

Stepping- Stones



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Editorial

The Good Friend

TO the Emperor of China's enquiry as to what constituted the essence of Buddhism the Indian sage Bodhidharma replied that it consisted in abstention from all evil, doing of good, and the purification of one's heart. This reply failed to satisfy His Imperial Majesty, who apparently had expected to hear something extremely abstruse and esoteric, and he therefore observed, not without a trace of sarcasm, that the teaching was so simple that even a child of three could understand it. "So simple that a child of three can understand it, but so difficult that even an old man of eighty cannot practise it", retorted the sage. The moral of the story is clear: intellectual understanding and practical realization of a religious doctrine are rarely commensurate. Nor is the reason far to seek. Reluctant as he may be to admit the fact, man is after all a creature of desires rather than the child of reason; and it is by his emotional attitude to any particular subject or situation, rather than by his intellectual understanding of the issues involved therein, that the course of his conduct is ultimately determined. Reason may point man to the stars, but so long as his desires continue to drag him earthward among the glow-worms of the grass he is powerless to reach up and pluck even the lowest and least of them from the azure depths of its native sky. The central problem of the spiritual life is, therefore, as we have said elsewhere, not static but dynamic, not so much a matter of the intellectual understanding of this or that doctrine as of the concentration of the total psychic energy of the individual—now dissipated in so many directions—along the line of its eventual realization. Since this energy is nothing but the energy of desire in the widest possible sense of the term, and since emotion is only the 'long-circuiting' of desire, it is with the concentration and sublimation of desire and the reorientation of emotion that the spiritual life is above all else concerned.

Such is the case with the doctrine of no-self. Difficult as it is to understand that things are void of soul, self or ego, to put the doctrine into practise is more difficult still, to realize it most difficult of all. For no matter how clearly the intellect may be able to conceive this or any other doctrine, while the individual remains uninvolved with it emotionally all his intellectual understanding is as useless as a locomotive without fuel. The difficulty which confronts the spiritual aspirant is not so much how to understand the doctrine of no-self as where in his experience to discover the rudimentary form at least of its emotional equivalent.

Desire is of two kinds, that of attraction, the desire to unite, and that of repulsion, the desire to separate. When the former is accompanied by an intellectual cognition of an object which is inferior, equal or superior to itself, it becomes differentiated into the emotions of compassion, love and adoration respectively, each of which may in turn be divided into two kinds, one selfish inasmuch as it seeks to merge the being of the object in its own, the other selfless inasmuch as it seeks to merge its own being in that of the object. While sex-love is the most typical emotional form assumed by selfish desire to unite (which explains, incidentally, the ease with which such love passes over into hate), what we may designate as friendship-love, or simply friendship, is the most typical emotional form of selfless desire to unite. It is, therefore, in friendship (the Buddhist virtue of *maitri*) and the sentiments kindred to it that, among all the relationships of human life, we may find in its rudimentary form at least the emotional equivalent of the intellectual understanding of the doctrine of no-self.

The emotion of friendship manifests in daily life as a readiness to sacrifice one's own pleasure and profit for the pleasure and profit of another, as a willingness to go where and do what is agreeable to him rather than to oneself; while at its most exalted height it manifests as that supreme act of self-abnegation whereof it is written "Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friend"—a text whereto more than one Jataka might serve as commentary. But behind every manifestation of friendship, of *maitri*, from the lowest to the highest, lies, as the heart-beat behind the rhythm of the pulses, the central psychological fact of the more or less radical denial of the selfish individual will; and it is due to the presence of this partial negation of selfhood, of the joyous merging of one's own being in the being of

another, that friendship and its kindred emotions are so richly endowed with potentialities for spiritual development.

If, however, those potentialities are to be actualized, it is necessary to cultivate, during the formative period of one's spiritual career at least, the friendship of the good rather than of the wicked. For with those whom we love we shall naturally tend to associate as often and as intimately as possible, delighting to go where they go and do what they do, which means that if our friends are slaves of vice their company will ultimately make us vicious, while if they are servants of virtue we may by their example and influence one day become virtuous. It is for this reason that the Buddha declared so emphatically that encouragement in doing good and discouragement from doing evil deeds was one of the most important characteristics of a true friend, and for the same reason the great philosophers and moralists of classical antiquity maintained that since virtue was the basis of friendship it was a relation which could subsist only between virtuous persons, friendship without nobility of character, purity of motive and unfailing mutual helpfulness in all the vicissitudes of life being hardly deserving of the name.

All desire the good, but few understand in what the good consists, with the paradoxical consequence that the vast majority of people spend the whole of their lives in breathless pursuit of things which they do not really want. But one who is so fortunate as to find a friend who not only understands what is truly good, but who tries to realize it himself and to persuade others to realize it, discovers at the same time that by renouncing his own will, by giving up his egoistic desires for the apparent goods of the world, for the sake of doing what his friend wishes him to do, he loses his own ignorant will and gains in its stead an enlightened will—a will set on that which in his inmost being he really desires—and realizes that in bondage to the will of a virtuous friend resides the secret of perfect spiritual freedom. The ideal of 'the good friend' (*kalyana mitra*) in the ordinary social acceptance of the term now passes over into that of 'the good friend' in an exalted spiritual sense, for the difference between the two is not one of kind but only of degree. As his understanding of what is ethically good in the everyday affairs of human life deepens into an understanding of what is spiritually desirable in the more complex issues confronting the soul, as his comprehension of truth ranges with wider and ever wider sweep from the particular to the universal, the mundane to the supramundane, Samsara to Nirvana, the good friend becomes by insensible degrees the trusted counsellor, the

trusted counsellor the spiritual guide or guru, the guru the Bodhisattva and the Bodhisattva the Buddha, just as among the colours of the rainbow red merges imperceptibly into orange, orange into yellow, yellow into green and so on. The Buddha is described in the Scriptures as the Good Friend, as the Elder Brother of Mankind; and such He indeed is in the highest sense of these words. For His love (*maitri*) for all sentient beings, His understanding (*prajna*) of in what consists their highest good, and His resolve (*pranidhana*) to help them in every possible way to realize it, are not limited and contingent in character like those exhibited by mundane friends but, on the contrary, unlimited and absolute.

“As above, so below”. By virtue of the indispensable element of self-negation which it involves the relation of friendship is able to symbolize in human and social form the submission of the will of the disciple to that of the guru, just as this relation in its turn is for the same reason able to symbolize the annihilation of the individual in the cosmic will, the joyous submission of the soul to the moral and spiritual order of the universe. Similarly, the selfless affection which we feel for an ordinary friend is symbolical of the devotion with which we regard the Good Friend of humanity, the Buddha; for just as it is out of affection for our friend that we do his will rather than our own, so it is out of devotion to the Buddha that we give up our ignorant and egoistic will in order to conform ourselves to His enlightened and selfless will as expressed in the Dharma which He taught. Friendship is thus of the profoundest possible significance. Through it we perceive “as in a glass darkly” the pure and tranquil lineaments of Enlightenment itself. It affords us yet another example of the symbolic nature of human relationships, of the sacramental character of life itself, teaching that spiritual insight does not consist in seeing new sights with the old eyes but in seeing the old sights with new eyes, just as ‘religious’ life is not so much a different kind of life as the same old life lived in a new way. We discover the emotional equivalents of spiritual truths by perceiving the spiritual significance of our ordinary emotional experiences. By learning to see our good friend as the Buddha we are eventually able to discover the Buddha as our Good Friend, and by accustoming ourselves to prefer the will of another to our own we are able gradually to prepare ourselves for that utter annihilation of egoistic will in the Dharma of Selflessness which is the essence of Enlightenment.

