation as a great bark upon the waters carrying the souls of the faithful to the golden shores of the West.

This theory of symbolization has saved Mahayana from being a cold philosophy. It has developed into a passionately devotional religion. It is the hope and the comfort of millions, their torch of learning, and the expression of their æsthetic ideals.

It has opened for thousands the gateway of illumination. It has shewn how we may outgrow each dogma and each limitation, and yet remain faithful to the ideal. It has taught that all the innumerable phenomena of life are expressions of one infinite Reality, whose essence by the purification of the mind we may gradually come to understand.

It discovers the Buddha-heart hidden within our breasts. The world which before seemed but a vale of tears is transformed. It has become the open door of Reality. In its clear light all sentient beings become pilgrims to the Goal, and ourselves but seekers after Truth.

Mr. Allan Bennett, formerly the Thera Ananda Metteyya, next addressed the meeting on *Buddhism as a Religion* :—

In every great religion we find a union, under the one style, of several widely different elements; there is the philosophy, or view taken of life as a whole; the ethic, or body of rules relating to human conduct, its moral aspect; and, of far less real importance, though it is often regarded as the main feature of the religion by those who have been born and bred under its auspices, you have the collection of outer observances, the rites and modes of worship, which form, as it were, the outer body of the religion; and which, like gross bodies in general, is found to persist in view of the world even after the religion has lost its interior essential vitality, and in real truth is dead.

Besides these, however, which we might conveniently classify as the equivalents, in a living human being, of the gross body, the vital principle, and the intellect or mind, there exists in all living religions the inner vitalising flame; what, to use a word which unfortunately carries with it certain non-Buddhist implications, but which in its

ordinary usage is the only English word available, we may term the *soul* of the religion, the only thing about it which renders it alive, a real and an active entity, capable of animating, through the channel of the bodies of doctrine and of ethic, the lives of its followers; and this, fundamentally speaking, is in the last resort what we imply when we speak of a religion in its deepest and truest sense. The *spiritual* element, the manner in which and the extent to which a given body of teaching is capable of ensouling and conveying to its followers the mighty potencies of the interior, the spiritual universe; that is what we mean when we speak of any of the world's creeds peculiarly as a *religion*: and it is of this, the innermost and most essential feature of Buddhism that I propose to say a few, and of necessity all too-failing, words.

For it is just in this matter of a religion *as* religion that it is most difficult, is indeed all but impossible, to convey any clear and sufficient idea to an occidental audience; and that for the very simple reason that, however it might have been in the bye-gone times, which we term the "age of faith," religion, in this interior sense of the word, has all but died out of our western world. Rather, perhaps, I should say that, by reason perhaps mainly of the fact that the West has grown out of the religions formerly prevalent; this, the deepest and most supremely important element in life has become so overlaid by other forms of mental and psychic activity as scarcely ever to appear above the surface of the mental life; only occasionally manifesting, as it were through the thick veil of material activities, in some great act of renunciation: like that of a Damien devoting himself to a life of untold horror and inevitable ending, so far as this world is concerned, in death. It is because this essential element of religious life has seemed to me to be only thus overlaid and not really dead, that I regard its revival as possible; as, indeed, a work before all others of importance at this special juncture in our history; and it is on this account that I have spent my life in the endeavour to bring home to our western world this greatest religion out of all the many which exist, still in the splendour of full vitality, out there in the East to-day.

For in the East, as ever, religion in all its aspects still exists as the most potent of the forces which move even the great masses of mankind. It still remains one of the most moving memories of my life, how landing in Ceylon as a young man, and going, that first day of my arrival in the East, to a Buddhist Temple, I first came into

contact with Buddhism as the living, heart-moving reality it is in those eastern lands. It was astonishing; well-nigh incredible to myself who experienced it, the all-but palpable power of its presence, in the very atmosphere of that little temple at Maradana; in the speech of the English-speaking Monk, whom I was so fortunate as to find installed there: a Siamese Prince, once a great personage in the worldly sense in his own country; an able diplomat, once accredited to five European Courts, and who, like no few others of royal lineage in the Orient, had found it the greatest and noblest thing in life to cast aside, as his great Master had done before him, wealth and dignity, and power, and all that makes for worldly happiness, to assume the Yellow Robe of the Bhikkhu; to beg, indeed, his daily bread from the charity of villagers; but also to find peace, peace that no earthly circumstance of pomp and grandeur can ever offer to the heart of man.

You all know what great difference, not only in mere quantity, but in quality also, there is between one's memories of solitude, of interior contact and commune with this universal life about us, of a moonless night beneath the stars, and a sun-lit day;—how the lessons that we gather from the star-lit heavens seem indeed so great and high and noble; but all so very far away; whilst the corresponding experience of lonely communing with life, with nature, in the sunlight, seems indefinitely more vivid, more immediate; partaking of the very essence, somehow, even of our daily human life. It is not only the incomparably greater volume and intensity of the sun's light, his life poured into us, but a difference of *quality* far greater still; so far away, so utterly remote in time and space that star-light seems; so wonderfully, potently present, so immediate and immanent in life itself, as is the magic presence, the light and warmth and life forth-streaming from the sun.

Multiply tenfold, nay a hundredfold, that contrast, that distinction, and you may realise a little of the difference I then found between that Buddhism of the books, read in this distant land, which still at that period had been my guide in life for some ten years; and the religion, *as* religion, of Buddhism as I found it on that ever-to-be-remembered day. Later on, indeed, I was to find that that same glory of an inner experiential life existed not alone in shrine and sanctuary and monastery tenanted by holy men;—that it entered into the daily lives, the daily thoughts and common speech of all the Buddhist peoples; an ever-potent presence, as obvious for one with

eyes to see it as is the splendour of the risen sun. And, just as all the sun's bright beauties,—its warmth, its sense of prodigally out-flung life,—grow ever greater and more wonderful, yet still ever in contact with our daily ways, as he rises ever yet higher above his place of dawning; just as one feels ever his presence in the sunlight, himself, one knows, the sure and certain centre, the focal source from which all this great earth's life is ever streaming;—just so one feels, with a surety, a sense of certitude that I despair of conveying to any who have not experienced it, the ever-real, ever-living presence, there behind this sunlight of Buddhism in its native land, of that great Figure of the Teacher, the Indian Prince who, so many centuries ago, cast aside all worldly blessings that He might find the way to peace for suffering humanity; and, finding it at last, taught us who dimly strive to follow Him not, after He had passed away, to suppose that He no longer evermore was with, to guide us and inspire; but rather to conceive Him as living onward through all the gathering ages, incarnate and immanent in the Truth He taught; Himself the glorious Sun, lighting for us the way upon our path to Everlasting Peace.

The Chairman then introduced Mr. A. W. P. Jayatilaka, a young Sinhalese law-student, who spoke on *The Essence of Buddhism* as follows:—

I am asked to speak a few words on this occasion, and the subject selected is "The Essence of Buddhism."

You will at once grant that it is too wide a subject to be dealt with in the space of ten or twelve minutes. But what I intend to do is to address you on some of the main, fundamental and essential truths of Buddhism. Let us take the three great pillars on which the structure of the Teaching is built; namely, *Anicca* (Impermanence), *Dukkha* (Sorrow or Suffering), and *Anatta* (Selflessness).

Anicca signifies that there is nothing that is permanent. We see this truth everywhere, around us and within ourselves. We realise it. We find everything decaying sooner or later;—material wealth, power, happiness, comfort, glory, pride;—all these change and pass away. We may stop to think and ask ourselves: Where is the glory of ancient Greece? Where is the power of Imperial Rome? Where is the pride of Germany? They have all vanished. To-day it is England's epoch of power and predominance; to-morrow the leadership of the world will have passed to some other race or nation.

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BUDDHISM AND THE WESTERN WORLD



DR. EDMUND J. MILLS, F.R.S.

OF all the manifold advantages which the science of the Western world (development as it is of scarcely more than a century's duration) has conferred upon mankind, few, if indeed any at all, can compare, in their power of enlightenment of humanity at large, with the effects of the marvellous extension of our methods of transport and of communication. Little by little it has broken down the barriers which time and space had imposed upon the multitudinous races of mankind ; has opened out for all of us the vast treasury of the united wisdom of humanity. It shows to man of each and every nation how his fellow-man who lives upon the further side of our globe has caught, from another aspect, another facet of the one jewel of Truth, another ray of wisdom's light divine. Not without cause, we may be sure, did the world's Greatest Teacher choose as the very type and symbol of the interior evolution, the very means of the attainment of the full perfection of humanity, the concept of a Path whercon the aspirant is a traveller. In like spirit, in his smaller sphere of study, does the modern psychologist investigate and treat of the nature of those pathways of association and dependent causation whereby our minds all function ; whereby our consciousness itself comes into being. To learn from one another, to syndicalize, as it were, the whole great mass of human wisdom ; this is perhaps the highest of many wonderful gifts that applied science has endowed us with. We know of naught else so capable of obliterating the barriers between the diverse nations of mankind ; of nothing more potent to efface alike the follies, self-importance, and intellectual pride, and all the walls that petty and parochial instincts have built up about our minds.

To an observing man, whether of the East or of the West, who has the good fortune to be able to avail himself in his own person of this priceless boon of travel, there is no single point of difference between the East and West which strikes him with such force as does the estimation in which religion (using the word in its best and widest sense) is held on these two faces of our globe, or the extent to which it enters

and takes a part in the lives of these his fellow-men. To the Oriental visiting our shores, we seem as a race fundamentally lacking in religious thought. To the Occidental visiting the East, it seems as though he never had realized before what real religion means. You travel along the Rhine, to see every eminence crowned by a robber-baron's castle. You travel along the Irawaddy, and every summit is surmounted by a pagoda or other shrine. And the same contrast runs through everything. When the villagers gather in the evening cool, their day's work done, there in the East, it will be seldom but that some religious topic presently comes up, to be most earnestly discussed and weightily considered. When our western peasants meet under the same conditions, what, except local scandal and newspaper politics, will you hear? Little enough, I fear! That difference, that wide contrast, may be summed up in two short phrases; two questions which rise to the minds and lips of Eastern and of Western man, when any new thing is mooted. The Occidental asks, "What is the use of it?"—or, another aspect of that same query—"Will it pay?" Whilst the East asks only "Is it *true*?" The thought, the hope, the heart of the West lies for the most part in this short, single life on earth, in this material world. The East has its mental vision ever fixed upon the matters of the Realm Beyond; the mysteries of time and space; the depths of consciousness which lie beyond the manifested world.

Now in depicting this wide difference, in pointing out this contrast between East and West, I am very far from wishing to imply either that the East is right, or that the West is wrong, or vice versa. Both, indeed, perchance are right; both, indeed, perchance are wrong. For the true path of wisdom lies ever in the Middle Way, between the two extremes of thought to which the minds of men are apt to run. If, as I think, the modern West needs more of the true spirit of religion, not less does the East need to work harder in the conquest of that material world which, since Karma has cast our lines in it, is obviously the fit field for our present efforts. If indeed the universe is not a chaos; if indeed it is the expression of a purpose, tending towards something greater and nobler; if, in a word, life has any *reason* in it (as the mere fact of physical evolution alone would seem to indicate), then, what time we dwell herein, it is our part to study it, to strive to bend its powers to the purpose of our betterment, the betterment of all the life that animates it. We must learn, in short, the lessons that in every phenomenon which it manifests

to our senses lie hidden truths for our minds and hearts to win.

If we of West and East alike are to make the best and truest use of this great faculty of intercommunication that Western thought has achieved for us, then even the old East (forgetting a little while its ancient glories) has to learn from the West somewhat of its energy, its clarity of thought about material things, its applications of the knowledge so won to the improvement of the conditions of life on earth, lest it should find itself left behind in the unceasing march of progress. And, whilst not, indeed, forgetting its religiousness, we should strive to bring that earnestness of aim and high-keyed aspiration more into contact with the affairs of this living, breathing, suffering, and yet so heart-moving and marvellous world. Whilst the West has to learn from the East, yet once again, this world is not all in life. The life we live, the purposes we pursue, are but the shadows of a greater and a nobler Life Beyond. There is a hidden, holier Purpose than that of mere material conquest. We have to find anew, each individual in his own heart, the secret fountain of the Amrita, the Water of Deathlessness; to learn that from, and out of, this very World of Matter wherein its recent achievements have been so wonderful, behind and beyond it, stretches the Path of Life's perfecting; the Path that leads to the true Goal of all life's striving and its sorrow; to that Peace which so dimly we, in the turmeil of our world, do yet conceive and long for.

It was just for the helping in this latter purpose—just for the presentation to our Western world of one, and, as we think, the greatest and truest, of the forms of Oriental Religion, that, fifteen years ago, this Society was founded. I, who was privileged to take some small part in its foundation, propose here to set forth, not so much the nature and detailed teachings of that form of eastern Religion which we of the West term Buddhism, as the reasons why the founders of this Society considered that it was competent to fill this great gap in the religious life of the West to-day, and so to take part in this great interchange of wisdom that has become possible between the East and the West.

Before, however, passing on to the consideration of these questions, there are two points which are best dealt with here. The first of these is: What, exactly, do we mean by Religion? Here the actual derivation of the English word does not help us; for, like so many words in that language, it has come to imply a very different set of ideas from those prevailing in

those early times when English was in process of formation. The derivation, as we all know, is from the Latin *re-ligare*, to bind together. In early usage "a religion" meant in English a body of "religious"—of monks or nuns who were "bound together" by some definite set of ordinances. In modern usage, however, it has come to mean that body of ideas, beliefs, and emotions, whereby a man directs his life, his outlook, so to speak, upon the universe wherein he finds himself; even more distinctively and particularly, it refers to a class of interior experiences and attainments which come to those who strive to penetrate the mystery of the life we lead. Religion, in this its deeper sense, is pre-eminently a matter of (to use a very un-Buddhistic term) spiritual experience. It is an entering, as it were, into the world within; the world whereof the phenomena of the outer life are but a reflection, or a shadow, of the realm of those realities which lie beyond. A philosophy or view of life as a whole, views as to man's nature and relation to the world about him, on the one hand, and a system of ethics, of moral ordinances and inhibitions on the other, are both important. Indeed, they are essential portions of the fabric of every great religion. But the most characteristic and peculiar feature of every religion, properly so-called, lies in a *gnosis*, in a definite claim as to the existence of a Power that transcends the forces of the visible universe. It is a claim, in effect, as to the existence of a greater World Beyond, accompanied by the claim that by particular practices, as of prayer and meditation, we all may attain to existence in that interior realm.

The second preliminary question that needs to be settled lies in an objection which is very commonly raised in relation to any attempt at religious propaganda in any land, save that in which the religion involved took its rise or developed into its existent form. It is founded upon the view that religions, not less than modes of dress, or the manners and customs of the various races of mankind, are definite parts of the racial or national *cultus*; that they have in the past developed in accordance with the national spirit; and that they are therefore suited to the country of their origin or development, and to no other peoples at all. Now we must admit that there is very much to be said for this point of view. It is undoubtedly true in one sense; and that is exactly the sense in which most people regard religions in general. For, associated with the philosophy, the ethic, and the spiritual content of religions, we invariably find a number of features, customs, rites, and traditional or legendary teachings, whose

development we can often trace as a matter of history; and which, even in what is nominally the same great religion, as it is found in diverse lands, differ very widely indeed from place to place.

If, in the foregoing definition of a religion as an ethic, as a philosophy, and a *gnosis*, all mention of this aspect of a cult has been omitted, the reason lies in the fact that this cult-aspect is essentially unimportant, extrinsic to the actual religion. In effect it is the mere outward garment, the trappings wherein the thing itself is bedecked. In the West, in Burma, Ceylon, and the several provinces of India, for example, the Arabic decimal notation is universally employed. But in each case a different character is used for the ten ciphers. Yet the arithmetical rules and processes do not vary. *Arithmetic* is the same throughout. In just the same way a religion is a very definite and real entity, quite apart from the mere externals of its outward cult or cults. It is the Buddhist *religion*, not this or that cult of it as obtaining in this or that country, that the founders of this Society considered capable of supplying the vast and ever-growing void manifest in the Western world.

Of the three features which have been detailed as characterizing a religion, it is naturally its philosophy, its view of life, by which alone its value in this or that set of conditions can be rightly judged. For the *gnosis* of any religion is essentially soliptic, a matter of individual experience in the spiritual world; whilst we find the ethical content of all the great religions to be closely similar, if not indeed identical. Only one feature, in fact, of the Buddhist ethic need here be considered in relation to this question of the value of Buddhism to the Western world. I refer to what may be termed its *sanction*. The sanction for the ethics of the various forms of religion prevalent in the West lies in the ordinance of the Supreme Being whose existence those religions teach. Buddhism does not admit of the existence of a Supreme Being, as we shall later see; and so has to look in another direction for its ethical sanction. It finds it in that which is its most fundamental teaching—a teaching which constitutes the very object of its existence. "Two things only do I declare unto you, O Brothers!" said the Great Teacher, "Suffering and the Cessation of Suffering"; and in those words there lies at once the whole *raison d'être* of Buddhism as a religion, and incidentally the sanction for its ethical side. An evil action, from the Buddhist point of view, consists in an action which, whether immediately, or in conformity

with the Law of Causation (of which more anon) ultimately, adds to the suffering of life at large; a good action is one which results in the diminution of suffering. That is all. And I think that in the simplicity and humanity of this, its ethical sanction alone, Buddhism is well able to compare favourably with the views current in the West; as also to find no half-hearted response here, in view of the increasing humanitarianism of the more thoughtful of our age.

Before any clear understanding of our problem can be arrived at, it is further indispensable correctly to diagnose the factors that have co-operated in bringing about the seeming indifference to religion of the Western world in these our latter days. I say here "seeming" of set purpose. For if, as is undoubtedly the case, the more advanced thinkers of our race and time are, almost without exception, to be found outside the membership of our religious bodies; if it is a matter of common comment that the several ministries are mainly recruited by men of second- or third-rate intellect and culture; if, as we all know to be the case, the Churches have altogether lost their once-all-powerful hold on the hearts and services of the community (to such extent that such questions as "Is Christianity a failure?" are common subjects of discussion in our public prints); if, in short, we see on every hand such manifest evidence that our people are no longer swayed by the religious beliefs of their forefathers that it is the first phenomenon to come home to the Oriental visitor to our shores.—If all this be so, I yet am very fully convinced that fundamentally, in its heart of hearts, the Western branch of the Aryan race has by no means lost that instinct for, and genius in, the field of religion, properly understood, which still so notably characterizes its Eastern offshoot. It may seem paradoxical, but I would emphasize that it is not because the West is less, but because it is *more* religious that our churches are empty and our ministries the refuge of the intellectually incapable. For the first demand that a thoughtful man has to make of any religious doctrine he may adhere to is that it should be, according to his best lights, the *Truth*; that its central tenets should endorse what he knows as true from other departments of human knowledge; that, setting aside mere minor matters, the main theses of his religion should not require to be constantly trimmed and adjusted, and twisted in order to preserve some sort of face in view of the ever-widening mental horizons which the wonderful developments of physical science have brought, and still are bringing about. For the indispensable feature of any religion is, as has been

said, its *gnosis*. Unless revelation, unless the doctrines and statements about life and the universe contain such truth that no new discoveries of the human intellect can subvert them, then we can only assume that the religion which puts them forward has, for our age at least, no genuine revelation, no real *gnosis* to offer us.

