LECTURE II

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEISTIC BUDDHISM

On the last night of the Teacher's life Ānanda, the beloved disciple, recalls the visits which the brethren used to pay him in reverent homage, and for their own encouragement in the faith; when he is no more they will be deprived of this help. The dying Buddha prescribes four places for pious pilgrimage: the scenes of his birth, his attainment of Supreme Enlightenment, the first proclamation of the Kingdom of Truth, and his final passage from the world. Such merit would attach to those who died in these acts of devotion that they should be reborn after death in the happy realms of heaven. After the solemn rites of the cremation were completed, ands even days had been spent in every demonstration of respect with dance and music and song, garlands and perfumes, by the Mallas of Kusinārā, in whose Sāla-grove the Great Decease had taken place, the hallowed remains were distributed among eight adjoining clans, and mounds were raised over them for their preservation.[1] When King Dutthagāmini (101–77 B.C.) built the Great Mound in Ceylon on a huge platform five acres in extent, reared on four hundred elephants, each nine feet high, coated with white enamel and provided with ivory tusks,[2] the miracles which had accompanied the first transport of the relics in Mahinda's day[3] were duly repeated on their deposition in the central chamber.[4] "Thus are the Buddhas incomprehen-

[1] Cp. *ante*, p. 30. On the discovery of a relic shrine of the Buddha at Piprāhwā in January 1898, see the *JRAS* (1898), p. 573.

[2] Cave, *Ruined Cities of Ceylon* (1897), p. 54.

[3] Cp. *ante*, p. 31.

[4] *Mahāvaṃsa*, tr. Geiger, xxxi. 98, 99.

sible," exclaims the pious chronicler a second time,[1] "and incomprehensible is the nature of the Buddhas, and incomprehensible is the reward of those who have faith in the incomprehensible." But Dutthagāmini was visited with mortal disease, and charged his brother Tissa to complete the immense structure. When it was finished the sick king was carried in his palanquin to pay it homage in the midst of a vast assemblage of the brethren. As they chanted in chorus hymns of devout praise, six heavenly cars arrived, each with its divine charioteer, who invited him to ascend to his special heaven. "Which of the celestial worlds is the most beautiful?" inquired the king; and the venerable Elder Abhaya told him of the Tusita city where dwelt—not the Buddha—but the compassionate Metteyya, the Buddha-to-be, waiting for the time of his future birth on earth.[2] And Dutthagāmini closed his eyes and passed away, and was immediately seen reborn in celestial form and standing in the Tusita car. Thrice did he drive round the Great Thūpa, showing himself in all his glory to the people; and when he had done reverence to the Mound and to the Order, he passed into the Tusita heaven.[3]

I

Piety could, however, use the language of religion. When the Buddha's cousin, the ambitious Devadatta, endeavoured to create a schism in the brotherhood, and the earth opened and swallowed him up, he took refuge in the Teacher for the rest of his lives as *devâtideva*, "*deva* above all *devas*."[4] But in

[1] *Mahāvaṃsa*, tr. Geiger, p. 125, cp. xvii 50, 65.

[2] Cp. *ante*, p. 5.

[3] *Ibid.*, xxxii.

[4] *Milinda-Pañha*, p. 111, "god of gods," tr. Rhys Davids, *SBE*, xxxv. 167. The king starts a dilemma parallel with that of Celsus, who asked how it was that Jesus, who knew what was in man, should have admitted a traitor among the Twelve. The Buddha must have foreseen that Devadatta would seek his life and render himself liable to age-long suffering in hell; either, therefore, he was not really omniscient, or he was not all-merciful, in ordaining him and thus exposing him to what would prove overmastering temptation and involve a terrible penalty. The Buddha is justified by the promise that the penal discipline would do its corrective work, and at the end of the world-age Devadatta would become a Paccheka-Buddha (a peculiar modification of the ideal, "a Buddha for one," i.e. possessing Enlightenment, but unable to communicate it).

Buddhist theory *devas* were, as we have seen, still mortal, and their superior, the Tathâgata, was distinguished from them by passing away—not into some new birth—but out of all limitations of existence without leaving a trace behind. Yet faith could still conceive him as its king. "Why did the Buddha claim that title?" asks Milinda. And Nāgasena, among other reasons, vindicates his sovereign thus:—[1]

"A king means one who rules and guides the world, and the Blessed One rules in righteousness over the ten thousand world-systems; he guides the whole world with its men and gods, its Māras and Brahmās [powers of evil and good], and its teachers, whether Samanas or Brāhmans.