Metteya Bodhisattva—The Coming Buddha

By F. L. Woodward

WHEN a Fully-Enlightened One has passed away from our world, a Teacher of Devas and mankind, His place is taken by another sage who for countless ages has been preparing himself to take the great step of Sammā-sambuddha. Gotama Sākyamuni brought the Light, and is referred to as the Light of the World. In one passage only of the Pali Tipitaka He refers to His immediate successor, Metteya, in these words:—

“Now in those days, monks, there shall arise in the world an Exalted One by name Metteya, an Arahant, a Fully-Enlightened One, endowed with wisdom and righteousness, a Happy One, a World-Knower, a peerless charioteer of men fit to be tamed, the Teacher of Devas and mankind, Exalted One, a Buddha, just as I myself have here and now arisen in the world... He of his own abnormal powers shall realize and make known the world, the worlds of the Devas, with their Maras, their Brahmas, the host of recluses and brahmins, of Devas and mankind alike, even as I do now.

“He shall proclaim Dhamma, lovely in its beginning, lovely midway and lovely in the end thereof. He shall make known the wholly perfect life of righteousness in all its purity, both in the spirit and the letter thereof, even as I do now.

“He shall lead an Order of Monks numbering many thousands, even as I do now lead an Order of Monks numbering many hundreds.....”

These words refer to His final coming on earth as Buddha Supreme, and at a period very far remote. Meanwhile He is supposed to be dwelling in the World of the Thirty-three (Tāvātimsa-devaloka) Great Devas.

What is the meaning of Metteya (Sanskrit Maitreya)? It is The Kindly One. Metta is love based on compassion for all; love, not in the sense of the Latin *amor*, Greek *erōs* or *philia*, Pali *pema*, which words denote a condition of emotion which is mutual attraction, selfish affection, sexual love.

It is spiritual *goodwill*, unity, forgetfulness of self. The Bodhisattva will bring in its highest sense the bodhi-metta, wisdom-love, the second aspect of the Trinity of Will, Wisdom and Intellectual Activity. We may call the Buddha's message the *will-to-good* which is Dhamma, and the Bodhisattva's message, the *goodwill-to-men*.

Buddhists are familiar with the *Brahma-vihārā*, the four ways of meditation or ways of living with Brahma or the Brahma-life, a form of meditation constantly enjoined by the Master, and said to have been first used by the disciple Assaji, who first introduced Sāriputta to the

Master. In this meditation one is urged to suffuse all beings, everywhere and always, with loving thoughts of *metta* and compassion. So much for the word *metta*.

Who is the Metteya, the Lord of Love? When and how will He appear? We have many a fable in the Pali *Jātakā*, or Birth Stories composed upon certain verses, to explain them. In these the Buddha Gotama Sākyamuni is represented as appearing through the far-off animal stages of man in various ways, and setting an example of the virtues to be obtained before becoming a Full Buddha.

According to the famous Mahayana sage, Ariyasanga,¹ the Bodhisattva works on the life evolving within the form (*rupa*), and implants in our minds religious ideas, develops philosophical concepts in individuals and races, and ever aims at the advancement of the human race, for He stands at the head of what may be called the *Bodhi-rasmi* the ray of Love-Wisdom.

It is said in the *Anāgata-Vamsa*, to which I refer below, that He was born as the son of the Raja Ajātasattu, in the time of the Buddha. He has been waiting a long time for this return, but wars and tumults have prevented it. The terrible troubles of the last thirty-five years may be regarded as similar to the eruptions of the human body, which must throw off long accumulated evil humours before health can be resumed.

In what nation will He appear? Doubtless He will come when He thinks that the time is ripe and when the world is at peace again and more united. Surely He will appear in that nation which will best welcome Him. Buddhists are apt to think that they themselves are always reborn in a Buddhist, perhaps in an Eastern land, and that the Bodhisattva will be also. It is said, however, that in his *last* birth the Buddha-to-be is always born in Jambudipa, rose-apple-land, which includes Ceylon. But I believe the word really refers to the whole planet.

Certain nations have never heard of Him, others would reject Him as unorthodox, and would not recognise His greatness. In what shape would He appear? Probably not as a new-born babe, like Krishna, but overshadowing some disciple who would be worthy. He might even influence some great statesman or scientist, some artist, even some great man of business. Such now-a-days have greater influence than monks and priests, who have a particular view or *ditthi*. With Him it is certain would appear some great disciples.

¹ Contemporary perhaps with Buddhaghosa, about 400-500 A.D.

As to the word Bodhisattva and His nature Buddhists regard the attainment of the Fourth Path, Arahantship, as the goal of humanity. It is not the full goal, but means release from compulsory rebirth in the ocean of *samsāra* or endless round of existence. The later *Mahāyāna* (Great Vehicle or Way) Buddhism is more comprehensive than the *Hnayana* (Lesser Vehicle or Way) Buddhism. The latter denies the reality of the self (Personality or *pañca-kkhandha*), the former denies *all* phenomenal reality, and lays stress on spiritual energy both for self and others. To seek swift release from *bhava* (again-becoming) is not its aim, as it is that of the Theravādins who make Arahantship the supreme goal. The *asekha* (Master) aims at Buddhahood itself, not just to be a perfect saint. *Sammā-sambuddha*-hood is, of course, a different thing. There can be only one at a time. Hence in *Mahāyāna* *all* such aspirants are called Bodhisattvas, and such go far beyond the stage of Arahantship. Our Buddha Sākyamuni always calls Himself Arahant, but must have attained that stage ages ago. These Bodhisattvas-to-be, therefore, do not cut off relationship with our world, but take part in the manifold life of human beings without being defiled by such action. They are like the lotus-leaf off which the drops of water slip or remain thereon without defiling it. As regards the arahant it may be said that on completing the fourth stage of the Path a man's long-cherished ego vanishes, and he is henceforth a flame of power, freed from compulsion and free to go where he chooses, for his karma is finished. He is *vimutto*, and exists as a free being.

It may be objected that, as there is only one Bodhisattva in thousands of years, what chance have the millions of aspirants to become one? Well, Time is infinite, and a freed man has many choices. This little planet of our humanity is a mere speck in the solar system, and the solar system itself is just a bubble in the Cosmic system. Though the Buddha has retired, He has not deserted us. Freemasons will understand when I say: The Buddha is now the Immediate Past Master of the World-Lodge, always at hand to give advice, and the Bodhisattva is now the Right Worshipful Master in the Chair, with His senior officers and staff chosen by Himself.

To the *Mahāyānists* the Bodhisattva is always with us and waiting to be welcomed. Teacher of Devas and mankind, he is above all formal religions but presides over them, not being responsible for the many errors of those who profess and teach such religions. He Himself aims at being a *Sammāsambuddha*, and (though it may seem strange to say it),

He needs our help to attain it. How? We can supply the base on which He can build. We can supply the goodwill and that state of harmony with all that lives, feeble though our efforts may seem at the present time.

In the Mahāyāna scriptures the vow of one aiming to be a Bodhisattva is thus given:—

“In the presence of my master and of all the Buddhas I give rise to the thought of enlightenment. To become a Perfect Buddha I apply the merit of my confession, of my refuge in the Triple Gem and my aspiration for Enlightenment.