This is what the clear and lucid Aryan mind of Europe has, with its straightforward grasp of fact, and its detestation of paltering with the Truth, almost too clearly seen. Our Western civilization is founded upon the great achievements of its finest intellects, operating in the ever-extending fields of scientific research. We all know how, time after time, its great deductions have been first anathematized, then decried, then deprecated, from the pulpits of our chapels and churches. Then, a little later, as science went its calm unheeding way, and piled up Pelion of certitude upon Ossa of demonstration, suddenly the opposing voices of our so-called spiritual leaders have become silent. A little later, and the hard-won truths of science have by some unimaginable *volte-face* become an integral part of Protestant Christian teaching! If, like the Catholic Church, with its proud assertion, "*Stet Crux dum volvitur orbis*," a man denies the validity of your reason to judge in matters of what he calls revelation; when, in face of scientific demonstration of our old earth's millennial age, he calmly continues to maintain the world was created some poor seven thousand years ago; if, in face of the doctrine of evolution, he still maintains the genesis doctrine of special creation; even if, as against all visible evidence, he still maintains the truth (it is but fair to add, in a special sense of his own) of his daily-renewed miracle of transubstantiation: then one can at least respect, one can even in a sense admire, the sturdiness of his determined mind. But we should consider that that determination were better expended on a worthier cause. This is not a Catholic country, but all of us who have been brought up in Christian households know only too well the mental agony we suffered in our youth as, one after another, the cherished teachings of our childhood's days were reft from us because we dared not palter with the truth as we came to know it; whilst those who stood in the high places of our Churches were first denouncing the new knowledge, and then announcing it as part of Christian truth!

It is just in respect of these great cardinal facts about life and the universe, these newly-discovered truths of science, that we Buddhists find the closest parallelism. This is a circumstance astonishing enough (since there were no labor-

atories in the Buddha's time) if we deny the possibility of there being other modes of arriving at truth than the painstaking study of nature through the avenues of the senses. But it is natural enough, and certainly to be expected, if you admit the validity of the Buddhist *gnosis*, if, with the Buddhist, you hold that there exists another means of attaining knowledge. That is to say, by entering, through intense concentration of mind, into that interior mental (or, as we say in the West, spiritual) realm which stands in causal relationship to the outer life whose effects the senses present to us. This realm, in respect of its immensely wider and deeper extensions of consciousness, in its incomparably more vivid and more lucid comprehension, transcends our present waking life just as much as our waking life transcends a dream. Because, to an altogether unparalleled extent the Great Teacher of India possessed that faculty, and not less the equally important power to bring down into this dimmer life the results of his investigations in that state, we term him the Buddha, "The Awakened One." And the Buddhist *gnosis* stands or falls by the extent to which its teachings substantiate that claim; therefore, by the extent to which those teachings can be proved to coincide with whatsoever demonstrable truth may be ascertained in any other manner; such, for example, as that which modern science has in the last two centuries attained. This, I would emphasize, is not *our* test for the certitude of Buddhist truth; it is the very rule which the Great Teacher himself laid down—that we should accept nothing as true merely because it was asserted by this or that person, including himself; but only when, after comparison with all we know of truth from other sources, we find it agrees in all respects.

That test, that high standard of perfect conformity with all that can be ascertained as true, is also the standard and the test of modern scientific method; and one of the greatest scientists of the last generation justly put forward this rigid standard of truth and its application to the facts of life and the phenomena of nature as the highest function whereof the human mind was capable. Who, in face of such a view, can assert that Religion, in the best and truest sense of the word, has died out amongst us, when, though our churches are empty, our laboratories are filled with men inspired by this same ideal?

It is the groundwork of the whole Buddhist philosophy that there is no such thing as a sporadic phenomenon; that, in short, in every phenomenon of nature, in every fact of life the Law of Causation reigns supreme: just as it is the ground-

work of the whole great fabric of modern science. So much is this emphasized in our Buddhist scriptures that a celebrated stanza, attributed to one of the Buddha's chief disciples, and which sets forth this principle, has come to be termed "The Buddhist Creed" by several western authors. We of the West have lately, thanks to our science, attained the knowledge of this fact so far as every phenomenon of nature we have investigated is concerned; though, so far, we can only assume its truth in relation to the realm of life and mind. The Buddha, dealing rather with this latter realm, dealt with it more particularly in that relationship, whilst still maintaining, as I have said, its general application. The Law of *Karma*, of "Action," whereby our lives are what they are, whereby our world is what it is and will to-morrow be something different, is simply the Law of Causation applied to the living, conscious world. And, if in one aspect it appears practically as a moral law, bringing suffering in train of evil, happiness in train of good thoughts and words and acts, that is due to the fact that the Buddha's insight enabled him to trace the causal sequences to their deeper dwellings in the interior mental sphere. That terrible concept of original sin which has devastated so many Western minds, and has been responsible for so much human suffering and madness is, happily and necessarily, totally absent from the Buddhist view of life. It is, as the Great Teacher showed us, "by not knowing and not understanding" that we come to suffer, and from suffering to learn. Wrong acts, as has been said, are those which add to the pain of life. The original word is *Akusāla*, which means unskillful, ignorant. So, when the Buddhist encounters suffering, there is no belief in a divine wrath, or a natural perversion, to stand between the awakening of his pity for its object; no thought of a just retribution for real or imaginary "sins." Life suffers because of its ignorance only, from not understanding the true nature of its deeds. So wisdom grows, life wins wider horizons, nobler and humaner thoughts and deeds replace the old, sad, not-understanding ones; till at the last, grown very wise and understanding, the perfected being wins to beyond all suffering. That is our thought of life and of its Goal.

All sentient life, we learn, has three great characteristics. With the review of these, and the consideration of their accordance with what we otherwise know of truth, we will close this brief study of the parallelism of Buddhist and of modern Western thought. First of the three comes *Anicca*, Transitoriness. In all the universe, the Buddha taught, there is no

single thing that endures. Here at once we come to a conflict between what our hearts dictate and the crude scrutiny of the senses manifests, and the teachings of Buddhism and of modern science alike. It is of the very nature of the human mind to imagine things as stable, as eternally enduring. We talk of the eternal stars, the everlasting hills, even of our petty monuments as "building to eternity." It is like a child building card-castles. Ever and again, the mind of man, driven from one so stable-seeming object, sets up some new supposedly eternal object of its idolatry. And lo! the chill blast of time, or yet again the gentler breeze of new-discovered truth, undoes his labour. The card-castle falls, to rise as such no more. - Even the scientific world, until the very beginning of this century, had its eternal, ever-enduring idol before which it worshipped. It had learned, indeed, how the once-eternal stars were born as fire-mist in the abyss of space; how they grew great, and later old, and at the last died out to flame no more. It knew how the enduring hills were thrust up from below, and, through the ages are ground to fine dust by ice and by that softest-seeming of material things, water. Wherever it was able to investigate it found the truth of this old Buddhist doctrine of Impermanence, till it devised its longed-for idol of stability as the atom, the chemical atom whereof all material things are built. Voicing the general view, one of the foremost of Victorian scientists declared that an atom of hydrogen had been an atom of hydrogen from all eternity, and would so evermore remain. They laughed at the old alchemists as ignorant dreamers, because these had deemed the transmutation of one element, and hence one atom into another was possible. Now with the discovery of radio-activity, that last eternal idol of Western thought has been thrown overboard. We know that certain of the elements are, like all else, constantly in process of degenerative change. We see in the laboratory new elements continually coming into being; and we infer that, since some, therefore all are liable to change.

The second Great Characteristic is *Dukkha*, Suffering. Here again the human heart revolts from the teaching of the Buddha. All individualized existence, he taught, is liable to suffering. It is only by ceasing to be a unit of life separate from all other lives that we can win to Suffering's cessation. But the Western mind is apt to imagine that even individualized existence can transcend all suffering, is prone, indeed, to minimize the suffering even now existing all about it; for there be none so blind as those that wish they did not see.

On the latter point I can only say that they forget that they are human beings: that by man's intelligence he has very greatly reduced the amount of suffering to which his kind are subject; that by his communal civilization he has enormously reduced the *danger* of life; until the modern city-bred man hardly knows of that most fertile cause of suffering, fear. All our knowledge of natural history goes to teach us otherwise. Beyond the outposts of man's kingdom fear reigns supreme in life. And, even fundamentally, science can instruct him better, if he will but understand the meaning of the phenomena it studies. For it finds, in the lowliest of organized beings, what it very aptly terms "irritability." It finds how, for example, the amoeba, a mere mass of living jelly, ever goaded on by the ceaseless metabolism or constant change of its internal structure, is "irritated," so to speak, to move about, to stretch forth portions of its substance in search of food wherewith to relieve its dim sense of craving. This is the apologue of all our sentient life.

The third Great Characteristic of life, as presented by Buddhism, is *Anattā*, Unreality. Here we reach waters so deep that in one aspect only does modern knowledge contact the subject at all. It is the Buddhist teaching that there dwells within us no one eternal principle or soul; rather that every momentary mental state might be regarded as the unit of being. So that, if we must use the term at all, a human being would consist of numbers of "souls" past all computation. That much of Buddhist psychology, in this respect, the modern psychological investigation has proved true: much work having been done in the investigation of those fascinating complexes known to modern thought as multiple personalities.

And so, in respect of these its most fundamental doctrines, I think we may admit the claim that Buddhism does not contradict aught that by other avenues of knowledge we know to be the truth. To my brothers of the West I would say: Read, study for yourselves; seeking, as the Buddha taught us, the Truth as your Guide, looking to the Truth as your Refuge, not looking for any other refuge than the Truth; and you will find that here, in this old-time Eastern religion, that very light exists which you have vainly sought in local creeds. The gap in our lives that lack of a religion leaves can be filled to overflowing by this ancient Truth.

To my Brothers of the East I would say: Do not, because you find our churches empty, our hearts turned away from the religions our forefathers held, believe that we are without the

instinct of religion in its highest sense. It is love of truth, because we will not palter with that highest refuge of humanity, that empties these churches, and that empties so many of our lives. Rather should you, in whose hands is this great heritage of the Dhamma, rejoice that your good destiny has saved you from the suffering we must needs endure in casting aside the beliefs of our childhood's days. Rather, still more earnestly, should you rejoice at the opportunity this condition offers you. If, as you and I think, our glorious Religion is the highest Truth yet known to man; if, as the Great Teacher taught, the Gift of that Truth excels all other gifts, then send us help that we may make the truth of it appear; even as the Greatest of Mankind declared it for the benefit of all!

ĀNANDA M.

Bennett, Allan
The Wonders of Radium
09/--/1903
from "Buddhism", Rangoon, Vol
HVD 30 1844

**The Wonders
of Radium.**

The remarkable properties of the new element Radium, discovered by Prof. and Mme. Curie of Paris, still continue to absorb the interests of the scientific world; its latest applications being therapeutic. Prof. Gussenbauer, of Vienna, it is said, has successfully treated a case of Cancer by exposure to the emanations from radium bromide; whilst a paper in the *British Medical Journal* details methods by which the emanations of either radium or thorium may be applied in the treatment of consumption. The bactericidal power of these emanations seems proved beyond a doubt, and the fact that solutions of radium and thorium salts impart bactericidal powers to air in contact with them would appear to place a new and most potent weapon in the hands of medical men.

But the great interest which radium has excited amongst physicists centres around the yet unsolved problem:—from what source does the new element draw the energy which enables it to evolve heat equivalent to about a foot-pound per gramme per hour, to emit its own peculiar radiations, and to shed off ions with prodigious velocity? To these questions no satisfactory answer has as yet been given, although many hypotheses, including even Clerk Maxwell's celebrated Demon, have been put forward to account for the phenomena observed.

If we presume to add to the growing number of these hypotheses, it is because the solution we would venture to suggest has not, so far as we are aware, yet been mooted; because that solution is capable of verification by experiments—which our vocation does not enable us to prosecute ourselves; and, most of all, because, that solution dispenses with the inconvenient necessity of supposing that energy can be created.

Our suggestion, then, is, that the energy evolved by radium is obtained from the movement of the earth through the Æther of space. If we imagine a system of points, more or less impervious to water, at fixed distances apart, being drawn through still water, that system will give rise to a series of waves in the water, the wave-length and periodicity of which will depend on the density and elasticity of water, the distance between point and point, the grouping of the points, and the velocity with which the system moves through the medium. If, then, we assume that a given portion of matter consists of molecules which present a certain tangible resistance to the Æther, and that these molecules are situated a definite distance apart: then when that portion of matter is drawn through the Æther it will give rise to vibrations in that medium dependent on the distance between its molecules, the density, etc., of the Æther, and the

velocity with which it moves: and, if the interval between molecules is fixed and the velocity is appropriate, that portion of matter will constantly emit a monochromatic radiation, the energy of which will be obtained from the force necessary to move the body throughout the Æther. Further, if we consider the molecule, not as a structure composed of non-etheric matter, but as a vortex in the Æther itself, and that as it is moved through space the Æther through which it passes enters it on one side and passes off the other: or, in other words, a given line of Æther in its path gets looped once or more round the vortex; then the Æther in the vicinity of the vortex will be strained, in proportion to the size and complexity of the vortex: and the motion as a whole of such a strained portion of the Æther (within which, also, the medium is moving at a greater rate, because moving round and round) through the unstrained Æther of space might well be conceived as opposing a certain tangible, though slight, resistance to its translation: in which case it would act as the point drawn through water acts. The more highly complex, as relating to the Æther, is a given molecule, the more will it resist being pulled through space, and the more will a system of such molecules tend to convert the energy of its movement into etheric vibration. On this view, then, all groups of all molecules will omit vibrations of a sort, and the amplitude of such vibrations will depend on the distance apart of the molecules. As this distance is constantly varying with internal movements due to heat and other small waves, no substance will emit wholly monochromatic radiations, except at absolute zero, when the internal movements may be supposed to have come to rest. Radium would then be regarded as an exceedingly complex molecule, opposing a quite considerable resistance to the Æther, by reason of which it produces vibrations of a high order together with some heat-waves,—either due to degeneration of higher orders of vibration, or to low harmonics of the upper notes; and its energy would be due to the movement of the earth through space, just as the sound produced by a vibrating reed on the periphery of a flywheel would be due to the energy of the flywheel. And if it were possible to isolate a given portion of the energy of radium—say its heat-radiation—and measure it, either by calorimeter for quantity or by bolometer for wave-length, then it would be found (if the hypothesis were correct) that the energy radiated varied with the altering velocity of the laboratory through space. That is to say, suppose such laboratory were at the equator, (there would be no diurnal variation at the poles) the radium experimented on would be moving with the velocity of the earth in its orbit (disregarding the proper motion of the solar system) plus 1,000 miles an hour at midnight and minus 1,000 miles an hour at noon, a total variation of one thirty-second of its mean velocity:—a very

considerable fraction indeed. And if the existence of an æther heat-band could be demonstrated with the bolometer, that heat-band would move towards the visible spectrum at midnight (when the velocity was greatest) and in the opposite sense at midday (when it was least). And as the movement would affect the total heat evolved, a delicate calorimeter would indicate a measurable difference between the heat-units evolved in an hour about noon and in an hour about midnight. Further, it is just possible that the resistance of æther to movement through the æther is so considerable as to be capable of being rendered visible; in which case a pendulum, suspended as in Foucault's pendulum, in the bob of which was a fair quantity of a radium salt, would lag a trifle behind the earth—more (at the equator) at midnight than at midday when its movements could be magnified by a cylindrical mirror attracted to the bob, and a slit of light used as in a mirror galvanometer.

It is not impossible that other substances besides radium owe certain of their properties to a similar cause, and this suggestion might throw some light on the phenomena of magnetism. The spectra of the magnetic metals would seem to imply great complexity, that they profoundly affect the æther is proved by their magnetic permeability, and it is possible that the phenomena of permanent magnetism are due to the molecules of steel existing at such a distance apart as causes them to give rise to electro-magnetic waves of such nature as to create a magnetic field. In this case a steel permanent magnet would slightly vary at the equator in its magnetic intensity between midnight and noon.

The obvious objection that if the æther thus effects matter it would retard it, and that no signs of such retardation are visible, is easily answered by the fact that we have at present no means of becoming acquainted with such small retardation as could be due to this cause, did it exist; and that a fall of a few yards a year of the vast mass of the earth towards the sun would account for many millions of horse-power of energy, dissipated into space, at present uselessly, by radium, and, perhaps by every form of matter with which we are acquainted. The time may not be far distant when we shall have learned from radium a new lesson:—how to hitch our machinery on to the æther of space,—and gain from the slow fall of our mother-planet on the sun more energy than a million Niagaras can supply.

Will Finson
light cure
Leprosy?

The remarkable and continued success of the ultra-violet light treatment of Dr. Finson of Copenhagen in cases of lupus and rodent ulcer lead us to suppose that it might be found similarly

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 - VI. **The Will in Buddhism**, by MRS. RHYNS DAVIDS (reproduced by kind permission of the Author from the Journal of the R. A. S.) Shows the falsity of the general belief current in Western lands, and that Buddhism tends to produce, or teaches, apathy and negligence concerning the affairs of life. Also points out the loose rendering into modern languages of several Pali words of very distinct meanings in the original Scriptures.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

Note.—We regret that press of other work has prevented us from materially adding to the present Bibliography. In future issues of this Supplement we shall hope to largely extend this list of useful works on Buddhism; in order that our Readers may be able to gather the nature of the extensive literature on this subject.