A king is one who, when pleased with a strenuous servant, gladdens his heart by bestowing on him, at his own good pleasure, any costly gift the officer may choose And the Blessed One, when pleased with anyone who has been strenuous in word or deed or thought, gladdens his heart by bestowing upon him, as a selected gift, the supreme deliverance from all sorrow,—far beyond all material gifts."

This is the style not of a dead but of a living Lord. "If thou hast thy thought on me," says Krishna to Arjuna, "thou shalt by my grace pass over all hard ways. . . . Surrendering all the Laws, come for refuge to me alone. I will deliver thee from all sins."[2] The devotional idiom is different, but the fundamental conception is not dissimilar. Buddhism was surrounded with religions and philosophies which could hardly fail to affect many of its adherents.[3] Brahmā still held his place as the God of the "lower knowledge" as the Vedânta afterwards designated it, the world of a relative reality.[4] The great sectarian deities, Vishnu and Çiva, were rising into prominence.[5] The monotheistic worshippers of the Bhagavat Vāsudeva were winning converts in the West.[6] To the Sānkhyan philosophy, with its plurality of eternal souls, Patanjali, whom tradition named as the author of the Yoga Sūtras,[7] added one Supreme Purusha, and thus converted an atheistic (*nirīçvara*) system into

[1] *SBE*, xxxvi. 28 f.

[2] *Bhagavad Gītā*, tr. Barnett, xviii. 58, 66.

[3] Just as, in its turn, it exerted influence on them. See below, p. 303.

[4] Cp. Lect. VI., p. 326.

[5] Cp. Lect. V., *passim*.

[6] Cp. Lect. V., p. 245.

[7] Cp Lect. IV., p. 212.

a kind of limited theism (*seçvara*). Speculation was active on all hands, and the tragic vicissitudes of life brought typical expressions of despair or unbelief. No poet ever formulated the great problem with the poignancy of Job. But when King Yudhishthira and his queen Draupadī were robbed of their kingdom and driven into exile, the royal lady could not forbear from impeaching the divine justice.[1] She urges vengeance on the oppressor, but the king proclaims the duty of forgiveness: "Forgiveness is virtue, is sacrifice, is the Vedas, is Brahmā, is truth; by forgiveness is the world upheld." The outraged queen, however, will have none of it: his virtues and his sacrifices count for nothing, men have no more freedom in God's hands than dolls pulled by wires; like a bird tied by a string or a bull with a rope through his nose, man must follow his Creator's will; he has no self-direction; God plays with his creatures like a child with his toys. Falling back upon the doctrine of the Deed, she boldly applies it to God as universal Agent, and declares that he who has done such wrong is defiled by it. What fruit, then, shall *he* reap? If no consequence touches him, then there is no moral order, might is the only power, "and I grieve," adds the unhappy sufferer, "for the weak." "That is the doctrine of the Nâstikas," replies the king:[2] he had given what should be given and done what should be done, seeking no "fruit," desiring no reward. "Doubt not nor censure Providence"; revelation and experience confirm each other; "Learn to know God and submit to him, by whose mercy mortals become immortal."

The Buddhist criticism of theism starts from a similar point of view, and assumes that God, if he exists, must be the sole cause of all that happens. The whole series of events issues from his arbitrary will; man has no freedom of his own; the interpretation of life is rigidly determinist. In one of the Jātaka stories[3] the future Buddha, in the guise of an ascetic, has occasion to refute the several heresies of a king of Benares

[1] *Mahâbhârata*, iii. (Vana Parvan), canto 30; cp. Hopkins, *Religions of India* (1895), p. 384. Cp. below, p. 158 f.

[2] *Ibid.*, canto 31, the sceptics, who say "Na asti," "there is not," *ante*, p. 17.

[3] No. 528, Engl. trans., v. 122.

and his five councillors. He is charged with having killed a monkey and eaten its flesh. "Why," he asks the believer in a Supreme Being (*issara* = *īçvara*), "do you blame me if you really fall back on the doctrine of creation by God?"

"If there exists some Lord all powerful to fulfil
In every creature bliss or woe, and action good or ill,
That Lord is stained with sin. Man does but work his will."

The argument is elaborated in a Sanskrit version of the same tale in the *Jātaka-Mālā* or *Garland of Birth-Stories*, ascribed to Āriya Çūra.[1] If the Lord does everything, he killed the monkey; but if because of his compassionateness this act is not to be imputed to him, the doctrine of his sole causation falls to the ground, and his exclusive sovereignty with it. Praise and supplication can have no propitiatory value if the Self-Born himself offers them to himself, and sacrifice is unmeaning when he is the sacrificer. Moreover, if it is the Lord who commits all sins, what virtue does he possess to call forth devotion (*bhakti*)?[2] And if, since he abhors wickedness, he is not their author, it is wrong to affirm that he is the universal agent, and his claim to supreme power is undone.