“In this world of beings, when no Buddha is in the world, may I be their refuge, shelter, safety and island (*dipa*, perhaps ‘lamp’). May I carry them across the ocean of *samsara*. I do adopt all beings as mother, father, brothers, sons and sisters. For the bliss of beings I will cultivate charity, morals, patience (*dana, sila, khanti*) striving, meditation, knowledge and skill to release. I am a coming Buddha. May my teacher so accept me.”

Thus he comes to treat his neighbour as himself (the injunction to the Christians). His aim is to help all beings until each one is delivered from *samsara*. He does not take upon himself the sins of the whole world in a literal sense of suffering for them, but, free from evil Himself, he urges others to save themselves by His example and attain the *bodhi*.

It is on the great festivals of full-moon days that we can help the Bodhisattva and be helped by Him. I would stress the importance of observing full-moon days, twelve in number. At the Wesak Festival, at the moment of full-moon for India, it is said that the Buddha shows Himself in the sky in His old form in *padma* or lotus posture to those who are able to be present at a certain spot near the Sacred Lake of Manosaravara, north of the Himalayas, and pours out His power through the Bodhisattva, who distributes it through the world by his disciples. On the Âsālha Festival of the July Full-moon the Bodhisattva is said to recite the Buddha's First Sermon to assembled disciples, of which we have still an outline in *Samyutta-Nikāya*, and probably comments upon it. In Buddhist lands the united goodwill of the people on those days can be felt as a tangible influence; a higher standard of life prevails, and the sacred day is not made an excuse for extra eating and drinking. A particular planetary influence is also felt on those days, missed by the movable feast days of Western religions. So then it is to the Himalayas that we may lift up our eyes. ‘I will lift up mine eyes to the Hills,’ says the poet, ‘whence cometh my help.’

It remains to be asked: 'Who will recognise Him when he comes?' Let me quote from *Anāgata-vamsa* (Story of the Future), a late Pali work professing to be the answer of Sākyamuni to Sāriputta, who asks: "What sort of hero is the one who shall follow Thee?" The Buddha then replies, giving a list of names of the three Buddhas who preceded Himself in this kalpa or world-period, namely Kakusandha, Konāgama, and Kassapa, and continues, "after me comes Metteya in this blessed kalpa, the Chief of men. After Metteya are to come Rāmā, Pasenadi, and (in the next period) Abhibhu, Dighasoni, Sankacca, Subha, Todeyya, Nālāgiri, and Palaleyya—these ten future Buddhas in due course shall attain."

And who shall *not* behold Him when he comes for the last time? Those who create differences, people like Devadatta; heretics and slanderers, self-torturers and the like. Who shall behold Him? Those who give gifts, keep the precepts, observe the Sabbaths, do their duties, plant trees and gardens for the people, build bridges, clear the roads and dig wells; those who further the Buddha-dhamma, who honour parents and elders; in short, those who definitely seek the welfare of others, forgetting self, shall hear the Dhamma of Metteya and attain their goal.

Let me then in this my eightieth year conclude with the aspiration of the old sage, Buddhaghosa, who thus ends his labours on his great work, *Visuddhi-Magga*:—

*In my last birth may I behold
Metteya, the sage-bull, world-chief,
That Lord who seeks the happiness
Of every creature. May I hear
That wise one preach the Dhamma true;
Winning the topmost fruit may I make clear
The Teaching of the Conqueror.*

(Reprinted from *The New Lanka*, Colombo.)



Introduction of Buddhism into Tibet, 11

By Dr. George Roerich

IN the reign of king Ti-song de-tsen Chinese Buddhist monks again returned to Tibet and resumed their preaching of Ch'an, or meditative discipline, which taught that in order to reach the stage of a fully enlightened Buddha, the adept was to concentrate on meditation only. They disregarded dogmatic teaching, and based their discipline on mystic meditation. Their preaching evidently met with some success, for the Tibetan king and the followers of the Acharya Shantarakshita were faced with the necessity of combating the spread of the meditative school. They decided to invite from Nepal Shantarakshita's disciple Kamalashila, a prominent follower of the Madhyamika-Svatantra school. It is then that took place the famous debate between Kamalashila and the Chinese Buddhist monks which was won by Kamalashila. The Tibetan king then promulgated an order that henceforth all Tibetan monks were to follow the monistic system of Arya-Nagarjuna, *i.e.*, the Madhyamika doctrine, which from then onwards became the philosophic background of most of the Tibetan Buddhist schools. It is interesting to note that Chinese MSS discovered in the hidden library of the Tun-huang cave-temples confirm the historicity of the debate. The influence of the Chinese meditation school is still discernible among the old Tibetan sects.

Nepal played a pre-eminent role in the propagation of the Buddhist thought in Tibet. Through Nepal lay the mountain trails followed by Tibetan scholars in their quest for knowledge, and by Indian Buddhist scholars who journeyed to Tibet. In Nepal Tibetan scholars used to make a prolonged stay in order to accustom themselves to the hot and humid climate before descending into the plains of India. The Life-stories of Tibetan teachers are full of such accounts. Here in Nepal, Tibetans learned the rudiments of Sanskrit grammar, and this enabled them to continue their studies at the great centres of Buddhist learning—Nalanda, Vikramashila (founded by Dharmapāla, 770-815) and Otantapuri (founded by Gopala). Within less than two centuries the Indian and Nepalese Buddhist scholars and their Tibetan colleagues accomplished a truly remarkable and unique task—the creation of a literary idiom able to render the abstruse thought of the Sanskrit originals. This transformation was achieved at the cost of a tremendous intellectual effort which can only be paralleled by the effort of the

Mongol translators who between 1624 and 1742 A.D. translated into Mongol the entire Tibetan Tripitaka.

The translators of the Buddhist Canon into Tibetan faced a tremendous task, for besides acquiring a working knowledge of Sanskrit and Tibetan, they were forced to evolve a new literary style. One can easily imagine the manifold difficulties that lay in their path. Tibet is a mountainous country, and frequently different mountain valleys speak different dialects. On the whole it can be said that the literary form of Tibetan speech was based on the dialect of the Tsang province of Tibet, which is nearest to Nepal. Towards the beginning of the IXth century Tibetan translators were already able to codify the rules of translation from Sanskrit into Tibetan. The translators had to follow, of course, the rules laid down by the early Tibetan translators and embodied in the Sanskrit-Tibetan dictionaries, two of which are included in the Tengyur Collection of the Tripitaka, which enjoined translators not to change the order of words in verses, unless this was absolutely necessary. When translating Sanskrit prose into Tibetan, the translators were permitted to give a free translation of the Sanskrit original, but were explicitly forbidden to coin new terms. When this was unavoidable, they were directed to report the matter to a special Tribunal, called the "Tribunal of the Doctrine of the Blessed One", attached to the royal palace. The translation of Tantric works could be undertaken with the king's permission only. These rules were promulgated by king Ti-de song-tsen (Ral-pa-can, 817-36 A.D.) in the palace of Hon-jang-do, situated South of Lha-sa, in 826 A.D., and have been followed by all Tibetan translators ever since. The result of this stupendous effort was the creation of a philosophic language and style which made possible the translation of Buddhist shastras into Tibetan.