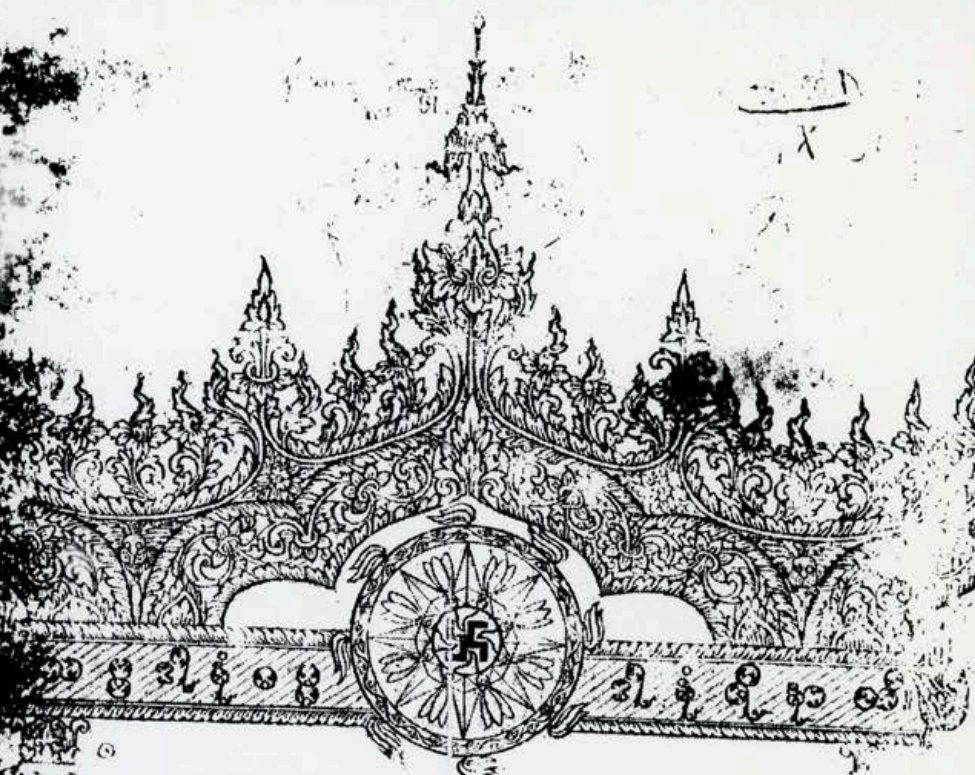
POETRY AND BELLES LETTRES.

The Light of Asia, by Sir Edwin Arnold, K. C. I. E., C. S. I., LONDON, 1885, TRUBNER & CO., 3s. 6d. This work—the Author's masterpiece,—sets forth the Life of the Great Teacher, and gives an epitome of His Teachings "from the point of view of an initiated Buddhist votary." To quote the Author's Preface. The work is so successful from this point of view, that we are constrained to think that the votary in question was not quite so imaginative as the Preface would have us believe. The "Light of Asia," stands unrivalled alike in beauty of expression, in accuracy of detail, and in what is perhaps the best criterion of all, the estimation of Buddha by themselves. This work has been so often re-printed and translated, and so widely known and admired, that further comment is unnecessary.

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
THE GOLDEN TEMPLE. <i>Sir Edwin Arnold, K.C.I.E., C.S.I.</i>	1
THE FAITH OF THE FUTURE. <i>Editorial</i>	6
BUDDHIST ETHICS. <i>C. A. F. Rhys Davids, M.A.</i>	39
BUDDHISM IN SHAKESPEARE. <i>Dr. Giuseppe de Lorenzo</i>	54
PALI EXAMINATIONS. <i>Taw Sein Ko, M.R.A.S., K.-i.-H.</i>	59
THE WOMEN OF BURMA. <i>M. M. Hla Oung</i>	61
ANIMISM OR AGNOSTICISM? <i>Maung Po Me</i>	83
IN THE SHADOW OF SHWE DAGON. <i>Ananda M.</i>	101
NIBBANA. <i>Ananda M.</i>	113
TRANSLATION. <i>Dr. Karl E. Neumann</i>	135
NEWS AND NOTES	
<i>Recognition of the Thuthaabaung; Riots in Ceylon; the 'Shiko' in Public Schools; the Animal's Petition; Gold-Plating on Shwe Dagon; Pagoda Notes; Wonders of Radium; Finsen Light and Leprosy; Obituary; the Buddhist Priesthood.</i>	145
OURSELVES	163
BUDDHIST ACTIVITIES	
<i>The Society for Promoting Buddhism; Young Men's Buddhist Association, Ceylon; International Young Men's Buddhist Association, Japan; the Maha-Bodhi Society; Sasanaadhara Society, Moulmein; Maitriya Hall, Colombo; Vidyodaya Parivena Colombo; Empress Victoria Buddhist Schools, Rangoon</i>	168
L'ENVOI, <i>Ananda M.</i>	175

Full-Page Illustrations (see p. 166)

SHWE DAGON PAGODA. <i>Facing</i>	1
THE GOLDEN MONASTERY. <i>Facing</i>	61
THE DRAGON SIMA. <i>Facing</i>	101

NOTE:—Full particulars as to Annual Subscription, &c., to *Buddhism* will be found on p. v. of the *Supplement*; and Subscription Form on p. xxi.

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VOL. I.]

DECEMBER 1903.

[No. 2.

CONTENTS.

PAGE.

THE THATHANABAING. <i>Editorial.</i>	177
THE NOBLE EIGHTFOLD PATH. <i>James Allen.</i>	209
THE LEGEND OF UPAGUTTA. <i>Maung Kin.</i>	219
BO-TA-TAUNG PAYA. <i>E. H. Seppings.</i>	243
PALI AND SANSKRIT BUDDHIST TEXTS. <i>Prof. T. W. Rhys Davids.</i>	249
THE PROCESSES OF THOUGHT. <i>Shwe Zin Aung.</i>	259
IN THE SHADOW OF SHWE DAGON. (<i>continued</i>) <i>Ananda M.</i>	267
TRANSMIGRATION. <i>Ananda M.</i>	289
OURSELVES.	313
AS OTHERS SEE US.	320
REVIEWS.	333
NEWS AND NOTES.	
<i>Ancient Monuments Preservation Bill; 'Barefaced and dishonest Vandalism'; Want of Chairs and Seminaries of Oriental learning in England; a French Orientalist in Burma; Ethics and Education; Fuli in the Collegiate School; Ceylon News.</i> ...	339
BUDDHIST ACTIVITIES	351

Full-Page Illustrations.

PORTRAIT OF H. E. THE THATHANABAING OF BURMA.

To face page 177

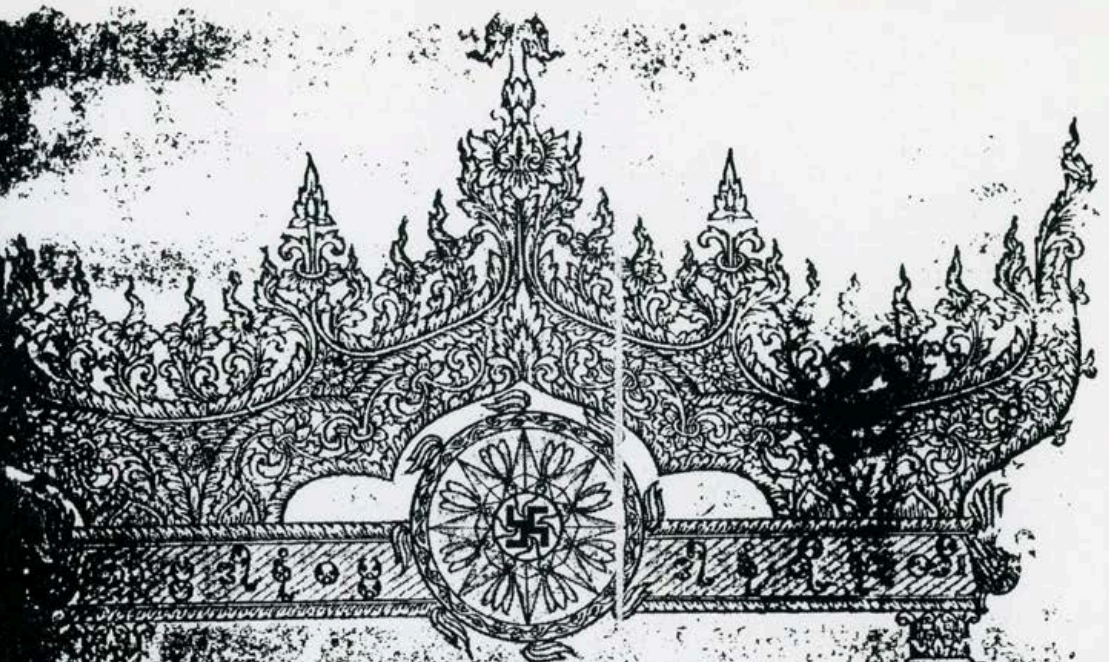
THE DARBAR AT MANDALAY. *To face page* 191

READY FOR THE BEGGING ROUND. *To face page* 265

NOTE: For particulars as to Annual Subscription, etc., to *Buddhism*

Hard by Benares in the Deer-Park Hermitage,
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Vol. I.]

MARCH 1904.

[No. 3.

CONTENTS.

PAGE.

THE LAW OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. <i>Editorial</i>	353
"SEEING THINGS AS THEY REALLY ARE." <i>C. A. F. Rhys Davids,</i> <i>M. A.</i>	377
EDUCATION IN BURMA. <i>Anonymous.</i>	393
ALCOHOL AND THE MIND. <i>Dr. R. Ernest.</i>	411
LOKAMARAJIN AND THE FIFTH GREAT COUNCIL. <i>Maung Tsain,</i> <i>M. R. A. S.</i>	419
HYPNOTISM. <i>J. Newman.</i>	433
ORIGIN OF THE BURMESE RACE. <i>Taw Sein Ko, K-I-H., M.R.A.S.</i>	449
IN THE SHADOW OF SHWE DAGON. <i>Ananda M.</i>	462
OURSELVES.	473
REVIEWS.	
<i>Buddhist India. The Kingdom of the Yellow Robe.</i> ...	481
NEWS AND NOTES.	
<i>Hidden Tibet; Herbert Spencer; the Home of a Humanitarian; the Kalyāni Inscriptions; the Agnostic Annual and Ethical Review, 1904; Radium; the Curse of Alcohol; Ceylon; a Sangha-rāja for Ceylon; the Treatment of Pilgrims; Transmigration; the New Pāli Dictionary.</i> ...	497
BUDDHIST ACTIVITIES	351
<i>The Pāli Text Society; The Japanese Mission in America; the Sambuddhaghosa School and Sāsauādhāra Society, Moulmein; the International Orientalists' Union</i> ...	521

Full-Page Illustrations.

ON THE PLATFORM OF THE SHWE DAGON	facing page....	353
ENTRANCE TO LOKAMARAJIN....	419
COUNCIL OF THE BUDDHASASANA SAMAGAMA	477

"Hard by Benares in the Deer-Park Hermitage,
The Lord set rolling that Great Wheel of Truth,
Empire of Law Supernal — the which none,
Monk, Priest or God, Spirit or Evil One,
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NOVEMBER, 1904.

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C O N T E N T S .

PAGL.

THE NEW CIVILISATION. <i>Editorial.</i>	529
THE PHILOSOPHY OF BUDDHISM. <i>Dr. Paul Carus</i>	561
THE FOUNDATION OF LHA'SSA. <i>Sarat Chandra Das, C. I. E.</i>	575
SIR EDWIN ARNOLD. <i>Obituary Notice</i>	580
THE INTRODUCTION OF BUDDHISM INTO BURMA. <i>Taw Sein Ko,</i> <i>M. R. A. S.</i>	585
THE AIM OF RELIGION. <i>J. F. M'Kechnie</i>	604
THE LAMA PRAYING-WHEEL. <i>J. de Grey-Downing</i>	613
THE STONE ANTIQUITIES OF CEYLON. <i>A. W. Perera</i>	621
IN THE SHADOW OF SHWE DAGON. <i>Ananda M.</i>	631
DOLDEN; ON PRE-EXISTENCE. <i>Albert J. Edmunds</i>	646
NEWS AND NOTES.	
<i>The War ; Conquest and Self-conquest ; Japanese Humanity ; The Press ;</i> <i>After the War ; An Oriental Alliance ? The ' Yellow Peril ' ; The</i> <i>Anagarika Dharmapala ; Good News ; The Buddhist National Cong-</i> <i>ress ; Other News from Laukã ; The International Free-thought</i> <i>Congress ; The Treatment of Leprosy ; What's in a Name ? Educa-</i> <i>tion in Burma</i>	649
OURSELVES	673
REVIEWS	
<i>India e Buddhismo Antico, and Il Buddha e la sua Dottrina, by C. A. F.</i> <i>Rhys Davids, M. A., Aus der Indischen Kulturwelt, by J.</i> <i>M'Kechnie ; A New Religion, by A. M.</i>	681
BUDDHIST ACTIVITIES	697

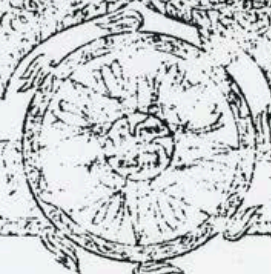
Full-Page Illustrations.

POETRAIT OF SIR EDWIN ARNOLD, C. I. E.	To face page	529
AMONG THE HILLS OF SAGAING	„	631
LESSONS IN THE MONASTERY.	„	649

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**"Hard by Benares in the Deer-Park Hermitage,
The Lord set rolling that Great Wheel of Truth,
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*2c
wiew,
toward*

On a Statue of the Buddha.

FLOWER of the Lotus, nobly born,
Spring thou amidst our English corn,
And let us smile thine eyes beneath,
Deep-purple in their fringed sheath :
Peaceful beyond our dreams of ill
And good, thou smilest and art still.

What secret chamber hast thou found
Within the gloom of thought profound ?
Wisely thou smilest : naught, naught less
Than deep translucent Nothingness—
The word that all wide space shall fill.
But thou ? thou smilest and art still.

Dim dreams of dawn within thy breast
Have set thy yearning heart at rest ;
Thou sittest in the dark green shade
Beyond the need of dumb gods' aid :
Thine eyes were lit beyond the Hill ;
Thine eyes smile ever, and are still.

O Lord who found'st the gates of truth
Too low for gods, too strait for youth—
Who saw'st the winding paths that bring
All men within the mystic Ring—
How may we find the hidden Rill
Whose healing waters made thee still ?

Thou smilest and art still, but we
Lie deep-enmeshed in mystery :
Thine eyes have made a truce with Pain,

For thou hast found how life is vain ;
The clarion soundeth loud and shrill,
But thou, Lord, sittest ever still.

Lord of the unforgetting birth,
Whose doorways spanned the arch of earth,
What lamp hath led thee to the door
With dark beyond and light before ?
Thy striving wearied thee, until
Thou saw'st, and then thy heart was still.

Far from the web, Siddhār ha, Lord,
Thou sittest at the gods' dim board,
And holdest in thy stern caress
Thine ever-virgin Nothingness.—
Not thine the cup that men fulfil—
Thou smilest ever, and art still.

We lie within the choking dust,
In pain and hate, in love and lust ;
Thou mayest now our pain forgo,
Who cast off life with joy and woe—
Thou see'st our life, our love, our skill :
Thou smilest, and art ever still.

Lord of the opening lotus-flower,
With shells of æons for thy bower,
Teach us indeed that we may know
The vanity of life and woe ;
We strive, we bear, beget and kill,
But thou, O Lord, remainest still.

O vain for thee the word to teach
In soaring song, in wondrous speech ;
Not thou the gift of sleep may'st bring,
Deep-merged within the mystic Ring—
We die and live, drink blood and spill,
But thou, Lord, smilest and art still.

Thou smilest, for thou art the Law ;
Thou smilest not in love or awe,
But, seeing to the end of space
And time, thou bear'st a god-filled face :
We creep into the lotus-flower,
And sleep an hour and sleep an hour.

VICTOR B. NEUBURG.

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THE TEACHINGS OF THE BUDDHA

By
Ven. B. Ananda Maitreiya Thero
in Sinhalese publication

'BUDDHA DHARMAYA,

Translated by

Amarasiri Weeraratne

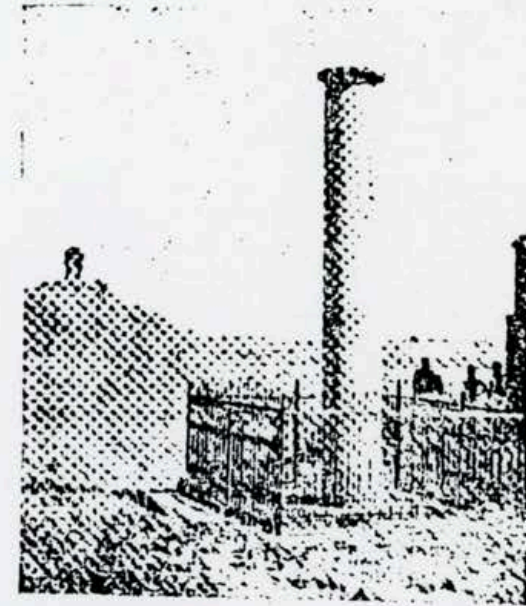
The Buddha's main purpose was to teach four facts to the world. These four facts are the existence and the universality of suffering, its cause, the remedy for it, viz: Nibbana and the way leading to Nibbana. Expressed in another form this is the revelation of the impermanency of all things, the fact that they are subject to suffering, and are devoid of substance, or anything enduring that can be called a soul. The exposition of these truths was the chief object of the Buddha, and these constitute the fundamental teachings of the Dhamma.



One who mistakes things of the world as enduring, delectable, or having an immutable essence will become attached to these things. As a result of this attachment he cannot extirpate himself from the cycle of births and deaths. Hence the Dhamma teaches that there is nothing delectable or pleasureable in the world. To a person who looks at this teaching through the coloured glasses of infatuation with the world, it appears to be nihilistic teaching which denies pleasure and joy.

Is there even a little happiness in the world? One can easily understand that inanimate objects such as trees, mountains, and creepers are devoid of any essence that could be taken for a soul, or Ego-entity, and that they are transient. If there is anything that could be termed a being, we should

LUMBINI



In the sixth century B.C. Lumbini in the Nepal Terrain was covered with Sal trees. There stands a huge pillar erected by Emperor Asoka to mark the site where Prince Siddattha (The Buddha-to-be) was born. It bears the inscriptions:
"Here was born the Buddha Sakyami."

investigate whether this being is changeless, blissful, and possesses of an enduring soul.