Similar reasoning is still further developed in a Chinese work professing to be a translation of the *Buddha-Charita* of the famous Indian poet Açvaghosha, made by Dharmaraksha about A.D. 420.[3] Anāthapindika, "the Friend of the Orphan and the Destitute," entered the first Path after hearing the Buddha

[1] Translated by Speyer, *Sacred Books of the Buddhists*, i. (1895), 210 f.

[2] See below, Lect. V., p. 244.

[3] Translated by Beal, *SBE*, xix. The Chinese work is much expanded from Açvaghosha's original composition; cp. Cowell's transl., *SBE*, xlix. From what source the additions were derived is not known; the passage in question is among them. Beal assumes (p. xxxiii) that the Chinese version represents the entire poem as it came from the author's hands. Açvaghosha is now recognised as one of the most eminent poets of India, equally at home in epic, dramatic, and lyric modes. He was converted from Brahmanism, to which he belonged hereditarily, and joined the school of the Realists (*sarvâsti-vādins*), and flourished in the reign of the Indo-Scythian King Kanishka, whose date is unfortunately uncertain, ± 100 A.D. Cp. Winternitz, *Geschichte der Indischen Literatur*, ii. (erste Halfte, 1913), 201 ff.

preach, and by so doing dispersed a number of erroneous views as the autumn winds scatter piles of cloud.[1] How is the world with all its varieties and contradictions to be explained? Are its vicissitudes due to its intrinsic constitution (*svabhāva*, "self-nature"), to Time, to the (Universal) Self?[2] Are they uncaused, or may they be referred to a common origin in God? The arguments under the last head are curiously though briefly intertwined. On moral lines it is urged that if all acts are his, all ethical distinctions disappear, the pure and the impure deeds come alike from him, and nothing is any longer wrong or right. Good and evil as we know them lose all their opposition when both issue from one will. If the Lord is really the world's creator, there should be no question about his existence, for how can he be the author of doubts of his own being? Nor should there be any rebellion against his ordinances, as if he were divided against himself; nor any adoration of more gods than one, implying that he worshipped others than himself. Metaphysically, the conception of Self-existence involved the ideas of eternity, completeness, immutability. But the world of our experience is full of change. Its events move on from moment to moment, and this Time-succession is inconsistent with the Everlasting. Moreover, if he was his own cause, what need had he to produce at all? What was the object of creating a phenomenal world? If it issued from some purpose, or expressed some desire, or satisfied some want, a new element must have arisen in the divine consciousness, a sense of need betraying incompleteness; his Self-existence was not all-inclusive. And if he created with no definite aim, his action was no better than a child's. Further, if God were sole cause, the totality of being, the world must have been created as a corresponding totality. The cause could not exist without its effect. But the universe is no static whole, complete at once. It is a process, unfolding a series of different occurrences. Each fresh step would require a fresh causal act; whenever the divine will was moved to operate, something must have determined him to bring about this result instead of some other, and thus a

[1] Beal, p. 206.

[2] Cp. *Çvetâçv. Up.*, i. 2: *SBE*, xv. 232.

plurality of causes would be carried back into the indivisible and immutable essence of the ultimate Deity.[1]

II

These difficulties Theistic Buddhism quietly ignored. It was concerned rather with the believer's moral needs than with the intellectual interpretation of the world. Not the universe and the nature of its cause was the theme of inquiry, but the character of human experience, its dangers and its victory. The issues of good and evil, the perils of temptation, the call to self-conquest, the peace of attainment, filled the disciple's mind. The early conversions, effected under the immediate influence of Gotama, placed the believer in direct relations with a powerful personality. When the first missionaries went forth to proclaim the saving truth, they could not set their hearers in the same immediate contact with the Teacher, and a new demand for faith was naturally awakened. Once started, this element in the believer's consciousness of dependence on the Master who was the Revealer of the secret of existence, the Guide of erring mortals through the snares of earth, the Deliverer of the stormed-tossed on the ocean of mortality, rose higher and higher. It was not enough that he should have committed his doctrine and discipline to faithful followers whose concord should guarantee their transmission without change.[2] Nor did it suffice that piety should be fed by contemplation of the scenes and incidents of the past, as the pilgrim meditated in the garden of the Birth, beneath the tree of the Enlightenment, or in the grove of the most holy Death. Struggling with weakness and buffeted by trial, he longed for the support of a living fellowship. Around him were devotions which offered the help of divine grace to those who sought it with sincere and humble minds. Philosophy might exhort men

[1] Cp. the later argument of Yasomitra, in his commentary on the *Abhidharma-Koça* of Vasubandhu, cited by Burnouf, *Introduction à l'Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien*[2] (1876), p. 510 The hypothesis of Içvara, as presented by Buddhist criticism, was unguarded by any form of Logos doctrine.