An Indian shastra first of all frames a special terminology for the concepts with which it operates and establishes clear-cut definitions of these concepts. The Tibetans, who followed the Indian tradition, have carried this care of minutely precise definitions to an extreme, almost artistic, perfection. Therefore the study of Tibetan sources has greatly contributed to our understanding of Buddhism. Some of the Tibetan scholars who proceeded to India excelled in their studies, and some even became famous as Sanskrit scholars. For example, Tsa-mi Sang-gye trak-pa, a native of Mi-nyag in North-eastern Tibet, who became a famous Sanskrit scholar. He spent twenty years at the great monastic college of Vikramashila, and died there from fever. In his time he was

considered to be one of the greatest panditas of Vikramashila. He was the author of several books in Sanskrit. At present there exists still a translation into Tibetan of his Mahakala-stotra, and some other short compositions.

The study of Sanskrit continued in Tibet even in later times. The famous Je-tsun Taranatha translated into Tibetan parts of the Ramayana and the first two chapters of the Bhagavad-gita. Unfortunately, the block prints of these translations are not extant, and were probably destroyed by fire during the destruction of Jo-nang-pa monasteries in the XVIIth century. Good Sanskrit scholars are known to have lived in the XVIIIth century, among them the first Jam-yang She-pa, the Incarnate Lama of the great bLa-brang monastery in North-East Tibet.

Buddhism was to suffer yet another eclipse in the Land of Snows. In 836/7 A. D. King Ti-de Song-tsen Ral-pa-can was killed by some members of the feudal nobility, adherents of the old shamanistic Bon. He was succeeded by his younger brother Dar-ma U-dum-tsen, a partisan of the old faith. The reign of Dar-ma was marked by discord and revolts which broke out in various parts of the country. The king and his advisors began to persecute Buddhism. Temples and monasteries were closed and destroyed, translators were ordered to discontinue the translation of Buddhist canonical texts, and Buddhist monks were ordered to become butchers and hunters. However, this new persecution did not last long. In 841 A. D. king Lang Dar-ma was shot dead with an arrow by the hermit monk Lha-lung Pal-gyi dorje.

We now know that the eclipse of the Buddhist Doctrine in Central Tibet was by no means total and that some Buddhist monks must have remained in the country after the persecution of 841 A. D. The reappearance of the Doctrine can be best described as a revival. Buddhism remained unaffected in Western Tibet and in the Eastern provinces of the country, in Amdo and Kham. We are told that a number of Buddhist monks from Central Tibet fled West and North-East, to Amdo. In Amdo some of the fugitive monks ordained a certain Gewa Rab-se, whose disciples were to start the Buddhist revival in Central Tibet. About 978 A. D. a group of his disciples known as the "Six Men from U and Tsang" inaugurated the revival of Buddhism in Central Tibet. From that date onwards the position occupied by Buddhism remained unchallenged. After the dissolution of the Tibetan Empire, which followed the reign of king Dar-ma U-dum-tsen, branch dynasties established themselves in outlying provinces which once formed

part of the Tibetan Empire. In Western Tibet a powerful local dynasty established itself in the province of Guge-Nga-ri, and contributed greatly to the revival of Buddhism in that province and in Central Tibet. The Western provinces of Tibet were under the strong cultural influence of Kashmir. After the persecution of Buddhism in Kashmir and Gilgit, in the Xth century, numerous Buddhist monks and artisans fled to Western Tibet and established themselves in Guge. Fugitive monks from Eastern Turkestan also found their way into Western Tibet. Ancient monasteries on the territory of the former Guge kingdom still preserve valuable art objects dating from that period. Thus Western Tibet became a place of refuge for Buddhist monks and this greatly fostered the spread of Buddhism. Under king Lha bla-ma Ye-She-od, Indian Buddhist scholars began to arrive. Under the reign of his successor Lha-lde was invited the great scholar Subhūtiśrīśānti, better known by the name of Kha-che Pan-chen, or the Great Pandita of Kashmir, who translated a number of important Buddhist texts, belonging to the Pra-jñāpāramitā class. To this period belongs the great translator Rin-chen zang-po (958-1055) who studied Sanskrit in Kashmir, and after his return to Western Tibet, established an active school of translators of Buddhist texts. In his 85th year the Great Translator Rin-chen zang-po met the great Atīsha who came to Ngari in 1042 A. D. and reformed the Doctrine. In 1076 A. D. the revivalist movement culminated in a great Religious Council held at the monastery of Tho-ling in the upper Sutelj valley, in which participated most of the great Tripitakadharas or scholars from Central and Eastern Tibet. This Religious Council marks the end of a period during which Tibet saw the revival and reestablishment of Buddhism.

Through Buddhism, Tibet came into contact with Indian culture, and science. Tibetan and Indian scholars besides translating Buddhist canonical texts, translated a number of ancient Indian works on medicine, poetry, art, astronomy and dramas; many of these treatises have been incorporated into the Tibetan Canon. Through Buddhism Tibet contacted Indian art, and Tibetan art became a province of Indian art. The Nepalese school of art, itself a branch of the great Pala art of North-East India, contributed greatly to the creation of Tibetan religious art. The Tsang province of Tibet became the centre of this new religious art. Some of the early paintings belonging to this school immitate closely the style of Nepalese paintings. Nepalese influence was pre-eminent from the VIIIth to the XIVth century.

We know that Mongol Emperors invited Nepalese artists to their court. A-ni-ko, invited in 1267 by Khublai Qan, founded a school of artists in China, among his disciples being the well-known sculptor Liu Yuan (1264-97). Nepalese artists were employed in the building of the famous temples of Wu-t'ai-shan in the Shan-hsi province of North China, and even in recent times Nepalese master-builders and artisans were employed in the building of the Ser-khang Byams-pa temple in the great monastery of La-brang in Amdo. In Western Tibet art was strongly influenced by the Kashmir art school of IXth century (the Avantipura school) which powerfully influenced the art of Guge (X-XIth centuries A. D.) and that of Khotan in Central Asia.

Such is the story of the advent of Buddhism in Tibet. No doubt future research will fill up the gaps in our knowledge, but the general outline as it stands now will, I think, remain. The event will always stand as an example of a remarkable transformation achieved by a cultural revolution. An event which besides its cultural significance, exercised a powerful influence on the whole course of Central Asian history.

(concluded)



EAST AND WEST

TWO further aspects of such trends [of thought] still treasured by Oriental tradition may here be noted, firstly, the sharp differentiation of the real spirituality, to be essentially defined in terms of knowledge, of *gnosis*, from all things pertaining to morality and ethics; secondly, just the opposite to that fancied "Asiatic contemplative inertia" of which many Westerners speak with a contempt only equalled by their ignorance. According to the Oriental teaching to which we are referring, spiritual knowledge and awakening are always connected with "power" as their natural consequence—power over both nature and men.

At last and as a whole the magic circle of Western "humanism" is broken through by the general view of life afforded by the traditional East. This view widens all spiritual horizons; earthly birth is no longer considered as the beginning of conscious being, just as death is no longer deemed to be a significant and tragic event, beyond which there is either a void, or the vague foreshadowing of religious mythology. Through such an outlook transcendence can be brought within the framework of immanence, so that reality is not evaded but transfigured, the one being completed by the other. Such is the East; and it recalls a reality once known also to the West, even though less intensely and universally, before secularisation and rationalism had the better of it.

—J. Evola.