A being is a combination of mind and matter in the form of a body. Mind here is a term applied to the psychic and mental concomitants. Matter is a manifestation of the elements of cohesion, vibration, radiation, and extension, in the shape of a physical body. A being does not possess anything other than these two constituents of mind and body. Of these is the mind and volitional activities permanent? No. Mind and volitional activities arise together with the mind and pass away simultaneously. Along with the mind they take the same object, They are manifested in the same base. No thought whatsoever is permanent, Every moment thoughts arise, pass away and continue in an unending stream or fleeting process. Hence there is nothing permanent. There is only a continual arising of one thought moment, its dissolution, only to be followed by another in unending succession. A thought moment arises, is static for a moment and passes away. All psychic processes arise and vanish in this fashion. If psychic processes are impermanent, it is needless to speak of mental concomitants. Non Buddhist philosophers blinded by their delusion, and unable to understand, that one thought moment arises only to give way to another without an interval between, have fallaciously taken the psychic process for an immortal soul. Yet the Buddha with his keen intellect has probed into this and proclaimed that there is nothing permanent in mind and psychic processes that can be termed a soul.

Heraclitus an ancient philosopher of Greece, accepted this principle when he taught that "everything throughout the universe is a constant flux, and there is nothing permanent." Modern scientists too accept this teaching-Huxley in his *Evolution and Ethics* says, "In the whole universe there is nothing permanent, no eternal substance either of mind or matter."

There is a stream of unending psychic processes arising, and passing away in rapid succession, and one set of matter arising and passing away to be succeeded by another set. In popular parlance this combination of (mind and matter) is termed a "being". Yet it is seen that in the ultimate sense there is nothing that can be taken for a being. Mind and matter arise, endure, and pass away, in a fleeting process like unto the flame of a lamp, or an unending stream of water. One watching the flame of a lamp would think that from the time of lighting to the blowing off one flame continues to burn. On closer examination one sees that there is only a process of burning gases arising and passing away in rapid succession. The normal human eye does not perceive the arising of one set of burning gases and their being followed by another set. Nor does it see the dissolution of the succeeding group of gases. It becomes clear only to the eye of the scientist. Similarly men with poor insight cannot perceive the process of the arising of psychic processes, their dissolution, and succession by other processes, which occurs with a rapidity very much faster than in the

above mentioned cases. The scientist of keen intelligence perceives this to a degree. The All Enlightened Buddha understood this perfectly well. Other religious teachers unable to understand the momentary arising and dissolution of psychic forces, proclaim that there is in beings an imperceptible spiritual force which could be taken for an Ego-entity. Other men with even less intelligence accepted their teachings. This theory of a soul is taught in religions such as Christianity. Under scientific examination it becomes clear that there is nothing here which is enduring and substantial that could be taken for a soul of Self. There is only a psycho-physical process. In this there is nothing permanent. What is impermanent cannot be taken as conducive to true happiness. The psycho-physical process which is neither permanent, pleasureable, nor substantial is merely a manifestation of transience, woe, and soullessness.

Now let us examine the nature of the physique. The body is a manifestation of various forms of matter. There is no form of matter that is permanent. Here again it is the arising of one group of corporeality followed by others, in close succession in three stages viz: the nascent, static and dissolution. Hence the entire mass of material phenomena is impermanent. What is impermanent is not conducive to happiness. In this process of physical phenomena which is characterised by transience and absence of happiness, is there anything that could be considered a soul or ego-entity? No. It is merely a mass of changing material phenomena. Here we see corporeality arising and passing away only to be succeeded by others. Hence one should realise that in the physical form too there is nothing to be considered an ego-entity, or self. The Buddha took pains to teach and to clarify to men the truths regarding the transiency, unsatisfactoriness, and soullessness of the psycho-physical process that we term a living being.

Of what use is such understanding to beings? On account of taking either one or both the mind and body as permanent, pleasureable, and substantial, beings develop an attachment to them. As a result of this attachment they get bound to the cycle of births and deaths through desire. They cannot extirpate themselves from this bondage. They consider the arising of mind and matter which they take for a Self, a happiness and pleasure. As a result they are born again and again in Samsara, (the round of rebirths) and continue to die, and become subject to all the cares and tribulations of life. By understanding the true nature of mind and matter (i. e. their transiency, unsatisfactoriness, and Egolessness) they discard their illusions and abandon their clinging to them. Their desire and thirst for gratifying the body abates. When this desire is completely eradicated the arising of mind and matter in future births is brought to a halt. As a result they no longer become subject to suffering. Thus one is emancipated from all forms of suffering.

The way to emancipation from suffering is to realise the true nature of psychic and material phenomena. For this purpose one should be grounded in virtue (Sila) and practise meditation.

“Sabbe sankhārā aniccāti,
Yadā paññāya passati,
Atha nibbindati dukkhe,
Esa maggo visuddhiyā.”

That all things rise and cease to be
When with wisdom one does see,
Fed up with sorrow he will be
Treading the path to purity.

“Sabbe sankhārā dukkhāti,
Yadā paññāya passati,
Atha nibbindati dukkhe,
Esa maggo visuddhiyā.”

In all things there's no felicity
When with wisdom one does see,
Fed up with woe, he will be
Treading the path to purity.

“Sabbe sankhārā anattāti,
Yadā paññāya passati,
Atha nibbindati dukkhe,
Esa maggo visuddhiyā.”

There is no Ego-Entity,
When with wisdom one does see,
Fed up with ill he will be
Treading the path to purity.

(Dhammapada, Verses 287-289)

We have not seen that there is nothing that can be taken as permanent, blissful, or possessing an essence or substance in the nature of a soul. When seen properly there is only a mass of suffering, and causes that tend to suffering in the world. Therefore it is essential that we seek the cause of this suffering. It is necessary to find out the cause of a disease before undertaking to treat it. When he ascertains the cause the skilful physician knows that by eliminating the cause a cure can be effected, and that for this purpose there is a certain course of treatment. Similarly it is the duty of a world-teacher to explain that there is an unending chain of mental and physical phenomena eternally arising and passing away, that this process is fraught with suffering, that there is a cause for this, which if eliminated one is freed from suffering, and that there is a method by which this can be accomplished. These four facts have to be explained, and this is his primary task. It is not the duty of a religious teacher to waste time on other themes not connected with these fundamentals. Therefore the Buddha did not devote time to solving all problems which engaged the attention of men, as they were irrelevant.

Is the earth flat, round or square? What is the shape of the earth? What is the extent of the area covered by the sun and the moon? What is the nature of other planets and stars? These and similar questions arise in the world. Yet in solving these no headway is made for the emancipation of beings from Samsarā.

To a world divided with various conflicting theories regarding the various geographical, astronomical, and scientific matters, no special benefit is derived in explaining the true position regarding them. Men of poor intellectual calibre would only increase their disputes on these questions and thereby waste their valuable time. If there is any spiritual welfare to be gained in disputing geographical questions then we should endeavour to gain that welfare even by taking pains to participate in these disputes.

Will the knowledge of the dimensions of the earth and the planets conduce to emancipation from the trials and tribulations of Samsarā? No. Therefore the Buddha did not exert himself in teaching secular subjects which do not appertain to release from the woes of the unending cycle of rebirths. A physician who has compassion on a patient suffering from a severe burning sensation will not attempt to teach him history, sculpture, etc. This is because he is a Physician, and though he may know other sciences it is irrelevant to his immediate task of curing the patient. Moreover to one suffering from a burning sensation it is useless attempting to teach anything else as the immediate task is to effect a cure. Similarly if a religious teacher discourses on astronomy and allied themes, to beings burning with passions such as lust and hate, and the fires of sorrow, lamentation and grief, he would be merely giving stones to those who are hungry.

Therefore the Buddha who knew the gravity of the sufferings of beings, more than those beings themselves, concentrated his attention on explaining the universality of suffering, its cause, its extinction, and the way how it could be achieved. It is these Four Truths that the Buddha enunciated in diverse manners, and in different places.

Is the Buddha incapable of teaching other branches of knowledge? No. He knew everything and could teach any subject better than any one else. Yet if he deviated himself to explain one point in a controversy over secular subjects, he will have to follow this precedent when a subsequent occasion arises. In such a case he would have to solve over a thousand controversies on secular subjects. Solving one problem he cannot leave the rest unsolved. Having solved one problem he cannot justifiably reject other questions as unnecessary. Thus if he deviated from his purpose of teaching the way out of suffering and solved one problem that is not relevant, he would have to solve a mass of equally irrelevant questions that are useless and utterly unconnected with his purpose. The time he had set apart to teach the way out of suffering would be lost.

He knew the value of time more than any other. Hence he did not waste even one moment in vain. Therefore he engaged himself in teaching a doctrine which was essential to beings who were steeped in the trials and tribulations of Samsarā.

Once the Buddha was travelling through a wood with a party of his disciples. He took a handful of leaves and said, "Monks, which is larger the leaves in my hand or the leaves in this forest? They replied, "Reverend Sir, the leaves in the forest are larger by far." Then the Buddha said, "the truths I have understood are as numerous as the leaves in the forest. I have not taught you all these. The truths I have taught you are small like unto the handful of leaves with me. Monks what I have taught you and continue to teach you are the truths that are absolutely essential to you, namely suffering, and the way to its extinction." The reader would now understand the purpose of the Buddha's teachings from this example. To the Buddha

the whole of existence was like unto a house on fire. He did not wish to display fireworks there.

I shall give another example to elucidate this point. There was a party of men injured with poisoned thorns. Their wounds were plastered on the surface and appeared to have healed. But from time to time the wounds were found to fester and cause pain. A kind physician of great intelligence examined them and found that the poisoned thorns were in their flesh, and as a result festering occurs from time to time producing a gangrenous effect which would become incurable and endanger their lives. He was making preparations to treat them. One of the patients told him, "Sir, before you treat me you must explain one matter. If you do not do so, I shall not take your treatment." The Doctor said, "What is it that you want to know" He replied, "I wish to know many things, who placed these poisoned thorns on the way, what is his race, and clan. What is his stature, where is his country, and like details. Without knowing these I do not require your treatment." Then the doctor though he knew these details thought this man would die by time I have finished telling these things. I will first cure him and then reveal the facts later. He said, "Your position is now a matter for serious concern. In this condition you cannot waste time on such details. Take my advice and undergo treatment." The patient declined the offer. Many who listened to the doctor agreed to be treated. The thorns in their flesh were removed, and the wounds were dressed. Thereby they were cured. This is a simile. The Doctor here is the Buddha. The patient who does not take treatment, but insists on getting irrelevant information is the foolish worldling. The patients who were cured were followers of the Buddha who attained Arahantship. The fact that there was pain was true. It was equally true that the chief cause of this was the poisoned thorn in the flesh. It was also true that by removing the thorn and dressing the wound a cure could be effected. That medical treatment was necessary was also true. Therefore it was useless for the patient to divert his attention from his immediate need to get himself cured.

All beings who inhabit the universe such as gods, brahmas, and human beings are subject to the woes of birth, decay, and death. The cause for their suffering is their attachment to the triple planed universe. By rooting out that attachment the happiness of Nibbana is achieved. The way to Nibbana is the Noble Eightfold Path. It is these Four Noble Truths that are of paramount importance to all beings suffering the travails of Samsara. That is why the Buddha endeavoured to inculcate these Four Truths.

The Buddha taught these truths in two ways, viz. through the medium of conventional truth, and ultimate truth. He used the accepted usage of such terms as, gods, brahmas, human-beings, the Maha-meru mountain etc. Here too he taught that all these beings and objects are subject to transience, suffering, and soullessness. He taught that wasting time on disputes over geographical questions will not bring them closer to emanci-

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pation from suffering. Whether the accepted ideas regarding these questions were correct or not pursuing them was irrelevant to the problem of emancipation from sorrow. He made use of the accepted ideas only to teach that even mountains of such tremendous proportions are impermanent, that despite their gigantic proportions they are subject to dissolution. Hence the Buddha in using the accepted data on geographical knowledge of the times merely used it as a means whereby he could stress the transience, unsatisfactoriness, and soullessness of all phenomena.

His teachings revealed the true nature of all forms of matter. He classified mind and volitional activities separately and showed how they rise and endure for a thought moment and perish. This teaching regarding transience is termed ultimate truth.

The details given in the commentaries regarding the moon, trees, and mountains, are not even the scientific knowledge of the times, needless to say they are not the Buddha's views. They were the popular beliefs of the times. The Buddha's teachings were confined to the exposition of transiency, woefulness, and soullessness in all things. Other teachers have taught the transiency and lack of happiness in the universe. But they lacked the knowledge that all component things are subject to change and suffering, and hence their teachings are imperfect. Therefore they taught that there is one plane in Samsara which is permanent, happy, and possessed of a soul. The Buddha categorically declared that all component things under all circumstances are subject to change, suffering, and completely lacking in an Ego-entity. Therefore the Buddha proclaimed that all planes of existence without exception are characterised by these three salient features, and that they are void of any real pleasureable substance. The psycho-physical process is a cause of woe to ensuing processes and gaining a release from these is the way to true happiness. Now the reader would realise that the process of existence is continued suffering, and that the motive force for this is engendered by craving which arises in this process itself. By stopping the arising of this craving it is possible to cause the mass of suffering to cease by treading the Noble Eightfold Path. The Four Noble Truths which explain these details constitute the teachings of the Buddha.

The Buddha was not the incarnation of any god, nor the messenger of any divine being. Nor was he the creation of any god. He is the peerless intellectual who by trial and error perfected himself in the spiritual plane during a long course of training extending through many lives. He developed his intellectual powers, and eradicated all baneful desires and passions, and realised the Four Noble Truths without the help of any external agency. The Buddha was moved to compassion seeing the sufferings and tribulation of beings in Samsara. Therefore he pointed out the way which he discovered leading out of the sufferings in Samsara. The doctrines he preached are termed Buddhism. What he taught and what he did not teach should be understood in the undermentioned manner.

THE TEACHINGS OF THE BUDDHA

By

The Late Ven'ble Ananda Mettreiya

(Continued from April Issue)

THE Buddha completely and correctly understood all things regarding the present, past and future. Yet he taught nothing that does not appertain to the purpose of emancipation from suffering. Although there are many secular sciences and arts they need not be taught by a teacher whose task is to deliver beings from the bondage to the sufferings in the round of rebirths. It is because no amount of such learning is conducive to emancipation from the trammels and cares of rebirth.

While preaching the way to emancipation from suffering he adduced examples and similes from the popular beliefs of the times in order to drive home his arguments. His purpose thereby was not to lend his authority regarding the truth of such popular beliefs. His purpose was to teach his doctrines in homely illustrations which would be intelligible to his audience. The minimum man need know to gain emancipation from suffering is the Four Noble Truths. Here suffering is the five aggregates brought to being by craving. Its cause is clinging. The cessation of suffering is the condition which disintegrates the five aggregates and halt their continued manifestation. The way to achieve this is how this technique is applied.

What we call a 'being' is the manifestation of mind and matter conditioned by causes rooted in ignorance. Thereby a mass of material phenomena, sensations, perceptions, volitional activities, and consciousness combine to form a being, just as cement, lime, stones, bricks etc. combine in a special manner encircling space forms what we call a house. Just as when the parts such a shaft, axle, wheels etc. are correctly assembled we get a charriot, matter, sensations, perceptions, and volitional activities, and consciousness combine to form a being. When a thorough search is made one does not see a being, or a person independent of the constituent parts.

Let us examine the mass of matter (corporeality) that goes to form a being. Matter is a mass of combinations consisting of the four primary elements of cohesion, vibration, radiation, and extension, and colour, smell, taste, and nutritive essence combined in an inextricable manner. The entire body comes under this classification. These particles of matter arise, reach a peak, and disintegrate, so there is nothing permanent in them. What is impermanent is not conducive to true happiness. What is neither permanent nor conducive to happiness cannot be taken for a soul or self. Thus it is clear that the mass of matter in the body is transient and lacking in an essence or a self.

Now let us examine the sensations. Sensations are mental states arising in the mind which assume an experience according to the object presented to the mind. These sensations are threefold, viz.: pleasurable, painful, and neutral. Sensations arise simultaneously with the mind, and disintegrate with it. Simultaneously with the mind they take the same object. Thus sensations arise and pass away with the mind, taking the same object with the mind. They have the mind as their base. These four fold characteristics together with the nature of experiencing are called sensations. The duration of these sensations is the same as that of a thought moment, inasmuch as they arise and perish with the mind. The mind is a fleeting process. Every moment it arises, is static for a moment, and perishes with astounding rapidity. Therefore the duration of a sensation is momentary. It is evanescent. Hence it is transient. What is transient is not conducive to happiness. Being impermanent and lacking in happiness it cannot be taken for a self or a soul. Thus it is seen that the mass of sensations are characterised merely by change, unsatisfactoriness, and soullessness.

Let us see the group of perceptions. Perception is the ability to identify objects that confront the eyes and other sense faculties. Their duration is the same as that of the sensations as they too arise with the mind and disintegrate identically like the sensations. When the mind ceases perceptions cease simultaneously. Hence perceptions too perish with the same speed as the sensations. A thought moment is subdivided into three minute stages termed, nascent, static, and dissolution. Hence a perception which arises with the mind under these conditions can never be permanent. It is transient. What is transient cannot be productive of true happiness. What is not conducive to happiness cannot be taken as a self. Hence the group of perceptions is merely a mass bearing the three universal characteristics of change, unsatisfactoriness, and soullessness?

Let us next take the group of mental formations (sankharas). There are fifty mental states excluding sensations and perceptions. Without going into details I will mention only the names here, which are as follows:- Volition, impression, advertence, determination, concentration, discursive thinking, investigation, mental vitality, joy, consciousness, delusion, shamelessness (for evil) fearlessness (for evil), restlessness, greed, erroneous views, conceit, hate, envy, stinginess, worry, languor, torpor, doubt, faith, mindfulness, conscience, compassion, equanimity, calming of body, calming of mind, levity of body and levity of mind, pliability of body, pliability of mind, dexterity of mind, and body, uprightness of body, and of mind, correct speech, correct action, kindness, sympathetic joy and wisdom.

These fifty two mental states are termed mental formations. These fifty mental states arise under favourable conditions with a thought. They too have the four characteristics of 1. arising with a connected thought, 2. perishing with that thought, 3. taking the same object with that thought, 4. having the same mental base. Therefore these fifty mental states do not last anything more than the thought moment of a mental

state. As the mind is subject to rapid arising and passing away mental states too must necessarily have that characteristic. Hence they are not permanent, and consequently are not productive of happiness. Hence there is nothing to be taken as a soul in them. Thus it is seen that mental processes too are characterised by transience, unsatisfactoriness and soullessness.