Lotuses of the Mahayana, No. 14

**"The Path of Good Wishes" of the
Buddha Samantabhadra**

THEN the all-good Buddha, Kuntu-bZangpo, uttered these good wishes whereby the sentient beings of the Samsara cannot but be saved:

(1)

"Ho ! All which is visible and invisible, whether Samsara or Nirvana, is at base one (that is Sunyata) with two paths (Avidya and Vidya) and two ends (Samsara and Nirvana). These (paths and ends) are the wondrous play of Ignorance (Avidya) and Knowledge (Vidya). By the power of these good wishes of Kuntu-bZangpo, may all attain Buddhahood in the Dharma-dhatu.

(2)

"The Foundation of all is uncreated and independent, uncompounded and beyond Mind and Speech. Of It neither the word Nirvana nor Samsara may be said. To realize It is to be a Buddha, and not to realize It is to stray into Samsaric being. May all sentient beings in the three Regions realize this indescribable Basis of all.

(3)

"I Kuntu-bZangpo knowing the Basis which is without cause to be self-produced, did not sully It by the thought that It was without or within. It is not obscured by the darkness of unconsciousness. No faulty notion of self darkens It.

(4)

"For those who are in the state of true knowledge there is no fear, were even all the three Regions to be destroyed. They are not attached to the objects of sense enjoyment. To the self-subsisting experience beyond ideas there is no material form or the five poisons (of Lust, Anger, Infatuation, Pride, and Jealousy). Then from clear unobstructed Mind come five Wisdoms though they are in essence one, from which are produced the five Buddhas. From the going forth of the Wisdom of the five Buddhas the forty peaceful Buddhas are produced.

(5)

"From the shining forth of the Power of the five Buddhas come the sixty blood-drinking (that is wrathful) Devatas. In Me there has been no error in straying away from Knowledge of the Foundation. As I am the Buddha, may all sentient beings in the three Regions by the power of this My good wish gain the great wisdom through the self-produced Mind.

(6)

"There will be no end of my Avataras, who will appear in inconceivable millions of numbers and shapes, and who will adopt various methods suitable for the control of every kind of being. By the power of My grace and good wishes, may all sentient beings of the three Regions escape from the six Samsaric worlds.

(7)

"Beings who aforesaid erred, did so because they knew not the Foundation. They were overpowered by the unconscious dark state. This was the cause of ignorance and error. Immersed in ignorance and obscured by delusion, the Knower (Mind) was afearful and confused. Then came the idea "I" and "Other" and hatred. As these gained force a continuous chain of Samsaric evolution was produced. Through that the five poisons of the obscuring passions of lust, anger, covetousness, delusion, jealousy increased, and an endless stream of evil Karma issued forth. Therefore, as the root source of error in sentient beings is unconscious ignorance, may all by the power of the good wishes of Me the Buddha, attain the clear pure Mind inherent in every being.

(8)

"The root-ignorance is the abyssal ground of the Knower's unconsciousness. The other ignorance is that which regards self and others to be different and separate. These two forms of ignorance are the root cause of error in all sentient beings. By the power of these good wishes of Me, the Buddha, may the gloom of unconsciousness, which obscures all beings in the Samsara, be dispelled. May they be cleared of their error which regards beings as separate from one another, and may their inherent pure Mind be realized.

(9)

"The thought which regards beings as separate begets a hesitating doubting state. A subtle feeling of attachment arises which on being allowed to gain force gradually resolves itself into strong attachment and a craving for food, clothing, dwellings, wealth, and friends—the five objects of enjoyment—lovers, wives and husbands. These are the chief errors of worldly people. There is no end to the action flowing from the ideas of dualism. The fruit of these cravings is birth as a Preta, who is tormented by the pangs of hunger and thirst. By these, My good wishes, may all those beings, who suffer from their desires, strive not studiously to avoid them, nor (weakly) to give way to them, but to let the knower (Mind) take its own course and attain its own (exalted) position. May it realize the discriminating wisdom.

(10)

"From the idea of something external, there arises a subtle feeling of dread which moves the Knower at first faintly. As the feeling gains strength, it resolves itself into a vague sense of enmity, and the thought "it will kill me" arises. When this hatred produces its evil Karma, burning in Hell becomes intense. By the power of the wishes of Me, the Buddha, may all the sentient beings of the six Lokas, when they feel great anger arising in their mind, learn neither to avoid it studiously, nor to give way to it (weakly), but to leave it to itself and let the Mind attain its own (exalted) position.

(11)

"From pride which puffs up the Mind is produced a feeling of Contempt for others, together with overweening self-conceit. This leads to disputes and quarrels. When these bear Karmic fruit, there is birth in the Deva world. From there they fall, suffering Hell after death. By the power of these My good wishes, may all such as are given to pride know how to detach therefrom the Knower, thus letting the feeling alone and the Mind attain its own (exalted) position. May it realize the truth that all is one, that each is (in essence) alike.

(12)

"From the propensity to regard oneself and others as different arises the desire to praise oneself and depreciate others; an act which leads to

suffering. When the wish to vie and fight with others is strengthened, there is birth in the Asuraloka, wherein beings are ever engaged in wounding and killing each other. This hurls them into Hell. By the power of these good wishes of Me, the Buddha, may all such beings cease to look upon each other as enemies. Let the feeling of enmity alone by itself and let the Knower attain its own (exalted) position. May it realize the unobstructed power of Divine Service. Lack of intelligence and memory, indifference, distraction, being overpowered by sleep and forgetfulness, swoon and sloth, are all forms of stupidity leading to birth in the brute world. By the power of these good wishes of Me, the Buddha, may the overpowering gloom of stupidity be dispelled and lit up by the rays of clear consciousness. All sentient beings of the three worlds are in their essence alike to Me, the Buddha. Unconsciousness is the cause of these errors. At present they are engaged in useless actions. The six acts aforesaid are but dreams and delusions. I am the most ancient Buddha that My incarnations may control the beings of the six Regions. By the power of the good wishes of Me, Samantabhadra, (Kintu-bZangpo), may all sentient beings, without exception, attain Buddhahood in the Dharmakaya."

—*Thogmahi Sans-rGyas Kuntu-bZangpo or
sMon Lam-stops-po-che.*

(Adapted from Kazi Dawa Samdup's translation,
Tantrik Texts, Vol. VII)



Poem

By Bhikshu Sangharakshita

*Lost in these yellowing Autumn woods, I see
A Buddha seated under every tree;
And each white peak, and each dark violet hill,
Seems a giant Buddha meditating still.
So poised this earth, so quiet its sky above,
They seem like Metteyya deep in thoughts of love.*

Members' Section.

The Land of Visions

By Sachindra Coomar Singh

GANGTOK, situated far, very far from the perturbed atmosphere of the urban world, far from the world of strife and conflict, in the heart of the Himalayas, guarded by the dread heights of precipices, is undeniably the paradise of poets and artists.

When, with the glimmering dawn, the blushing rays of the rising sun touch the snow-bound ranges—it looks so beautiful, so dazzling and so divine that the imagination of mortals can hardly conceive such grandeur. In the evening, when the purple sun-beams slowly fade in the Western horizon—even as faint reminiscences plunge into the ocean of forgetfulness—Gangtok displays singular beauty unchallenged by any hill-country.

All around the small town are sweet-smiling villages with their laughing harvest. When evening draws near, those green rustic fields look like deep green seas. And when the gentle breeze begins to blow the paddy-plants sway this way and that as if they were showing to mankind the rhythm of life.

Amidst the deep green pine trees, those tiny red-roofed houses look charming. Those rushing waterfalls, small dimpling streams producing music—that sounds so divine, and these deep blue mountains with groves of wild flowers that look like jewels on green velvet—they are all so heavenly that it seems as if we were in sleep's dim wonderland. There is a highway that leads to the interior of Tibet—the land of mysteries. We see the caravan of mules going to and coming from Tibet. The backs of these poor creatures are always fully loaded; their necks are adorned with small tinkling bells that make strange sounds as they move on, and they kick up the dust in clouds as they trot along—thus creating a queer sort of atmosphere.

And the people there are so simple that they know nothing of the world outside and the treachery, jealousy and widespread hatred therein. They are always sincere and true and are beyond the reach of these evil things. They are simply confined to their own homes, their lands—there they live, earn their livelihood and spend life in splendid isolation. According to the modern theories they may be called backward; but so far as their simplicity and sincerity are concerned they have never been in question. The so-called modern

people ought at least to learn these things from them. They are very hard working, healthy and vigorous. They remain contented with what they have and do not run after luxury and pleasure.

The next attraction is the big monasteries—gompas, as we call them. They are full of reverential atmosphere. Incense is burned and butter-lamps are lit in front of the altars. The red-robed lamas, with their peak-like caps, offer prayers before the image of the Buddha; and when they blow the long cannon-like trumpets—sounding so melancholy and so mournful, our hearts begin to throb—everything seems to move. And as they beat the drums—it seems as if they are trying to shake the whole universe with their beatings. The interior and exterior of the gompas are so beautifully painted that they suffice to show forth the hidden artistic talents of the Tibetans. Inside the gompas the atmosphere is so full of devotion that even a wicked heart will realize that there indeed is the Master.

To the people of the stifling plains of India, it is a dreamland—a real heaven on earth. These poor people heave sighs of relief when they leave the remorseless heat of the Indian sun, and enter this land with new life in them. The gurgling sounds of the twirling machines in the factories cannot penetrate this part of the world. From the land of hatred and competition they step into this visionary land of solace and tranquillity. There one finds true peace and consolation. When the cool restless winds sweep over the hillside in that quiet and still atmosphere—a plainsman would forget everything about the cities of the plains.

Such is this land situated in a remote corner of the earth. It is a tempting fruit in the Garden of Nature. It is a mysterious realm of imagination—the abode of dreams. A poet would well say that it is a forlorn region of unseen and unadmired beauty.

* * * * *

*Plucking chrysanthemums along the east fence;
Gazing in silence at the southern hills;
The birds flying home in pairs
Through the soft mountain air of dusk—
In these things there is a deep meaning,
But when we are about to express it
We suddenly forget the words.*

—From the Chinese.

News and Notes

Religious Celebrations.—On Wednesday, 18th July, being the Full Moon Day, a religious service was conducted in the Y. M. B. A. Shrine in commemoration of the preaching of the Lord Buddha's First Sermon, the celebrated Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta. The programme included worship of the Triple Gem (Buddha, Dharma, Sangha), a discourse on the Four Noble Truths and Noble Eightfold Path by Ven. Bhikshu Sangharakshita, distribution of prasada, and devotional songs. A similar Full Moon Day celebration was held on Friday, 17th August. On Sunday, 26th August a paritrana (protection) ceremony was conducted by Ven. Bhikshu Sangharakshita and Rev. Thupten Chhodags, and holy water and sacred thread distributed to all present.

Weekly Lectures.—Four public lectures were delivered by Ven. Bhikshu Sangharakshita in Kalimpong and Darjeeling during the month of August. On Saturday, 4th August he spoke on "Literature and Life" in the Town Hall, Kalimpong. Sri N. S. Chettri presided. On Saturday, 11th August, he addressed the staff and students of the Government College, Darjeeling, on "The Purpose of Education". The Principal of the College, Dr. Majumdar, presided at the meeting,

at the conclusion of which members of the audience asked several questions, to which the speaker gave suitable replies. After speaking on "The Meaning of Dharma" in the Brahmo Samaj Hall; Darjeeling, on Tuesday, 14th August, the Ven. Bhikshu delivered a lecture on "Religion and Education" in the Town Hall, Kalimpong, on Saturday, 18th August, under the presidency of Upasaka Sri Joseph E. Cann. Attendance at these lectures varied considerably, but most members of the audience appeared to appreciate the speaker's attempt to show the connection between religion and the various other spheres of human activity.

Maha Bodhi Society's Gift.—We offer our most cordial thanks to the Maha Bodhi Society of India for their generous gift of one set of their current publications, comprizing fifty-two books and pamphlets, for the Y. M. B. A. Library and Reading Room. Our special thanks are due to Dr. M. R. Soft, Vice-President of the Society, owing to whose exertions on our behalf this gift was made.

Donations.—The Y. M. B. A. (India) acknowledges with thanks receipt of the following donations:—Mr. Mingyur Tsering, Darjeeling, Rs. 50; Sm. Bishnumaya Pradhan, Rs. 5; Mr. Y. Sadu Tsang, Rs. 100.

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Stepping-Stones

(नेपाली विभाग)

वर्ष २

सेप्टेम्बर, १९५१

अंक ५

बुद्ध-वाणी

१ । रागका दृष्टिले जीवन बिताउने, इन्द्रियलाई असंयत राख्ने, भोजनको मात्रा नजान्ने, अलसी औ वीर्यहीन मानिसलाई, वृक्षलाई हावाले नष्ट गरे झैं, पापले (मारले) नष्ट पाछै ।

—धम्मपद, श्लोक ७ ।

२ । वैराग्यका दृष्टिले जीवन बिताउने, इन्द्रियलाई पूरा संयत राख्ने, भोजनको मात्रा जान्ने, श्रद्धायुक्त औ वीर्ययुक्त मानिसलाई, शैल पर्वतलाई हावाले नष्ट गर्ने नसके भैं, पापले (मारले) नष्ट गर्ने सक्दैन ।

—धम्मपद, श्लोक ८ ।

३ । मनलाई स्वच्छ नबनाई, इन्द्रिय दमन नगरी, सत्य ज्ञान नपाई काषाय-वस्त्र धारण गर्नु योग्य छैन ।

—धम्मपद, श्लोक ९ ।

४ । मनलाई स्वच्छ राख्ने, शील पालन गर्ने, इन्द्रिय दमन गर्ने, सत्यले युक्त मानिस मात्र काषाय-वस्त्र धारण गर्ने अधिकारी हुन्छ ।

—धम्मपद, श्लोक १० ।

५ । असारलाई (मिथ्यालाई) सार औ सारलाई असार संझने मिथ्या-संकल्पमा परेका मानिसले सारलाई प्राप्त गर्नसक्दैन ।

—धम्मपद, श्लोक ११ ।

६ । सारलाई सार औ असारलाई असार संझने सम्यक् दृष्टि भएका मानिसले सारलाई प्राप्त गर्नसक्छ ।

—धम्मपद, श्लोक १२ ।



बौद्ध-संघ ।

[लेखक—श्री देव, कालिम्पोङ ।]

जुन समयमा भगवान् बुद्ध जीवित थिए औ धम्म-प्रचारमा स्वयं लागेका थिए, त्यस समयमा आज भैं पुस्तक-प्रकाशन किम्वा पुस्तकालयको प्रथा थिएन, अतः धर्मको शिक्षा दिने सबैभन्दा सरल उपाय नै थियो संघको स्थापना । यसले मानिस एकत्रित मात्र होइन संगठित पनि हुन्थे, औ त्यसरी संगठित भएका व्यक्तिहरूलाई बुद्ध आफ्नो शिक्षा दिन्थे, र पूर्णतया शिक्षित भएपछि संघका प्रत्येक सदस्यलाई नयाँ-नयाँ ठाउँमा मानिसहरूलाई धम्म-मा ज्ञानी र शिक्षित तुल्याउन पठाउँथे । यसरी धम्मको प्रचार र प्रसार बुद्धले गरे र यही परम्परा आज पनि चलिरहेको छ । तर यहाँ यो स्मरणीय छ कि आजको यस्तो वैज्ञानिक युगमा पनि यो संघको महत्व घटेको छैन; कुरा कतिसम्म हो भने बुद्धका समयमा यो नै बौद्ध-धर्मको प्रचारको मुख्य साधन थियो औ आज यो बाहेक धम्म-प्रचारका अरु साधन पनि छन् !