Let us consider the group that comes under consciousness. Mental states come under 89 classifications. All these taken together are termed the group of consciousness. The mental states that come under this category arise each moment and pass away, their duration being only for three minute thought-moments. These mental states arise, disintegrate and continue in unending succession. Apart from this process there is no mental state that lasts or endures constantly without change. Those who have not understood the rise and fall of the mental processes have fallaciously imagined a changeless soul. In this state of ignorance they imagined that there existed a soul which is extracted from the body could enjoy eternal bliss. As a result of this fallacy they were bound to the cycle of births and deaths on account of their attachment, desire, and craving. Being attached to the cycle of existence, not seeing its dangers, and not being disgusted thereby they became engulfed in the cares, trammels, and woes of birth, decay, and death.

The term 'a being' is merely a name given to the combination of the five aggregates of corporeality, sensations, volitional activities and consciousness. A thorough examination reveals that only these five aggregates exist and that apart from them no 'being' is to be found. These five aggregates are merely mental and physical phenomena entirely characterised by transience, unsatisfactoriness, and soullessness. By the combination of these five groups each of which are characterised by the above mentioned features, what else could one expect but a mere manifestation of transience, suffering, and soullessness. Hence it is seen that 'a being' is merely a manifestation of psycho-physical forces that have no essence or Ego entity. Mere suffering is the dominant feature here.

Those who do not know the true nature of this existence which is completely devoid of anything worth being called a self or soul fall into the errors of eternalism and nihilism. Thereby they become subject to the sorrows, tribulations, and cares that follow in the wake of existence. Falling into the error of the ego-illusion, they think in terms of 'I' and 'Mine.' They exert themselves in trying to trace the origin of the 'soul', which is merely a figment of their imagination. They do not understand that this search is futile, and that this does not in any way help to gain emancipation from the sufferings which already overwhelm men.

Before one tries to trace an origin in beings he should understand the true nature of himself. What we conventionally term the "self" is merely a manifestation of psycho-physical forces. Every moment these arise and fall only to be replaced by others in rapid and unending succession. This process goes on one set of psycho-physical phenomena arising and passing and becoming the cause for the succeeding phenomena to arise. We should

investigate the cause for this. A being or a psycho-physical process perishes from one life causing suitable conditions for its continuity in another life. The flux of psycho-physical forces is merely a continued process of suffering. The cause why this unending stream of suffering continues from life to life must be looked for within this mental and physical process itself.

Let us search to find out what it is. A grasshopper seeing the flame of a lamp and not seeing any danger there comes repeatedly towards it. Having come, it jumps into the flame. Even if one of its wings are burnt and it falls down still it makes another attempt to leap into the flame. Thus it does not stop its leaping until it is burnt to death. That is because it fails to realise the dreadful nature of the fire. In other words it is ignorant. Not understanding the dangerous nature of the flame, it still does not abandon its desire for the flame even though its wings have been burnt. Thus failing to understand the danger in the flame it perishes in it. As long as it has not discarded attachment to the fire, it cannot get away from the flame. Even though one may carry the grasshopper and throw it away it still remains enamoured of the flame and comes there again. Now we see that the cause for its destruction is the desire springing from its own ignorance. Thus we can realise that the cause why mental and physical phenomena continue their flux from life to life on account of craving which is within that process itself.

We have seen that the five aggregates consisting of matter, sensations, perceptions, volitional activities and consciousness are characterised by transience, suffering, and soullessness. These five aggregates bearing these characteristics are the constituent parts of a being.

Thus it would be seen that whether we use the term 'being' or 'combination of five aggregates' it is the same combination bearing the three salient characteristics that are referred to.

Hence it is merely a combination of suffering in varied forms, there is nothing to be considered pleasurable or conducive to happiness there. By not realising that this conglomeration constitutes suffering desire springs up. This desire generates the manifestation of the five aggregates or recurrent birth in Samsara. The mass of suffering arises again and again on account of desire. Thus one should understand that the cause of suffering is desire.

Is it of any use to know whether the world had a beginning or not? Does it help us in any way to emancipate ourselves from this desire which is the cause of recurrent birth and the consequent woes? For the man pierced by the poisoned arrow the immediate need is to extract the arrow and take suitable treatment. Does it help him to find out all kinds of details regarding the archer who shot the arrow before having himself treated. If the cause of the pain in his body is the poisoned arrow that has pierced his foot then it is futile to trace the origin of the arrow before taking immediate treatment. The cause for the continued existence of the

five aggregates is the craving or desire generated within it. Therefore it is a certainty that the process of recurrent suffering is brought to a halt by eradicating this desire. If the process of suffering is brought to a halt will it not be conducive to happiness? By eliminating heat we can get cold. Similarly by curing the disease of suffering we can get true happiness, a freedom, and a grateful cooling effect. This is called the elimination of suffering or Nibbana.

What should we do to eliminate desire, the cause of suffering? We should tread the Noble Eightfold Path. Here noble is used in the sense of perfection. Eightfold means consisting of eight factors or links. Path means a device or a method. Hence Noble Eightfold Path means, the Perfect Method Consisting of Eight Divisions. These are:-

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Right Views | 5. Right Livelihood |
| 2. Right Thoughts | 6. Right Effort |
| 3. Right Speech | 7. Right Mindfulness |
| 4. Right Action | 8. Right Concentration |

These eightfold factors come under three categories as follows:-

1. Sila - (Virtue) - Right words, Right Action, and Right Livelihood.
2. Samādhi - (Concentration) - Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration.
3. Paññā - (Insight) - Right Views, Right Thoughts.

Briefly said Sila is the control of ones words, and deeds, and the avoiding of wrong livelihood. Concentration is gaining the one pointedness of mind to be developed by the Samatha and Vipassana methods of meditation. Paññā is to gain insight which sees the five aggregates as transient, sorrow, and soulless.

One should be disciplined well by the rules of Sila. He should concentrate the wayward mind on a particular object of meditation. Then he develops wisdom which sees all things as transient, sorrow-laden, and soulless. Thereby he realises the true nature of the five aggregates in all existences in the triple planned universe. Consequently he discards attachment to all forms of existence. Therefore he does not accumulate kamma which cause existence from the life to life. Hence the results of kamma, namely, the five aggregates which is a mass of suffering does not arise.

There are four truths that all those subjects to the cycle of births (Samsara) should know. They bare the omnipresence of suffering, its cause, its extinction, and the method to achieve that extinction. These are the Four Noble Truths. Therefore the Buddha considered it his main task to inculcate these. Apart from this he did not endeavour to teach anything that was irrelevant to these even in the slightest degree. Now the reader would be able to understand what the Buddha taught and did not teach.

To be continued.

THE TEACHINGS OF THE BUDDHA

By

*Ven: B. Ananda Maitreiya Thero
in Sinhalese publication*

"BUDDHA - DHARMAYA"

Translated by Amarasiri Weeraratne

(Continued from May Issue)

PART III.

SUFFERING

THE Buddha-Dhamma is a teaching that points out that there is no lasting or worthwhile pleasure in any of the celestial planes, either of the gods or the Brahmas. It weans away beings from the infatuation to existence in these planes and encourages them to tread the way to the eternal peace of Nibbāna. When it is said that there is no lasting pleasure in the celestial planes of the gods and Brahmas, could we accept that statement without questioning? The Buddha has said that nothing should be taken on blind faith, that investigation, inquiry, and conviction should precede the acceptance. Once the Buddha visited the village of the Kalamas. The Kalamas approached the Buddha and said, "Venerable Sir, daily various kinds of religious teachers come to our village. They teach us doctrines which are in conflict with each other. Therefore doubt arises in our minds in this connection. Which of these can we accept as speaking the truth". The Buddha said, "Kalamas, do not accept anything merely because it is handed down as truth. Neither accept anything on hearsay, or on the authority of texts, or merely because it came from your teacher. Examine it with your intellectual powers, and test it in the crucible of your experience. Then accept it if you find it convincing. If you find that if accepted and practised it leads to one's welfare then accept it." Therefore the words of the Buddha too have to be accepted not out of fear, or merely because others accept it, nor because it was preached by the Buddha, but after due investigation and conviction.

A Buddhist teacher does not say, accept the universality of suffering as a dogma, on the authority of the Buddha. He says test it, and examine it. This is worthy of impartial investigation. Thoughtful consideration should be given by a student of the Dhamma. The teacher points out the way to some extent. He does not say that non-existent things do exist. He merely reveals the nature of things in the world.

"All that arises passes away". This is an indisputable truth. Let us examine inanimate objects. Is there any tree or creeper that having grown will not be subject to decay and death. No, there is none. At the time of origination it commences with certain potentialities in the seed. It receives support from the soil, climate, rain and similar external agencies and grows.

The potentiality of the seed is of paramount importance. Other contributory factors are secondary. The seed that grows thus has a limited potentiality. With the aid of the contributory factors it grows up to full stature as a tree. The tree advances from tender age to young age and maturity. With the lapse of time it becomes old. Becoming old the potentiality of the seed which caused its arising deteriorates and finally it dies. Whatever arises must go through the various stages of development and die, if it is not destroyed by any external agency in the meanwhile. This is the law of nature. It is not a law ordained by a God. It is in the very nature of those objects. No God or Brahma can alter this course of nature.

Now let us consider animate objects, or beings. No one can live without going through the stages of infancy, adolescence, middle age, old age and death. It is a law of nature that all born should die. It is a part of nature and does not happen because a God had decreed it.

In other religions such as Christianity *it is taught that death is the result of the displeasure of God.* That is by no means an intelligent teaching. Why? If death was inflicted on man because he disobeyed God and thereby sinned, then for what fault did God inflict death on animals, rocks, trees, and the vegetable kingdom? From the microscopic to the macroscopic what crime have all creatures committed against God to deserve death? Or are we to think that for the fault of man, all other forms of flora and fauna were condemned to death by God? If the Christians say that death is God's punishment for man's sin, how do they explain the death that is common to the animals and the vegetable kingdom too? If they say that only the death of human beings is a punishment for the sins of Adam and Eve, and that the death of animals etc. occurs without any such divine injunction, could we as intelligent human beings accept such an explanation?

Let us watch carefully the burning of a lamp. How long does the flame burn? If there is no extraneous intervention it will burn as long as the oil and the wick lasts. The wick and the oil facilitate the continued burning of the flame. The fire that was first introduced at the time of lighting is the original cause of the burning flame. When either the wick or the oil is exhausted the flame goes out. This is a law of nature. Similarly the death of animate and inanimate life is part of the law of nature. Apart from this it does not occur due to the decree of a God or any other being. Hence none that is born can exist without passing away. If all beings that are born must necessarily die, then whatever pleasure a man may enjoy here must end with the pangs of death. Let us imagine that a man gains kingship over the whole world and enjoys all the possible pleasures. Does his life not end in death? A happiness that ends with death cannot be really true and worthwhile happiness. Let us imagine that a man enjoys himself during his entire life-span with the most melodious of musical instruments, choicest food, and all possible kinds of comfort. He will not enjoy this pleasure for anything more than a hundred and

twenty years. When we take into account the periods in Samsāra where he has undergone suffering, and the periods in future births that he would be subject to suffering this period of 120 years of enjoyment seems very small indeed.

Further let us investigate the life of a man living for one hundred and twenty years. Half this period would be spent (sleeping) in night-time. Thus day-time lasts only 60 years. Of these 10 years are spent in childhood, and 20 years have to be set apart for dotage. Thus 30 years have to be set aside. Of the rest the time spent in eating, bathing, dressing up, and professional activities would total to another 20 years. Of the remaining 10 years when we set apart the time consumed by illness, and seeking treatment for same and the tribulations involved very little remains for real happiness. When this is the case with a long lived man of 120 years how little is the real happiness a short-lived man of the present day living 60 to 70 years enjoys. How can we consider such a brief span of pleasure a real happiness?

Further if we consider in what direction we are advancing from birth do we not see that it is towards death? Let us think that a man is born destined to live a hundred years. Thus if nothing untowards happens he will live for a hundred years. When he has lived one year he has only 99 years more to live. At the age of 10 his life span lasts only for a further 90 years. As he grows his age span gets shortened. Thus growing means advancing towards the grave. When he is 99 he has only 1 more year to live. When that year is lived he dies.

Thus seconds pass to minutes, minutes to hours, and the hours end with the day. Days pass to months and a life time gets consumed. The advance of age proceeds moment by moment. When we consider thus we see that living means advancing towards death. Thus if we are asked what is living, we could reply that it is advancing towards the grave. Is this advance towards death is happiness? No. Therefore the one key-note that underlies life is unsatisfactoriness which is inextricably mixed with suffering. Fear of death should advance as we progressively walk in the direction of the grave.

Let us imagine that 100 feet away there is a yawning precipice below which is a pit of burning coal. A person who is finally thrown into the pit is being pushed inch by inch, one foot, two feet etc., till he is cast into the fires below. As he advances by stages he approaches the precipice. He feels the heat of the fires raging below. When he feels the heat of the fire more and more he should know that he is now nearing the abyss. If he does not understand this much but continues to be deluded by mirages to the effect that he is enjoying himself, it is a lamentable delusion.

The life span of a hundred years is like the way to the precipice 100 feet long. There 12 inches make a foot. Here 12 months make a year. Our advance year by year is similar to the advance to the precipice foot by foot.

Though some continue to advance to the precipice making merry and jubilating it is not a real happiness but a delirium due to ignorance of the impending danger. Similarly the merry making of beings who are advancing to the grave is not a true happiness, but a state of delirium due to blissful ignorance.

A man being led to execution advances step by step to the gallows. He walks forward to meet death. If he is in his proper senses he knows that every step is a push towards death. Would he dance and sing as he advances? No. If he be under the influence of liquor then he would sing like a madman, dance, and gesticulate frivolously as he advances. Would any one in his senses think that his merry making is a true happiness. Therefore what happiness is there for beings who daily undergo the pangs of hunger, thirst, sleepiness, tiredness, pain, woes, lamentation, grief, disease, decay and simultaneously advance to the grave? Would a man who consider his position seriously in which direction he is going, sing, dance, and indulge in the gratification of sensual pleasures? Men blinded by ignorance do not know the real nature of forms and sounds and consequently are attached to them. As a result like the man going towards the gallows under the influence of liquor making merry men behave like jesters and clowns. To a right thinking person their jubilation is mere delirium, if not insanity. What singing, dancing, and sport to one who cannot tarry even for a moment without walking to his grave. A man who is being lowered with a rope to a boiling cauldron should as he gets nearer and nearer the cauldron fear his fate. If he drinks something considered sweet and enjoys that singing and deluding himself that he is enjoying himself would it not be the height of folly? How great is the loss of a man who takes delight in sensual pleasures, ignoring that he is advancing to the grave? He is under delusion and gone insane with greed, hate and ignorance. The world is full of such insane men. Should we not ceaselessly strive to cure ourself of this insanity? Consider the words of the Buddha, "Sabbe puthujjanā ummattakā", "All worldlings are insane." To live is to advance towards death. Even with the gods and brahmas it is so.

If one is born then his death is a certainty. Therefore in as much as life in all forms of existence is a prelude to death, we should endeavour to get rid of death. The only way how this could be done is to eradicate the cause. The cause which brings about birth to be followed by death is Ignorance and its ally, craving. On account of ignorance and craving men do not see the dangers in continued existence. Hence they tarry in Samsarā and become subject to all forms of suffering.

To show that craving conditioned by ignorance is the cause of suffering I shall cite an example. A grasshopper seeing a burning flame gets deluded and comes near it. It does not understand the danger of the fire. If it knows it will not jump into the flame and perish. Yet having attempted to jump and getting its wings burnt it still persists in leaping into the flame. It will not give up its attachment till it is burnt to death.

Even though one may remove the creature, yet on account of the fact that a strong attachment is working within it, the grasshopper still persists in coming towards the flame. That is because it has not realised the nature of the fire, and craves for it. Because of craving within it, it cannot abandon the flame and go its way. Thus due to not knowing the nature of the flame (ignorance) attachment, and longing (craving) arises. Thereby the creature suffers. Even so men do not know the dreadful nature of all forms of existence (Samsarā), not knowing they are attached to existence. Because of attachment they incur repeated birth, death, and the train of cares and woes that follow in the wake of existence. Thus one should understand that the cause of suffering is Craving, which is conditioned by Ignorance.

If the grasshopper knows the real nature of the flame it would be frightened to come near. It would be disillusioned and get away from the flame with all speed. Similarly if one understands that existence in Samsarā is suffering then due to that correct understanding he will fear all forms of existence. Then he will be disillusioned and give up his attachment and craving. Not being attached one works his way to emancipation and achieves it. He never more gets within the reach of death.

Death occurs in all planes of existence, such as the heavens, brahmi realms, and the states of woe. Hence none of these states of existence is worthwhile. All these planes where life is subject to death should be considered fearful, and worth escaping from. Their true nature should be considered wisely. An effort must be made to gradually root out the attachment to them.

To discard attachment to existence in the realms of form and formlessness is not easy to those without a high degree of spiritual insight. We should first wean away our attachment from the spheres of sense-desires (Kama-loka). That too would be a gradual process. The nature of sensual desire has to be carefully considered and their dis-advantage and loathsomeness have to be understood. Then we get rid of attachment to gross forms of sense pleasures. Then even the minor forms of sensual indulgences must be scanned and studied. Thus developing wisdom gradually one is able to abandon attachment to the worlds where sensual pleasures dominate. Then attachment to the realms of form and formless realms remain. When one directs his investigation in this direction, the result is a complete disgust for them too. Then one reaches a stage when the impermanence, suffering, and soullessness in the three-fold planes of existence becomes indelibly impressed in the mind. Then one is able to cut off the bond of craving, which binds beings to all three worlds. By eradicating craving one reaches the highest state of purity and perfection called Arahantship. Then the wise one sees the threefold planes of existence as a blazing fire, he sees its antithesis, namely Nibbāna perfectly well. That noble one who has rooted out craving enjoys the bliss of emancipation, even when he lives here. We term that state of bliss absorption on the bliss of Arahantship.

Many criticise Buddhism saying Nibbāna is an annihilation, and therefore the goal of Buddhism is mere nothingness. Nibbāna is a supra-mundane state, an ultimate reality. It is a condition that causes the dissolution of mind and matter, yet it is not void of true happiness. It is a state of unalloyed happiness without any tinge of suffering.

We worldlings could know of Nibbāna only by two methods. They are by analytical reasoning, and by studying the words of the Buddha and what the Arahants had to say regarding Nibbāna. We could realise Nibbāna first hand only by gaining the knowledge that comes with attainment to the paths (magga ñāna).