सर चार्लस इलियट महोदयले आफ्नो एउटा पुस्तक 'हिन्दुइजम् एण्ड बुद्धिजम्' मा एक ठाउँ लेखेका छन्, "बुद्धको कार्यरूपमा परिणत भएको एउटा सबभन्दा ठूलो सफलता नै एउटा धार्मिक व्यवस्थाको (संघको) स्थापना हो, जो कि आजसम्म वर्तमान् छ ।" यो कुराको सत्यताको प्रमाण साजसम्म वर्तमान् रहेको बौद्ध संघले नै दिन्छ । शुरुमा मात्र होइन कि आज पनि बौद्धहरूमा संघको ठूलो महत्व औ स्थान छ । यति मात्र होइन, आज बौद्ध धर्मले जुन सर्वव्यापकता हासिल गरेको छ, त्यसको निति पनि यही संघप्रति बौद्ध धर्म अत्यन्त ऋणी छ । भारतमा मात्र होइन, परन्तु अन्य देशमा पनि अघिदेखि नै जति पनि बौद्ध धर्मको प्रचार भइराखेको छ, ती सबै यही संघको जरियाबाट नै भएर आएको हो । अतः आज कोही यसको उपेक्षा र यसलाई तुच्छ संझ्छ भने त्यो अन्याय ठहरिनेछ । त्यसो गरेर उसले आफैलाई उपेक्षा गर्छ, तुच्छ संझ्छ ।

बौद्ध धर्मको एउटा विशिष्टता हो आत्म-विकास र उन्नति ! प्रत्येक क्षेत्रमा, चाहे त्यो सांसारिक होस् वा आध्यात्मिक, अरुको आलोचना गर्नु, छिद्रान्वेषक हुनु, र आफ्नो भूल र गल्ती छोपेर राख्नु आजको युगको सभ्यता नै भइसकेको छ । आफूले जतिकै ठूलो भूल गरे पनि, जतिकै महान् पाप गरे पनि त्यसलाई मानिसले देख्दैन, तर अरुको सानो-भन्दा सानो भूल उसले चाँडै देख्छ, अरुको क्षुद्र पाप-कर्मको आलोचना उसले भट्ट गर्छ । यसैले अघि-अघिभन्दा पनि आजको युगमा आत्म-विकास र आत्म-ज्ञानको आवश्यकता

घेर बढेको छ । यो कुराको ज्ञान बुद्धले आजभन्दा अठ्ठाइ वर्षअघि नै पाए, यसैले आत्म-विकासलाई उनले ठूलो महत्व दिए । बौद्ध संघको पहिलो उद्देश्य यही आत्म-विकासका कार्यमा उचित साधन पुर्‍याउनु र उचित व्यवस्था गर्नु थियो र हो ।

यो ध्यान राख्नुपर्दछ कि यो संघको यो उद्देश्य व्यक्तिवादको प्रचार होइन । व्यक्तिवाद र त्यसको प्रचारलाई बुद्धले कहिल्यै कहिँ समर्थन गरेनन् औ गरेका छैनन्, किनकि बुद्धलाई यो पूर्णतया ज्ञान थियो, उसले म-म र तँ-तँको अहम्-भावना जागृत गराउँछ, जो बहुजन हिताय बहुजन सुखायको कट्टर विरोधी हो । संघको उद्देश्य हो, समष्टि-जीवन यापन गर्ने सिखाउनु र गराउनु र त्यो यस्तो प्रकारले कि त्यो समष्टिका प्रत्येक सदस्यले त्यसबाट फायदा उठाउन सकोस् औ त्यो फायदा यस्तो प्रकारको होस्, जसले आत्म-विकास गराओस्, त्यसमा सहायता देओस्, तर अरुलाई बाधा दिएर होइन, अरुसित भगडा-फसाद गराएर होइन, अरुप्रतिको आफ्नो कर्तव्य बिर्सेर होइन, तर अरुलाई कुनै प्रकारको बाधा नदिई, अरुसित कुनै किसिमको भगडा-फसाद नगरी, अरुसित मिलेर औ अरुप्रति आफ्नो कर्तव्य पूरा गरेर । यस्तो रूपमा औ यस्तो उद्देश्य लिएर यस्तो संघको स्थापना गरेर बुद्धले यो पनि स्पष्ट रूपले देखाएका छन् कि बुद्ध संगठनमा विश्वास गर्दथे, समष्टि-जीवन र समवाय कार्यमा उनलाई सबभन्दा घेर भरोसा थियो ।

यो संघको अर्को उद्देश्य हो सम्पूर्ण मानव-जातिलाई 'धम्म' को शिक्षा दिनु । बौद्ध धर्ममा 'धम्म' को अर्थ नै हो सत्यताको अभिव्यक्ति, प्रकाशन र अनुसन्धान । अतः बौद्ध दर्शनमा जे जति पनि कुरा आएका छन्, ती जम्म सत्यतामा आधारित छन्, यसैले ती सब सत्य हुन् । यसैले यो धर्मको मानिसका सांसारिक औ आध्यात्मिक जीवनमा कस्तो महत्वपूर्ण स्थान छ, त्यो अविदित छैन । बौद्ध दर्शन त्यस्तो नभएको भए आज संसारमा बौद्ध धर्मका अनुयायीहरूको संख्या उत्तरोत्तर बढ्दै जाने थिएन, र यो संख्या-वृद्धिको मुख्य साधन नै बौद्ध-संघ हो, यसैका प्रयासले आज बौद्ध धर्मले अरु प्रकारका धर्मलाई पछि छाडि-राखेको छ ।

जुन समयमा बुद्ध जीवित थिए, त्यस समयमा बुद्ध नै संघका प्रधान दिए । तिनले देह-त्याग गरेपछि कोही तिनका उत्तराधिकारी बनेनन् औ आजसम्म पनि यो त्यही अवस्थामा छ । समय बित्दै गएपछि जहाँ-जहाँ संघको स्थापना भयो, त्यहाँ-त्यहाँ त्यही संघका सदस्य-हरूले आफ्नो-आफ्नो संघको प्रधान आफूमध्येका एक जनालाई छाने औ तिनैका अनुशासनमा बस्न लागे तर संघमा कसैले कसैको आज्ञा आँखा बन्द गरेर मान्नुपर्छ भन्ने केही नियम