The peaceful and exquisite nature of Nibbāna is perceived only on entry to the paths and fruits. Nibbāna does not become an object to mental states anything short of these. Hence we should understand it as a reality beyond the realm of mind and matter which we have seen is unsubstantial in their nature. It is not devoid of true peace and happiness. There is nothing in the planes of existence from which a parallel could be drawn by way of comparison. 'Becoming' or continued existence is merely a manifestation of psycho-physical forces. These are all subject to transience, suffering, and soullessness. Nibbāna is eternal and happy. Therefore no parallel can be drawn or an example cited from samsarā which could be fully applicable. The man born blind will not accept the existence of the sun, the moon, and the stars. He has no eye to see them, Though he does not see these things do exist. Even so man blinded by ignorance, does not possess the eye to see Nibbāna and denies its existence. Or he says it is merely an annihilation, a mere nothingness. Yet even as the sun and moon exist as mentioned above Nibbāna is a reality, and does exist. It is not possible to know it fully without obtaining the eye to perceive it. Nibbāna is the peaceful, desirable, happy and eternal heaven of rest. It has to be attained by purging desire, it is incomparable, and it is a reality. The way to attain Nibbāna is by treading the middle way between indulgence in sensual pleasures and self mortification. This way is known as the Noble Eight-Fold Path. Thus the Buddha has taught in diverse ways the existence of suffering, its cause, its extinction, Viz: Nibbāna, and the way to Nibbāna.

To be continued



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(Continued from June Issue)

PART IV.

CAUSE and EFFECT

THERE is no result which is not preceded by a cause. All life is the manifestation of the law of cause and effect. The effect of a cause becomes a cause for a subsequent effect. This is a law of nature. This can be disproved only if one is able to point out anything in the world that is independent of a cause. The Buddha-Dhamma clearly points out that the continued existence of the psycho-physical forces that we term a being is dependent on the law of cause and effect. An example illustrates this:-

The worldling does not correctly know that the world is subject to suffering. When he sees a form he considers it desirable, and gets attached. He sees the beautiful features, and the shapeliness of the nose, ears, eyes etc, but does not consider their disadvantages, and their undesirability. He does not clearly see the body is a mass of impure matter, that the eyes, nose etc., are combinations of undesirable matter such as flesh, blood and veins. As he continues to think that the figure is beautiful his mind is drawn towards it. This is because he has not understood the true nature of a human being. He merely sees well dressed men and women. He too tries to dress equally well if not better. He sees men and women go about touring in vehicles, singing, dancing, and making merry. That sight pleases him. It makes a firm impression on his mind. Therefore he thinks the world a happy place. Yet does he think that the jubilant men and women and the spectators are all subject to decay, death, disease and all the evils that flesh is heir to? Seeing the gaily dressed people he thinks that this very fact is proof of the happiness in this world. It does not occur to him at all that there are millions of paupers, destitute and helpless, wearing rags, ugly to behold, and suffering from various diseases. Even when he sees those in distress, and men reduced to misery, and the corpses of dead men, he soon forgets these sights. When he sees an aged man he does not realise that the same fate awaits him too.

He thinks that his youth will last a long time. Seeing the sick he does not consider that he is not immune from sickness, and that state of health will not continue unchanged. He fails to reflect on the corpse that he had seen, and deliberately forgets it, but does not fail to forget or abandon the empty illusion that sensual pleasures bring true happiness. Under what a great delusion the worldling labours. How far he has gone astray on the wrong path. Open your eyes wide and scrutinise the position with intelligence.

One who has climbed a mountain peak sees the rest of men living in the planes below. Similarly one even with a measure of insight sees the men of the world living on a low plane of delusion. A pack of dogs does not realise that their playing about and sham fighting is mere vanity. Sleeping on a heap of ashes is a comfort to the dog. Eating faecal matter is a matter for joy to it. The sight of dogs, their scent, and their touch are pleasant to it. To the dog that is happiness. Man who has attained higher level than the dog holds in contempt all that the dog considers happy. Similarly beings who do not realise the loathsomeness of sensual pleasures are fascinated by them, and think that their very existence is a cause of joy in the world. One who sees from an elevated position of spiritual insight sees the whole thing as loathsome, purile, and vain. Just as the dogs and bitches are not repelled by the evil odour emanating from their bodies those engrossed in sensuality cannot find anything repulsive in them. Nor do they understand that it does not constitute true happiness.

Just as the co-habitation of dogs and bitches is repulsive to man even so the sensual pleasures of human beings are loathsome to the gods. The sensual pleasures of the gods are despised by the Brahmas. The passionless Arahant sees the happiness of Brahmas, gods, and human beings as vanity, low and disgusting. No intelligent being looks down on the happiness of Nibbāna experienced by the one who is free from passions.

All the pleasures of the brahmas, gods, and human beings are transient and unstable. They are enjoyed as if in a dream, after that they pass to oblivion. The difference between the dream and the transient pleasures of the world is only one of duration. Let us imagine that a man sleeps for 10 years enjoying dreams of dance and song. Let us think another man indulged in sensual pleasures for 10 years and died. There is not much difference between the two types of happiness experienced by either.

Worldly pleasures which must necessarily end are like unto dreams. Those who think intelligently even for a short time find this statement acceptable. Those engrossed in sensual pleasures and are blinded by them find this statement intolerable like unto the words of an enemy.

We should investigate the position fully. Then it would be seen that the world is a place of vanity, where everything is passing away, and therefore without any substance.

The worldling is unable to recognise suffering in its various manifestations. Therefore he does not know that the cause of suffering is craving. Therefore he has no idea of Nibbāna. Hence he does not tread the path to Nibbāna. How could he realise the true nature of the mind and body? Ignorance is the inability to understand suffering, its cause, cessation, and the way to it. This ignorance helps a person to perform mundane meritorious deeds. How is this? Not knowing the vanity in the pleasures of gods, men perform meritorious deeds desiring rebirth in these spheres. Not knowing the transiency of the happiness experienced by brahmas of the formless realm and the realm of form men practise meditations which qualify them for existence in these planes.

The happiness of Brahmas, gods and human beings is subject to change. Attachment to these worlds is on account of inability to understand that there is suffering in them. Therefore men acquire meritorious deeds which cause rebirth in these planes on account of ignorance.

Is it in accordance with the Dharma to say that the root cause, namely ignorance generates the performance of meritorious deeds? Yes, it is. It is a law of nature that one cause becomes the cause for another one quite dissimilar. From orange seeds one often sees lime, and other citrus varieties springing up, even though in size, taste and nutritive essence they are quite dissimilar. The dead body of a mole cricket can be used to produce a herb which is named after the mole-cricket. Lime leaves collect and go to form an insect of the mantis variety in shape similar to a lime leaf. The hair of cattle mixed with the hair of a red goat is able to synthetically produce the drug known as sweet flag. (Sinhalese vada kaha, a bitter drug in appearance like tumeric) Powdered horn of cattle mixed with sesamum refuse and jaggery in the form of a manure produces citronella. The cross bred offspring of a horse and donkey is a mule. These and similar examples from nature can be shown as instances where effects are produced which are dissimilar to the original cause. It would be thus understood that ignorance becomes a cause for meritorious actions.

PATICCA SAMUPPADA.

Ignorance also becomes a cause for demerit. Not understanding the true nature of suffering, the foolish man mistakes suffering for happiness. He commits evils such as the killing of animals for what he thinks is happiness. Thus ignorance causes the performance of unskilful actions (akusala).

Now as mentioned above due to ignorance of the Four Noble Truths a man performs many kinds of mundane meritorious deeds. Skilful and unskilful thoughts translated into actions constitute kusala and akusala kamma (meritorious and demeritorious deeds). Kamma is the cause and it has its effects. The re-linking consciousness, the life continuum, the eye-consciousness, and kindred mental states, and the thought moment at death arise on account of good and bad kamma performed in that life. The thought moment at conception arises conditioned by the kamma of the previous life. Other subsequent mental states are also similar. When mind arises thought processes and a material form also arise. Without mind there are no thought processes. Without matter there can be no colour. Thus just as the mind becomes the base for the arising of thought processes it becomes the cause for the appearance of the body. How could we know that the mind facilitates the appearance of the body? When a man is in a rage the colour of his face changes. When he is happy the colour of his countenance is pleasant. From this we could infer that mind determines the appearance of matter. Thus consciousness and mind becomes the cause for the appearance of the material form. With the combination of mind and matter, organs of the body such as eyes, ear, nose etc. take shape. With the arising of the organs of senses, contact arises. Because of this contact sensations are registered in the mind.

With the arising of sensations pleasurable impressions and so on are created. Thus craving arises for them. That craving begets covetousness - a dense form of craving (uppadāna). This uppadāna engenders kamma, which becomes a cause for the next birth. Because of this immediately at death mind and matter take shape in a new life. With the arising of the new life (birth) decay, death, grief, lamentation and the whole trains of woes of life set in. Thus on account of ignorance suffering continues like the endless links of a chain one connected to another.

If one roots out ignorance and realises the Four Noble Truths, and attains Arahantship, the acquiring of skilful as well as unskilful kamma is brought to a halt. In other words the person who eradicates ignorance (the Arahant) is not attached to any of the planes of existence, and performs no kamma which leads him to rebirth. As he does not acquire kamma the re-linking consciousness does not appear at death. Therefore it is not conceived in an embryonic life and consequently the organs of the senses do not appear. Hence no contact occurs. Without contact no sensations come to be. In the absence of sensations craving is absent. In the absence of craving no kamma is acquired, hence no rebirth occurs. There being no rebirth, decay, death and all the ills that flesh is heir to are absent. From this we should know that all forms of suffering come to be on account of ignorance. When ignorance is dispelled all forms of suffering are done away with. It was in this manner that the Buddha taught how suffering arises, how it is caused, how it ceases, and the way how the cessation is to be achieved.

To be continued.

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PART V.

SILA.

THE performance of all meritorious thoughts, words, and deeds has to be done grounded in virtue. One cannot accomplish the perfection of virtue to a high degree all at once. It has to be a gradual process. The man who wishes to climb a high mountain peak has to get there by stages. Even so those desiring the perfection of virtue have to advance in stages. One should commence with observing the Five Precepts. To a person who observes the five precepts the observance of the Eight Precepts once a month will not be difficult. Continuing this practice for some time one gets a better control over self. Such a person could observe the Eight Precepts twice a month. After some time he would find it desirable to observe the Eight Precepts once a week. Still later he would find it possible to observe the eight precepts twice a week. One who advances in this practice could observe brahmachariya - abstinence from sexual life for a week or two. Advancing in this practice he would not find it difficult to observe the Ten Precepts. Advancing on this observance before long he could practise the precept of a novice (samanera sila). A novice could observe the precepts of an Elder if he is qualified for it by way of age, etc. We see some men who are virtuous by their very nature. Before long such men become successful in perfecting themselves in the observance of the higher precepts of sila. It should be observed that they are men who have practised virtue in their previous lives. Such men when instructed wish to practise virtue to some degree or other. If they obtain the acquaintance of noble friends and develop it they gain the ability before long to perfect themselves in virtues to a high standard.

One who has successfully practised the precepts undertaken at the higher ordination for some time gets complete control over his words and deeds. If a monk practicing the precepts of an Elder knows the Dhamma well, and on seeing the full moon could truly say, "This moon is marred by spots. My precepts of virtue have been practised without blemish, it is a hundred and thousand times untarnished and flawless more than the moon", then he could be considered perfect in virtue.

PURITY OF MIND. (*Citta Visuddhi*).

Having gained perfection in virtue the aspirant to purity of mind should practice mental concentration or samādhi. Here samādhi means

one-pointedness of mind, Bhavana or meditation means development of the mind, (mental culture) Therefore Samādhi Bhavana means one-pointedness of skilful thought (kusala citta) By being established in virtue he suppresses the development of unskilful states of mind (akusala) and increases skilful thoughts pertaining to the sense sphere (kamavacara kusala citta). To develop these mental states the mind should be concentrated on a suitable object of meditation. In other words all thoughts that arise should be concentrated on an object of mental concentration. By this practice the mind which pursues random thoughts like a wild ox freely roaming the woods, is fixed on one object of meditation.

An object of meditation suitable with ones individual character should be chosen. Then concentration should be developed and one gains the first, second, third, fourth, and fifth Jhannas or Absorptions. All these are termed Jhannas of the realm of form. After this one could develop super normal intellect or abhiññā, and perform miraculous deeds like travelling through air, walking on water etc. After death he will not be reborn in the sphere of sensual pleasures as he has inhibited sensuality. As his mind is attached to meditation on form this yogi who has gained the Jhannas is reborn in the realm of form among the Brahmas suitable to the absorptions he has gained. When the kamma force of the Jhanna that caused the birth there is spent he passes away from that realm. One who develops meditations which cause aversion to the body gain Jhanas of the formless sphere. The first of these Jhanas is termed 'infinity of space'. The second is called 'infinity of consciousness, and the third is termed 'infinity of nothingness'. The fourth is termed 'neither perception nor non-perception'. The fourth Jhana is supreme among mundane Jhanas. There is no higher mundane happiness than a bliss experienced on attaining to the absorption of neither perception nor non-perception. Even so with the spending of the psycho-physical force generated by that Jhana the person passes away. But the mental concentration gained by the Jhana is tremendously powerful. A wise person realises that by attaining to those Jhanas he has suppressed sense desires for a limited period only, and that no permanent eradication of passions is achieved. Hence he discards attachment even to those Jhanas. His mind is bent on developing concentration that gives insight or paññā. He enters into a Jhana and arises therefrom and reflects on the transiency, unsatisfactoriness, and soullessness, in that state of absorption.

VIPASSANĀ

The one who thus concentrates his mind on these three characteristics is said to practise Vipassanā, or insight. When this is fully developed he comes to realise that all component things (mind and matter) are sorrow laden and characterised by suffering. With this attainment the force of craving is eliminated to a point where rebirth will not be possible for more than seven times. The power of craving that causes

birth in a woeful state is annihilated. The power of craving to cause him perform an akusala kamma is completely wiped out. His keen intellect now grasps Nibbāna. Progress on the Eightfold Path is developed fully. His emancipation from Samsarā is a certainty. He has entered the stream that carries him to the sea of Nibbāna without fail. Therefore he is called a "Sotapanna", which means one who has initially entered the current. As all defilements have not yet eradicated he gets busy with the task of completely annihilating the remnants of defilements (kilesā). He proceeds to develop his insight into the three characteristics. At another stage his wisdom is developed to an extent that he fully comprehends suffering. The power of his craving is reduced to cause him only one more rebirth. He sees Nibbāna first hand and realises its bliss. He perfects himself in the practice of the Noble Eightfold Path to a significant point. On reaching the stage where these four points are achieved we say he has attained the Sakadagami stage. That means he has become 'a returner but once' i.e. he will be born only once more. Still there is a remainder of craving sufficient to cause him one more rebirth. To eliminate this he practises Vipassanā meditation. Developing his insight he realises the truth of suffering in its entirety. He wipes out the remainder of craving which would cause him one more rebirth. He sees Nibbāna and glimpses its reality. He reaches a significant point on the Noble Eightfold Path. With the development of these four achievements he has done away with rebirth in the sphere of sense desires. Therefore he is called an Anagami which means 'non returner'. At death he is reborn in the Suddhavasa Brahma realm. That is because there is still a trace of craving. He practises concentration to eradicate craving for existence in the realms of form and the formless realms. When his intuitive wisdom is fully developed to perfection he sees clearly that the entire triple-planed universe is a mass of suffering. He stamps out craving for existence in the realms of form and formlessness. He realises Nibbāna and experiences its bliss. He develops perfection in the practice of the Noble Eightfold Path to its culmination.

As he has completely wiped out the remnants of craving that lingered within him causing rebirth in the realms of form and formless realms he becomes worthy of honour and offering by the rest of mankind. Therefore he is termed an Arahant, which means the one worthy of offerings. He is freed from craving for sense gratifications and hence the bond which binds beings to the planes of sensual existence is completely cut off progressively during the Sotapatti, Sakadagami and Anagami stages. He has cut off craving for existence in the two realms of form and formlessness. Therefore that noble one is emancipated from the thralldom of ignorance and craving, hence he is freed from existence in the triple planed universe. A creeper the roots of which have been cut off would live for a few days and even bear flowers if there are favourable conditions like rain etc. Then it dies off. Even so the Arahant lives his span of life but does not gather either kusala or akusala kamma. At death he gains the eternal peace of Nibbāna. Thus the noble Buddha has taught in diverse manners how by the observance of sila, one gains control over the

senses, how by the practice of concentration one gains one-pointedness of mind, and how by the practice of Vipassanā one completely cuts off all the roots of evil which bind him to the cycle of births and deaths.

VI.

CONVENTIONAL and ULTIMATE TRUTHS,

The teachings of the Buddha are divided into two categories, viz: conventional and ultimate truths. What is accepted by a consensus of opinion among men is convention. It is subject to change from time to time. At one stage popular parlance calls one an infant, later he is called a youth, still later a middle aged and an old man. Convention changes thus. If one does not conform to this usage, one could be accused of uttering falsehood. To speak of an infant as an old man is a lie. These terms are given according to the age at a particular time. When a tree is felled, sawn and timber is produced, we do not refer to the timber as a tree. When that timber is prepared and assembled together in a particular way we call it an almirah. When the almirah is dismantled and we make a box, we no longer call it an almirah. We speak of it as a box. If we should not do so we should be accused of lying. What was cut and shaped into a box was the former almirah. Thus conventional terms are based on external appearances, and not to conform to such usage would be tantamount to utter falsehood.

The true nature of all phenomena is termed ultimate truth (Paramattha Sacca). Its special feature is that it does not change from time to time. If we correctly speak of an infant we should say a psycho-physical force. Because the mind and mental processes bend towards mental objects they are called 'Nāma' (Namati = bends). The body is a process of matter subject to change by heat, cold and so forth.

The body is termed Rūpa, in the sense that it is afflicted by cold, heat and so on. The psycho-physical process arises and passes away in rapid succession, and continues in an unbroken chain with great velocity. **Apart** from this there is nothing to be called a child. When we say psycho-physical force it would include not only one infant but all infants. The same is equally applicable to a youth, a middle aged man, and to an old man. Nay it is applicable to gods, demons, animals, and in fact to all having a mind and body. Even if we use the term 'Pañcakkhandhā' combination of fivefold aggregation, though the words used are different, the meaning remains the same. Whether we say mind and matter (nāma-rūpa) or five aggregations, it means the same thing. Whether we say mind and matter, mind, mental processes and matter, or consciousness, sensations, perceptions, mental concomitants and matter, all mean the same. The five-fold aggregation is a word used in reference to consciousness, perceptions, volitional activities, and matter. When we say psycho-physical force we mean the same thing. There is no difference in the intrinsic

meaning of these terms. Hence they are termed 'Paramatthas' or ultimate realities. Though words, syllables and the letters used are different the meaning remains unchanged. Hence the pāli definition "Paramo aviparito attho-paramattho". Ultimate reality is what does not change but remains constant though we may refer to it by various synonyms.

If we examine and see what elements constitute a tree we see cohesion, vibration, radiation, and extension in combination with colour, odour, taste and nutritive essence inextricably bound together. There is nothing apart from these eightfold combination of elements. Considering that this is the true nature of a tree we should term it the eightfold combination of primary elements. Thus this term is applicable even when we refer to a wooden almirah, or when it is converted into a box, and even when it has disintegrated into dust. Thus the basic elementary condition which remains constant is called the Ultimate state or Paramattha. Aggregations, elements, sense-bases, mind, volitional activities and so on are terms used in the ultimate sense. If these ultimate truths are mistaken or confused one falls to the error of fallacious view. This is how it occurs. If one calls greed by the name of hate, or thinks that the hate of human beings is the true hatred, while the hate of a god is on the other hand a virtue, or that one or a number of mental states constitute the soul, or that the body is the soul, then that is erroneous view.

Thus when conventional terms are misused we become guilty of falsehood. When we mistake or confuse ultimate truths and conventional truths we become subject to erroneous view. What the Buddha preached in conformity with convention is called conventional truth. What he preached in conformity with ultimate realities is termed 'ultimate doctrines'.

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THE TEACHINGS OF THE BUDDHA

-By

Ven: B. Ananda Maitreiya Thero

in Sinhalese publication

"BUDDHA - DHARMAYA"

Translated by Amarasiri Weeraratne

(Continued from August Issue)

PART VI.

ALTHOUGH in conventional speech we refer to a 'being' or a 'person' and so forth when we see their real nature only the rise and fall of phenomena is seen. Though in the ultimate sense no person or being etc. is to be found, yet according to popular parlance men take these words as having an accepted meaning. The man of poor intelligence finds it difficult to grasp the meaning when reference is made to ultimate doctrines. Therefore the Buddha preached on the conventional aspect of the truth when that would help man to understand the teachings and develop his virtues accordingly. He preached the ultimate truth to men sufficiently advanced to understand them and thereby to attain the paths and fruits. A skilled teacher who knows many languages is able to teach various arts and sciences to men of various nationalities in their native languages. Even so the Buddha who was skilled in the use of conventional as well as ultimate truths utilised either of these methods according to the capacity of his audience and made them realise the truth. Hence teachers of old have said:

"Dve saccāni akkasi,
Sambuddho vadatan varo,
Sammutin paramattan ca
Tatiyan nupa labbhati."

The Buddha, nobles! of those with speech,
two-fold types of truth did preach,
Conventional truth that all accept,
And ultimate truth, that is perfect,
These two truths he has taught,
Truth apart from this there's naught.

This is expressed in the 'Madyamika Vrutti' a Sanskrit Buddhist work as follows:

"Dve satye samupa sritya,
Buddhanan Dharma deshana,
Loka sanvruti satyancha,
Satyan cha paramarta tahh."

"The Buddha's doctrines are preached in conformity with the two aspects of truths termed, Conventional and Ultimate realities.

What did the Buddha teach employing these two methods of teaching? The Buddha's main object was to emancipate beings from the sufferings of Saṃsāra. To achieve that the bondage to Saṃsāra must be cut off. It is craving that binds beings to Saṃsāra. To cut off this craving is to eradicate attachment for existence in the triple planed universe consisting of the sphere of sense-gratifications, the realms of form, and the formless realms. To eradicate attachment one must be convinced of its disadvantages and dangers. In other words he should realise that existence in these planes is transient, sorrow laden, and soulless.

By realising the three characteristics of transience, suffering, and soullessness, craving for existence in the round of births ceases. Hence one gains emancipation from the cycle of births and deaths. The realisation of the three characteristics is essential to deliverance from Saṃsāra. Therefore the Buddha made use of these two methods of exposition of the Dhamma, namely conventional and ultimate truths to inculcate the fundamental teachings.

Through the medium of the accepted usage of words he taught that not only the minute atom but even what is believed to be the gigantic Mahā-meru mountain and so forth are subject to change. All beings whether large or small are subject to change without exception.

In the analysis of all ultimate forms they come under four categories, viz: mind, mental concomitants, matter and Nibbāna. By the term mind and matter the general reference is to beings. All inanimate objects come under the classification of matter. Hence all animate and inanimate matter come under the three ultimate classifications of mind, mental concomitants, and matter. The eternal happiness of Nibbāna which is the only permanent state of bliss is a supra-mundane state, it comes under the ultimate classification, Nibbāna. The world and Nibbāna came under this ultimate form of analysis.

In the classifications by the Buddha he has clarified the true nature of the mind and what is according to ultimate truth. He taught that it is a fleeting process which arises and passes away with great rapidity. He has explained that it is impermanent and subject to suffering. He has also explained that there is only a psycho-physical force and that it is void of any Ego-entity or soul. He has also elucidated the true nature of volitional activities, how they rise and pass away, and the fact that they are subject to transience, suffering and soullessness. That matter is subject to arising and dissolution every minute, and that it too is subject to transience, suffering, and soullessness is established. That Nibbāna is permanent, blissful, and full of peace and is itself soulless has been taught in the doctrines which teach ultimate realities.

The Buddha in resorting to conventional methods of speaking too taught the same facts regarding transience, suffering, and soullessness.

No other religious teacher took into account the conventional and the ultimate aspects of truth. One set of religious teachers took the concept of 'a being' 'self', 'person' as ultimate realities, and taught doctrines which come under the classification Eternalism. Others went astray and preached annihilation at death.

VII.

REBIRTH.

We must bear in mind that a being is a psycho-physical process. One mental state follows another and in this manner each moment, mental states arise and pass away, in unending succession. Matter too is composed of waves of radiation, energy rising and passing away. In this combination there is nothing to be taken as a self or a soul. Unless this is understood rebirth cannot be understood correctly. When we examine a being as he really is, ultimately there is nothing apart from mind and matter.

One thought moment exists in three stages: before dissolution. These are the nascent, static, and the dissolution stages. That is the duration of a thought moment. With the dissolution of that thought moment that mental state passes away. That passing away becomes a cause for the arising of the next mental state. Thus one psychic state is succeeded by another leaving no gap between either of these. Seventeen of these thought moments constitute the duration of the time that a unit of matter lasts. At intervals between seventeen thought moments matter arises and passes away only to be succeeded by another such unit of matter. In this manner material phenomena continue to exist in a series of rising and falling waves of energy.

If thought processes are regarded as beings, inasmuch as a series of thought processes arise and pass away every moment, then a number of beings arise and pass away each moment. If material phenomenon is considered a being then with the lapse of every 17 thought moments a number of beings arise and perish. Then could we consider the psycho-physical forces as the 'being'. If it is accepted so, then a 'being' would mean a continued process of arising and falling. It is so. What the world considers a being is the psycho-physical force that is continually arising and passing away. Apart from this there is no other 'being' to be found.

Of these what is it that is reborn after death? The mental process continues arising and passing away until death. After that it will no longer be associated with the body. Yet it will arise in a new body which is produced in a new life by the kamma-force of the individual. There is no interval between the dissolution of the last thought moment of an individual and the arising of the psychic stream in a new life. Even in this life itself one thought moment arises, and gives way to another. Similarly the last dying thought is succeeded by another thought moment in a new life. The stream of psychic processes is unbroken. Should he not have died the

thought moment which passed on to the new life would have arisen in this mind itself. Here the only difference is that the psychic process was shifted to another body. When that psychic process passes onto a new life a material form is also suitably produced by the kamma of the individual. In conventional speech we say the new mental process and body produced is that of the dead man. Thus the arising of mental and physical phenomena in a new life on account of the kamma-force of an individual who passes away from one life is called rebirth. Did the mind of that dead man pass on to the new life? No. Did a new mental process that is completely independent of the older one arise? No. Then what has occurred at birth? It is the arising of the last thought of the dying man being succeeded in a new thought moment in a new life. We should call it neither the mind which belonged to the dead man, nor a completely new life. Conventionally speaking we could say a being passed away from one life to another. Nothing goes from one life to another. The last dying thought moment was followed by its succeeding thought moment and produced in a new mind suitably produced by the kamma of the individual. Apart from this nothing has gone from one life to another. Hence one should know that rebirth occurs without anything passing away from one life to another, (that there is no soul that migrates.)

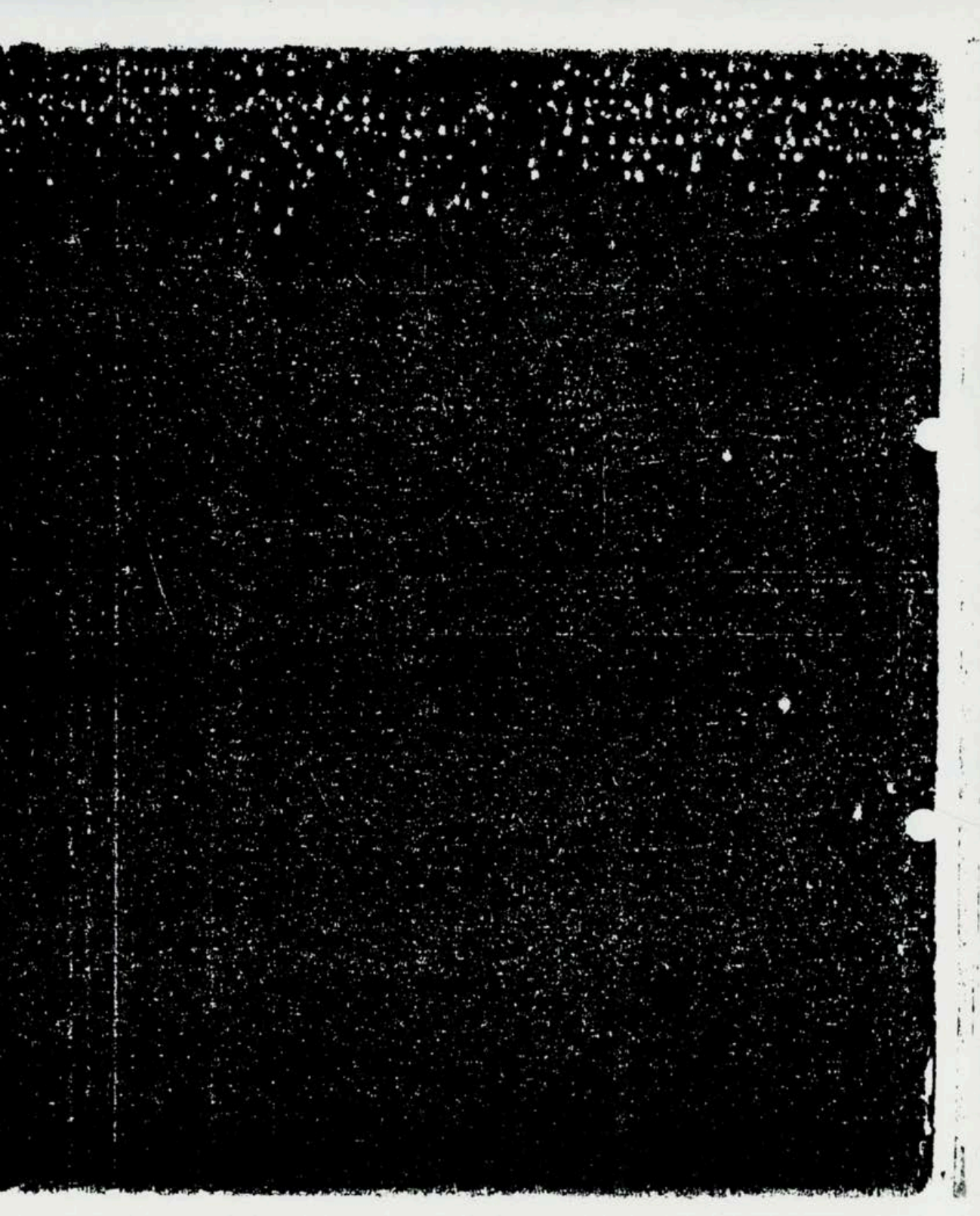
We say that the infant grows and becomes a youth. Does the same mind of an infant become the mind of a young man? Or is it a different mind? No. Is the physical phenomenon in a youth the same as that which existed during his infancy? No. Or is the physical matter entirely different? No. The mental and physical phenomena of an infant arise and pass away no sooner than they have risen. Based on these and as a consequent of these mental states and physical phenomena, it follows that at a certain stage we give them the name 'a youth' in popular parlance. Nothing has migrated from the infant to the youth, no essence, or substance has persisted. Thus when we consider what happens in this life itself under our very eyes, we can understand what is meant by the teaching, "it is neither the same person nor an entirely different one that is reborn after death".

For some reason or other a man is moved to a towering rage. His body too assumes a fierce nature. If later on a great joy arises in him, his body will be transformed into a pleasant figure. Here did the identical mind that flew into a rage become the mind overwhelmed with joy? No. After the process of thoughts associated with hatred arose and passed away, thought processes associated with joy arose. Did the identical body that became fierce transform itself to one possessed with joy? No. Physical phenomena associated with anger arose and passed away. Conditioned by that state of flux phenomena arose in that very process which were associated with joy. In conventional parlance the identical man flew into a rage. Later he became glad. In the ultimate teachings (taught in the Abhidhamma) after the arising of psychic states associated with repulsion other psychic states arose which were associated with pleasure.

(A psychic state-citta-vithi, is a series of seventeen mental states that arise and pass away in succession.)

Thus it should be understood that nothing migrates from the combination of mind and matter of the dying person. What is termed rebirth is the manifestation of the psycho-physical force in a new life. Thus it would be seen that nothing passes away from one life to another in the shape of an Ego-entity or soul. If in conventional parlance one asks "Is it the very same being that dies who is reborn", we should say, "the identical person is not reborn." Because if we say that the same person is reborn that would lead to the fallacy of the transmigration of an eternal soul, Ego-entity, or Self. If we say that another being is reborn that too would lead to the misunderstanding that after death there is annihilation of the individual, and that the person reborn is entirely another. Therefore in order to emphasize that from the standpoint of a permanent soul, Self, or Ego-entity, it is impossible to understand rebirth, we say that neither the identical man nor an entirely different person is reborn.

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Mr. Bennett's Answers to written Questions
about the Subud Exercises.

26th October, 1957.

(This transcript has not been corrected by Mr. B.)

I am going to summarize some questions I have been asked about the Subud Exercises and then try to answer them.

Firstly: There is clearly a great power here, but what is this power that moves people in the Subud exercises?

Secondly: Why can it be switched off and on instantly so that people begin within a few seconds and when they hear the word 'finish' they stop equally suddenly. Who is it that switches the power and what does that mean?

Thirdly, why do people behave in such a strange way when they suddenly fall down and remain prone throughout the exercise, or move round the room apparently moved by something that has nothing to do with themselves?

Fourthly, are these people in a trance, and connected with that is there really no danger for people in it? Is it not possible that someone submitting themselves to this power without fully understanding it can come to some real harm, either physically or mentally?

Then there is a fifth question, about the work itself. Something is to happen, something is to grow. We have always understood that this transformation of man must be the result of our own efforts, we have to work. Whereas here, in these Subud exercises, it seems that we are being 'worked upon.' If we are not simply passively being worked upon, in what sense can these Subud exercises be called 'work,' positive work?

Sixthly, there is the word 'purification' that has been used in connection with the action of the exercises. What is 'purification,' what is meant by it? Connected with this there are two words that have been used that ring strangely in our ears after what we have heard of the Gurdjieff teaching and our attempt to affirm. The word 'submission' here seems like being asked to obey an order. We are told to do the exercises, we are told to submit, but who orders that? The use of the word 'submission' seems wrong here. One can understand the idea of 'surrender' but not of 'submission.' Then again, there is the use of the phrase 'worship of God.' Many people have felt out of sympathy with the church dogma in the

conception of a God who demands worship, who expects his creatures to worship or to admire, as one might worship or admire a man - and this seems to be quite incompatible with any idea of God that we are coming to nowadays. It seems a reversion to an older and falser idea of God.

Then comes the question: How does one know that these exercises are good, how can one know that the Subud approach is good until one has seen the results over a long period of time? Is there any other test that one can apply?

Finally, many people are asking the question: Who is Subuh himself? All sorts of strange and vague rumours exist. It has been said that he is the Messiah who has come again, that he is a prophet from God or that he is an inspired man. Also that he is none of these things but that he is himself a pupil of a great Master who has come to prepare the way for someone to come after him. We have never been given a clear lead as to who you, or those who have longer and more experience of this, understand him to be. This has certainly left a feeling of confusion and uncertainty as to how people should think and how they are expected to think about him.

I wanted to record the answers to these questions because they are questions of principle that should be asked and should, as far as possible, be answered.

The first question is about the power that is here. Of course it would be possible to talk in technical language about a level of energy that is higher than anything that can enter human consciousness. For example, when I have written and spoken about energies I have said that there is a creative energy that is above and beyond the earth, that works through the sun. And I said that beyond the creative energy again there is an energy which has the power and quality of love in it, and that that is infinitely above and beyond the solar system. It would be possible for me to answer that this is an energy the source of which and the level of which is higher than the whole solar system. If I were to use another language - that of Gurdjieff's All and Everything - I should say that this is what he calls the Theomertmalogos or emanation of the Sun Absolute, which energy is necessary, he says, for the formation of the higher being body of man. Mr. Gurdjieff himself said that it is through the action of this energy of the Theomertmalogos that the soul of man is nourished - no lower energy than this can nourish the soul. Or again, if I were to use the more familiar language of the Christian teaching I would say: this is

the power of the Holy Spirit, the same power that came on the disciples at Pentecost, the same power that has come again and again on people at certain moments. It came, for example, on St. Francis of Assisi when he received the stigmata. It is that same power, and for me there is no doubt that it belongs to a level which is far greater than anything that can originate on this earth or in this solar system of ours.

The second question is: 'How is it that this power can be 'switched on and off instantly?' It is a matter of contact. Electricity can be switched on and off instantly. Even though there may be an enormous voltage that would destroy a whole building if it were allowed to run freely through it, a child could switch it off at the switch - and switch it on again. At my very first introduction to these exercises, which must have been a year ago, this explanation was then given to me and it certainly helped me to understand - to recognize, perhaps I had better put it - what was happening in these exercises. The analogy was that this is like an electric current of very high voltage. Our ordinary efforts, our ordinary attempts to do what is right, to arrive at what we should be, are made with a power of very low voltage, and it can only work a part of our machine. The higher parts of the machine require a much greater intensity, a higher voltage, and we can become connected with that when we do these exercises. But although it is a very much higher voltage it is quite as easy to switch on and off as it is to switch on and off a current from a tiny little battery.