छैन । यही व्यवस्था आजपर्यन्त पनि चलिरहेको छ । प्रत्येक संघमा उचित अनुशासन पाइन्छ औ अनुशासन भंग गर्नेले संघलाई त्याग्ने पर्दछ ।

बौद्ध संघमा जति पनि सदस्य छन्, तिनमा पनि एउटा क्रम वा श्रेणी-विभाजन पाइन्छ । संघमा भर्खर पसेको व्यक्तिलाई भ्रामणेर भनिन्छ । उपसम्पद-उत्सवमा नयाँ भएको यस्तो भिक्षुलाई काषाय-वस्त्र दिइन्छ । भ्रामणेरदेखि भिक्षु (सं-भिक्षु), भिक्षुदेखि थेर र थेर भएको बीस वर्षपछि उसलाई महाथेर भनिन्छ ।

संघका प्रत्येक सदस्य, अत्यन्त वृद्ध औ अस्वस्थबाहेक, सूर्योदयमा भिक्षाका निति पात्र लिएर भ्रमण गर्छ, दिइएका प्रत्येक वस्तु मौन भएर स्वीकार गर्छ, तर कसैलाई दान दिएबाबत धन्यवाद वा आशीर्वाद दिँदैन ।

चीन, जापान, स्याम, वर्मा, लंका आदि देशमा यस्ता बौद्ध-संघ केही परिवर्तित रूपमा पाइन्छन्, तथापि संघका बुनियादी रूप र उद्देश्यमा केही रूपान्तर भएको छैन ।

याचना ।

[लेखक—श्री ओकिउयामा ग्वाईन् ।]

हे आकाश !

तिम्रो नीलिमा राशि ।

दली देऊ त मेरो देहभरि

अनि हे सागर,

तिम्रो लहर—

माथि, आकाश जहाँ भएछ चूर्ण

त्यहीमाथि ढुबाऊ मलाई वक्ष-पूर्ण

तब यो विपाश

यो अग्नि पिपास—

बाट, लिएर मुक्ति जानेछु कहीं

मरु-तृष्णा मेरो पछिलकन अरे

जीवनको आवर्ज्जना बोकेर जानेछु बगी ।

रागिणी !

[लेखक—श्री लक्ष्मण गजमेर ।]

वेणु—

सुमधुर तान एवं रागले बनेकी—तिमी चिर वियोगित देवकी वेणु हौ !
तिम्नो मृदु तान औ रागमा मानव-हृदय डग्मगाउने असोम शक्ति छ—औ तिम्नो
मधुरता नै देवको पवित्र स्मृति बनेको छ !

तिमीमा सबै गुण भए तापनि संसार तिम्नो सौन्दर्यसित खुशी छैन ! तै-
पनि केवल मधुर राग औ तान नै तिम्नो सौन्दर्यको प्रतिभा हो, त्यसैले तिम्नो
प्रशंसा नगरी शान्ति पाउँदैन । तिमी प्रथमोप्रथम उनै देवकी रागिणी बन्यौ
यसैले पनि तिम्नो यतिको आदरणीय स्थान बनेको होला !

जंगलका हिंसक पशु-पक्षीका संसारमा पनि तिम्ना भाषा औ तानले शान्तिका
साम्राज्य फैलाउँछन् !

अकस्मात् परिस्थितिको कठोर वज्रले एक दिन तिमीलाई प्राण-प्रिय देवबाट
पृथक बनायो—संसारवारि र पारिको भिन्नतामा ! तत्पश्चात् संसारमा तिमी
एउटी वियोगिनी झैं सबैकी वेणु बन्यौ !

तर त्यसले तिमीमा त्यो मधुर तान, राग एवं शान्तिको दुनियाँ बसाल्ने
शक्ति विलीन भयो । अब केवल करुण रोदनको क्षीण-ध्वनि जस्तो मात्र बज्दछ्यौ !
सबैले तिम्ना देवको जयन्तीलाई हर्ष औ आनन्दपूर्ण हृदयले स्वागत गरे तर तिमी
चाहिँ केवल विषाद औ दुःखपूर्ण तानलाई आह्वान गच्छ्यौ !

तर त्यो तानको भाषा बुझ्ने को ?

जब तिमी संसारका दुःखलाई अनुभव गरेर अनुभूतिको अन्तिम सीमामा
पुग्दछ्यौ—सम्भवतः तिम्नो अन्तिम पुकारको क्षीण-ध्वनि सुनेर चिर वियोगित
देवले नव-अवतार लिई तिम्ना दुःख औ पापपूर्ण संसारमा शान्ति स्थापना गर्नेछ,
औ तब धर्मको विजय हुनेछ !

यही नै त तिम्नो जीवन-कहानीको पृष्ठ हो !!



?

[लेखक—श्री भीमदल राई ।]

स्मृतिको 'समाधि' आहको 'मंत्र'

आँसु मेरो 'संकल्प-जल',

'पूजन' तिम्रो 'तपस्या' प्रेमको

'मृत्यु' मेरो तपको 'फल' ।

—

मुनिलाई शोक हुँदैन ।

[अनु०—श्री रत्नबहादुर शाक्य ।]

मैले यस्तो सुनें !

एकपल्ट भगवान् श्रावस्तीमा अनाथपिण्डिकको जेतवन आराममा विहार गरिरहेका थिए ।

त्यसवेला आयुष्मान् सारिपुत्र भगवान्का छेवैमा आसन लगाई जीउ सीधा गरेर बसे । तिनी अल्पेच्छ, सन्तुष्ट, एकान्तप्रिय, मानिससित धेरै मिलजुल नगर्ने, उत्साही अनि योगाभ्यासी थिए ।

भगवान्ले आयुष्मान् सारिपुत्रलाई जो अल्पेच्छ, सन्तुष्ट, एकान्तप्रिय, मानिससित धेरै हेलमेल नगर्ने, उत्साही औ योगाभ्यासी थिए, छेवैमा आसन लगाएर जीउ सीधा गरिवसेका देखे ।

यो थाहा पाएर त्यसवेला भगवान्का मुखबाट उदानका यी शब्द निस्केः—

“प्रमाद-रहित चित्त हुने तथा मौन भएर सदैव स्मृतिमान् भई शान्त बस्ने मुनिलाई शोक हुँदैन ।”

—‘उदान’-बाट ।



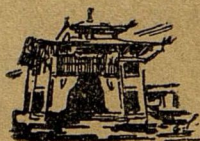
एकान्त स्वप्न ।

[रच०—श्री इन्द्र नारायण प्रधान ।]

विश्वको एक कुञ्जमा
निरव निस्तब्ध प्रकृतिको कोमल गाथमा
जहाँ रविको स्निग्ध अनातय लाग्दछ
समीरको स्कन्दनमा माधुर्य हुँदछ
त्यहाँ बसाउनेछु म एक कुटि
सानो सरल कुटि !

जीवनको हर्ष-विषादसँग सम्पर्क
न ता मेरो केही छ,
सुखमा सुखी न ता दुःखमा दुखी हुन्छु
त्यहाँ बसाउनेछु म एक कुटि
सानो सरल कुटि !

म सुन्छु पवनको मधुर गान;
पक्षीको करुण राग
त्यो विविक्त स्थानमा
जहाँ बसाउनेछु म एक कुटि
सानो सरल कुटि !



16

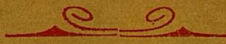
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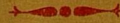
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