Here comes really the essential thing about these exercises that I have tried to convey to people, and that little by little they come to understand and recognize for themselves; that is, that we are entirely free in front of this power and this is the nature of this power of God in the world. It is one of the mysteries that people have tried again and again to penetrate. "How is it;" they ask "if God is Almighty that He allows the world to be as it is; how is it that the power of God does not change things?" As you know, I have often tried to answer this by quoting my favourite passage in the Gospels, when Jesus said: "He shall not strive nor cry nor shall his voice be heard in the streets." The power of God is never a violent power, and never acts against the will of people, never acts to overcome their will. If people will to do evil, the power of God does not withstand that will of theirs. It is because we men were created free, and if there is one thing that is

certain about our human nature it is that this is how we were created and this is what we were destined for, that we should become free, responsible beings.

Here I really can answer a question that comes later, about how one can test whether this power is good or not. The test I have always applied - one that I heard from Gurdjieff nearly forty years ago - is this: when you see any kind of teaching, the first thing that you should ask yourself is: does it take away people's will or does it leave them free? If it takes away people's will in any sense it is not a true teaching, but magic. Only if it leaves them free can it be true. That is a test that I applied when I came to this Subud work. I saw, from the very start, that nothing happened to me unless I consented to it. The moment my consent was withdrawn, it ceased to happen. This is really how it is in these exercises. All that is done when the person says "begin" is that that is the signal for people to ask - to consent to its working in them. It is no more than a signal. Exactly the same happens when people work in solitude in their own rooms. It certainly does not depend upon the presence of Pak Subuh or of Ibu. The exercises are now being done for example by groups in Holland - in The Hague and Eindhoven - with no one there who has had more than a few months experience of this work, and they have no difficulty in starting and stopping, exactly as if Pak Subuh himself were there. Similarly in England; there are now groups doing these exercises in Manchester and Bournemouth and Bristol and none of these people have done these exercises for more than a few months and yet they start and stop in exactly the same way as if he himself were present. Therefore this really means that the starting and stopping does not depend upon someone else; it depends upon ourselves, and all that other people do is merely to give a signal. But you will ask: "How is it that people respond so suddenly to that signal?" There I can answer that they respond because they can hear it. Sometimes there is a noise in the room and someone does not hear it, and they do not stop. I have seen it myself many times; it is sometimes necessary to go and touch a person on the shoulder and say "Now stop," and as soon as he hears this, he stops and quietly goes out of the room. So I can really say - by my own observation of having seen these exercises done hundreds of times and having done them myself - that the starting and stopping is really the 'yes' and the 'no' of the people themselves, not anything outside them or any person outside them that starts and stops it. What others do is only to give a signal.

Here another question is interpolated; that is, how the power is generated. The question is this: "Presumably the power itself is generated, for example, by Ibu, because she herself said she could not take more than fifteen or twenty people at a time, and therefore it must be limited by her own strength." The answer to this is different. It is connected with what I will have to say about purification. What does happen is this: that when people in the course of these exercises become more sensitive, they begin to be able to absorb from other people certain - what I should call - 'poisoned energies,' and the amount of poison that someone is able to absorb depends upon their own strength. Certainly, especially in the very initial stages of the exercises, and at the opening, there can be a great outpouring of the negative energies in a person and these enter into those who are present who are in a sensitive state, and most especially into the person who is making the contact for them. It is not that Ibu herself generates the power that moves them, but she has to receive and absorb what comes out of them and Ibu's limit is what she can absorb. I have seen that when she comes away from the opening, when there are people full of passions and with violent kinds of inner forces, that something has entered into her that has really exhausted her and it is only after a time of rest that she is able to throw this off. So that undoubtedly the answer is that it is not a matter of generating the force; it has nothing whatever to do with the people present but with the absorbing of the force when it acts on people.

The further question then comes: how is it possible for people to continue to work alone, or when Ibu or someone like her is absent? That is why a certain time is required. People are, in general, not allowed to work by themselves for several months unless they show that they have made very exceptional progress with the exercises. I myself have compared the function of Ibu or Bapak at the opening to that of a midwife; they have to help to deliver the person of something that comes out of them. Once that which comes out has begun to 'flow out' as it were, the person is able to deliver themselves from these negative forces within them. Then they no longer need someone else to help it to come out of them, though sometimes it may happen that later on some rather big negative quality, some big defect of character - or particularly of heredity - has to be eliminated and then once again that same sort of help is needed.

Here I would like to say something else. As you know, for some time past Pak Subuh has authorised me to do this opening with the men and I have done this when he has not been there, also out of London. I have no doubt at all that when this happens, it is nothing at all that comes from me. I have never had such a sense of completely disappearing myself and of just not being there at all; of seeing, of witnessing how that power comes down and enters into people. I would really go so far as to say that I have actually seen what was meant in the description of Pentecost by the 'tongues of flame' coming down and entering into people. I have had no doubt that I was nothing else but a witness of this happening. Afterwards, when the shock of this contact is made with people, the presence of someone else there who is stronger in this also acts as a protection for them, because what comes out of them is absorbed and so they are protected in the early stages, but nothing whatever comes from the stronger one - it is clear to me that nothing, literally nothing, goes from me to the person.

The next question I want to speak about is the word 'submission.' I am going to answer this by giving just one example from my experience during the last few days. As you know, these Subud exercises, by the power that is awakened in them, act firstly upon our physical bodies to produce a general state of health and harmony in the body. This also has the effect of curing diseases and we have had many and extraordinary examples of such cures. Now this case that I am going to speak about is one that has just happened. A woman in one of our groups rang me up about ten days ago to say that her father was to have a very serious operation and she wanted to know what she should do. She went to Birmingham - where he was to be operated upon. The next day she rang me and said that they had operated and found that he had an inoperable cancer of the most malignant kind which had spread all over his lungs and his liver and stomach and so on and that they had closed him up again and that nothing was to be done. The doctors had told her that he had only a very short time to live. She also told me that both he and her step-mother are devout people but they have not been able to receive help from any direction.

The upshot of it was that I went immediately to Birmingham and talked with the lady concerned. She at once felt that this was right, and that she and her husband should come and receive the exercises immediately, understanding very well that life and death are in the

hands of God and that they could not even ask for the life of the person to be prolonged if it is not the Will of God that it should be. However, she wished - and she was sure that he would also wish - to receive these exercises as a preparation for death. When he had been out of hospital only a few days he felt himself strong enough to make the journey and they drove all the way from Birmingham. He arrived here in a state of real exhaustion, having incidentally been warned by his own doctor - he knew his own situation fully - that this journey might bring fatal results. His doctor had said that his expectation of life was from three days to a month.

When he arrived here I explained to him the meaning of these exercises, that one surrendered oneself to the Will of God, not asking for anything for oneself. He said that he wished to receive the exercises with that understanding. Pak Subuh said that I and one or two others were to open him to the exercises and make the contact for him. Pak Subuh himself had to go to London that day. When I was standing in front of him and the exercise had been going on for perhaps a quarter of an hour, I felt already many upheavals in my own body which I knew were my own sensitivity to the symptoms. At a certain moment there came a real desire that he should get well. I began to pray that he should get well. At that moment it was as if I had been hit on the head. I fell on my knees and I knew that this was quite wrong, that I had no right to wish, I had no right to do anything, that whatever God's Will was, I must submit to it. From that moment, something changed in the man and he also began to make the kind of movement that we see in the exercises. He lifted his hands as if in prayer and I could feel that something was also happening with his body, that, in fact, at the end of the exercise he was a changed man inwardly; that a wonderful surrender had come over him. Now only three days have passed since then and he certainly feels better than he has for some time past.

No one can say - and Pak Subuh has emphasized again and again that no one can say what will come. There is no question of our healing, or of there being any healing power in us. We cannot even wish that a person should be healed. We have to recognize that nothing comes from us - we must not ask for anything or wish for anything - but submit to whatever God's Will may be either for ourselves or for another person. That is what I understand by submission. It is certainly not submission to a person, it is not submission even to a commandment. It

is simply the recognition that in this case life and death are in the hands of God. If you like you can call it 'acceptance'. I can at this moment feel again how the power of God was suddenly laid on me and I knew that I had no right to wish, that I had to abandon all wish myself. That is really more than acceptance; it was really submitting and knowing that God is almighty and that we have nothing in front of Him except submission when it comes to the moment when His power is manifested. I am saying that because that experience of what is submission is so vividly present to me and after all, my wish was that this man should be given life. Such a wish we have no right to have when we are in the presence of God - we can have it at other times.

This leads me on to the next question, about what is meant by 'worship.' Because they have an anthropomorphic conception of God, people think of Him as a great man, a great Being, who expects or demands something of the kind a king might demand. We picture worship to ourselves as that, but really worship has no such significance. Worshipping God means to acknowledge and to become conscious of the might and the power of God - we are neither changed or diminished or increased by our acceptance of it, it is a state in us which enables us to be before God so that we acknowledge the greatness of God the Creator, the Omnipotent.

At the same time, as I said before, one must not think of God as a 'governing power' like an emperor or a god in the sense in which it seems that the old Israelites understood. It is not that understanding that I have at all. It is much more God as in the picture you get in the New Testament; of the power that is actually within man; the kingdom is only there in so far as man acknowledges and accepts it. And yet it is great, unlimited, and as one begins to become conscious of this one begins to become conscious that if one will turn to that power then everything that we need - everything that the world needs, more than the world needs - will come from this power. That is worship; to become conscious of the power of God. It is not adding anything to it, it is something in ourselves which allows us to be rightly orientated to it. It is not something that God demands for Himself, it is something that is given to us as a possibility to be related to Him. This is how I understand the word worship.

This leads me on to purification to which I have referred several times while I have been talking. In

order to explain about purification I really have to explain one fundamental feature of this Subud work. That is the difference between work that comes from outside and work that comes from within. All ways, without exception, that we know, have this in common; that something is taught, some methods are given - whether they are methods of prayer and worship such as different churches receive, rituals and codes of conduct and behaviour, commandments, or whether they are specific methods such as they exist in the East or as we have in the Gurdjieff system for self-perfecting for man - all have something in common; there is an external form which enters and to which one tries to conform. Even when it is a very flexible system or teaching - such as we have with Gurdjieff, which adapts itself to different varieties of people - it still remains inevitable that there must be some compromise if, for example, a group such as you have of twenty or thirty people are set to do a particular exercise. That exercise may be of very great, direct value at a given moment for a certain person; for another person it is too soon and others too late and others really not appropriate to their type. So it is - you can observe for yourself - that there are just one or two people in a group who bring remarkable observations and confirm that they have very valuable experiences from doing a particular exercise. Others realise that it has value, but it is not so specific, not so direct and sure for them; and when it comes to really standardised methods such as - I would be bound to say - exist in churches where everyone, by the million, goes through the same ritual and are expected to conform to the same codes of conduct and to have the same beliefs and the same understanding, then inevitably this is a Procrustean bed into which everyone is forced, whether it fits them or not; so some are stretched and some have their feet cut off.

The more intimate, the more personal and flexible a method is, the less there is that harming of people by forcing them into a mould, and I can truly say that of all methods that I know - and as you know I have studied many from all parts of the world - none has the same degree of adaptation and flexibility as the Gurdjieff method, but even that is still a method that is received from outside. When a particular exercise is given to twenty people, twenty people do the same thing. When people work at the movements, all the class are making the same movements. Now one movement may be of particular value to one person and not to another. For example, I can well remember Gurdjieff once going right across the room to a woman in a class and saying: "This exercise is mesoteric for you."

Meaning 'this exercise is acting for you directly on your being.' That was for one person out of about forty and on that one single occasion for that person; the exercise was exactly adapted to that person at that moment. When there is that kind of action then the exercise, or method, or prayer, or ritual - whatever it may be - has a purifying, cleansing effect on that person, because it rectifies the defects of their nature. But inevitably there is a great deal of wastage in all such methods that have some standardisation because every single human individual is unique. The properties of our inner nature - the features of our minds, of our feelings, of our bodily functions, of our five senses, the forms of memory, the kinds of understanding to which we are adapted - are as individual as our finger prints, and that combination is unique for every single human essence, no other is like it.

The only perfect way is one that corresponds exactly to what a given person is. That can only happen if it is not received from outside but from within. In order to be received from the inside it has to have a motive force, a source, an originating point that is deeper than anything that requires changing. For example, if it proceeds from our own 'I', from our own ego, our own selfhood, then this source, although it is within and deep inside us, has still all the defects of our own nature in it and therefore it cannot be a source of real purification; so that people who try to be right simply by their own wishing, by their own understanding, get into worse trouble than people who follow some properly devised traditional method with supervision and help from a teacher. But when the source is much deeper than our own 'I', much deeper than anything of which we are conscious ourselves, and when that source is really - what I said at the beginning - the Holy Spirit acting in us, then it purifies from within, and the action is exactly specific; therefore every single person acts differently, each person has a different experience, each person has a different response, the process by which their different inward defects - physical, emotional, mental and so on - are rectified corresponds to what they themselves need.

That is what has made such an immense impression on me in these Subud exercises, that I have really seen this for myself after somewhat more than a year's experience in my own case, and the same amount in the case of about a dozen other people and with several hundreds now for four or five months. I have now really seen this specific character of the action, how it is different for each single person and how with each person

it corresponds to what they need and not only what they need in general but what they need at that particular stage of their development. So that at one time the action is very much on the physical body because there are defects, bad habits, bad conditions that have arisen just in the physical body and therefore the action is on the body; there are other defects of character, of attitude, of feeling and so on. When the work reaches those then the action is there, and the physical body is no longer touched. So that when you see people making rather strange and extraordinary movements - and indeed sometimes I have seen people behaving literally like animals, running around and barking like a dog - it seems monstrous and outrageous, but really, there are certain genuinely animal passions dominating in that person and he has to be rid of them, they go out of him in that sort of way. You yourself said when you were asking the question: "We read in the Gospels of the evil spirits being cast out of a man and falling and writhing on the ground when they came out of him."

It is very remarkable in the Gospels how often it is referred to; clearly what a big part this casting out of the evil spirits played in the ministry of Christ, so that sometimes people thought: "Were they all madmen in Palestine at that time?" Of course they were not all madmen, there were probably far fewer madmen in our sense than there are nowadays, far fewer neurotics, far fewer psychotic people, but not fewer people who had these wrong passions in them, because this is human; all of us require these passions and wrong things cast out of us and this is meant by the 'casting out of the evil spirits.' This is what really happens in these exercises. The remarkable feature - and almost really unbelievable, I have never encountered it before - is that the action is appropriate to the condition, to the makeup of the individual person, so that every single person has a different action, each person has a different stage of this process in him. It is the action by which, little by little, people are liberated from negative qualities and defects, bad habits and the rest in their organism, in their feelings, in their minds, and so on that is meant by purification.

Another question is. "But what is it that actually goes out, is it an energy, is it a pattern?" Really there is a certain substance or energy in man - much lower than the one I spoke of at the beginning as the Theomertmalogos or the energy of Divine Love - which is the typical human energy that is also called in All and Everything 'Hambledzoin,' or it is also called the blood or the nourishment of the astral body of man, just as

the other is called the nourishment of the soul of man, and it is this - which is also sometimes called 'astral matter' - that absorbs all the experiences of our lives, and the actual process of purification is the driving out of this poisoned defective hamblezooin or astral matter and its replacement by fresh and pure matter of the same kind; it really is analogous to a blood transfusion. That is why I said before, that what is coming out goes into another person. That astral matter, charged with the defects of the one person, enters into another person, and that person in his turn is able to release it and get rid of it and it goes into the general ocean of astral matter in which it is lost and everything is renewed in it. But as this goes out of a person, impure, there enters the pure matter, but that pure matter is terribly sensitive and therefore it is very vulnerable to all kinds of impressions that come to it. That is why Gurdjieff in his All and Everything says: "About that matter it is necessary to be very, very careful because from that very good results can come but also very harmful results." This is certainly true of these exercises, that after a certain time people do become more sensitive and that sensitivity makes them pick up and recognize all kinds of states that exist in other people. That is certainly also one of the few things that are 'taught' in the Subud exercises: we are taught how to protect ourselves against that action when we begin to become subject to it, how to purify ourselves, how to clean out this diseased astral matter when it has entered into us.

I now have to say a little about the question: "How do we know that this is good?" Certainly this is something that we can answer from our own experience. If I say that I know it is good, it is because I have received from it what I knew was necessary for me and which I knew had to happen to me before I died, and when I see that I am receiving in these exercises this innermost purification that I have always longed for more than anything, I know that it is good for me. But if you say: "What evidence can we have?" then that evidence must be external and therefore what you say is quite right, that this depends upon time. If, in a year's time, one sees that five hundred people or so who received these exercises are really better people and that their lives are really better and more harmonious, that is evidence, and truly there is no other kind of external evidence that is possible. When John sent his disciples to Jesus and they said: "Are you not he that should come or do we look for another?" Jesus answered: "Look round you and see, the blind receive their sight" and so on. That is the only kind of external answer

that can be given, but then He went on to say: "Verily I say unto you that of them that are born of women, none is greater than John the Baptist, but nevertheless he that is least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he." Because John the Baptist had not entered into the Kingdom, external evidence was necessary for him as it is for all who have not received the inner awakening.

I have several times quoted the Gospels in answering these questions and I must say that there is one more thing that is one of the most remarkable things about these exercises; it is the way in which they brought the Gospels to life for me. Always, ever since I was a boy, I have studied the Gospels and know many of them by heart and have gone over them again and again to try to understand, but never, until I came to these exercises, have I had such a sense of living the teaching of Christ. If we cannot doubt that the teaching of Christ is good, surely we cannot doubt that something that brings the teaching of Christ and every part of it to life for us must be good.

This leads me on now to the question: "Who is Mohammed Subuh himself?" I must really say that I cannot answer that. I realize that people are left in a state of confusion and conjecture about it but it would not be right if I were to speak about what I myself have seen and experienced concerning this. Therefore I simply have to leave this question just where it is. If one person thinks he is a chosen one of God who has come at this time to save the world, another one thinks he is a prophet and another one that he is a remarkable teacher or someone who is preparing the way for another, then I simply have to leave it to people to think what they think, because the moment has not come when it is really right to declare on the housetops what you have seen in secret. At present there is something that I have received in secret, that I have seen and experienced for myself and I know the moment has not come for me to speak about this and therefore about that part of the question I simply have to say: "I am sorry, I must not say."