[2] Cp. the "Four Great Authorities," in the *Mahā-Parinibbāna Suttanta*, iv. 7, *Dialogues*, ii. 133.

to be their own lamps, their own refuge;[1] religion craved for the promise of a present aid.

The endeavour of Gotama to withdraw a number of difficult questions from the field of discussion was only partially successful. He might strive to concentrate attention and effort on the moral conditions needful for release from rebirth. But this analysis only stimulated intellectual activity, and the disciples, exposed to opposition and criticism, soon began to raise difficulties and develop differences which resulted in the formation of divergent though not necessarily hostile schools. In the second century after the Buddha's death no less than eighteen of these varieties can be already traced.[2] They may be grouped in two main divisions. On one side stood the *Thera-vādins*, or followers of the doctrine of the Elders, who maintained the orthodox tradition, now preserved in the Pāli Canon. On the other were the *Mahā-saṅghikas*, or adherents of the Great Council or Assembly. The story of this movement is involved in hopeless confusion. Between the Ceylonese and Tibetan accounts the conflict of testimony is too great to allow of any definite conclusion as to the origin of the schism. When the Council was held, what circumstances led to its meeting, what members of the Order attended it and in what numbers, where the gathering took place and what resolutions it adopted —all these particulars needful for adequate historical judgment are beyond our present reach.[3] But the seceders from the original fellowship were strong enough to produce seven independent branches within their own ranks, and they held their ground for many centuries. The first Chinese pilgrim, who came to find the proper *Vinaya* or Rule of Discipline, discovered a Mahāsanghika copy in a monastery at Patna belonging to the Mahā-Yāna type (the so-called Great Vehicle[4]), which was supposed to be derived from the original work preserved in the famous Vihāra in the Jeta-grove.[5] Along the lines of practical

[1] "Atta-dīpā atta-saranā," *ibid.*, ii. 26, *Dialogues*, ii. p. 108.

[2] Cp. Prof. Rhys Davids, in the *JRAS* (1891), "The Sects of the Buddhists," p. 409.

[3] Cp. Poussin, in Hastings' *ERE*, iv., "Councils (Buddhist)."

[4] See below, p. 63 [2].

[5] Legge, *Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms*, p. xxxv.

observance the Mahāsanghikas might thus believe themselves in harmony with orthodox tradition. But other departments of the Scriptures might be enriched with new works. Yuan Chwang, whose interests were much wider than those of his predecessor, studied some Abhidharma treatises in a monastery in the Andhra country[1] belonging to this great school. Among its subdivisions was an important body which held the doctrine that the Buddha was *lokuttara*, "above the world," transcending the needs and habits of ordinary life. This view is elaborated in a lengthy work known as the *Mahā-Vastu*, or "Sublime Story,"[2] which presents (amid a large mass of incongruous material) the tale of the Teacher's life as far as the beginning of his long ministry. What new elements does it add to the traditions of the Elders?[3]

The doctrine of the descent of the future Buddha from the Tusita heaven to take his last birth on earth was well established in the early texts, with all the detail of holy incident investing an event so august. The Lumbinī garden where he entered this mortal scene, the sacred Bodhi-tree, the deer-park at Benares where he founded the Kingdom of the Truth, the grove at Kusinārā where he passed away,—did not these witness to the reality of his career? One of the latest books of the Pāli Canon throws an interesting light on the beginnings of fresh

[1] On the eastern coast, north of Madras, along the river Krishna; Beal, *Life of Hiuen Tsiang*, p. 137; Watters, *On Yuan Chwang*, ii. 214–217.

[2] So Rhys Davids, or otherwise "the Great Matter" (Poussin).

[3] This work was published by M. Sénart, in three vols. (Paris, 1882–1897), on the basis of texts from Nepal. It is written in "mixed Sanskrit," and was reckoned as a Vinaya text, though it contains no rules for the Order, but only relates the events preceding its formation. Cp. the demonstration by Windisch, *Die Komposition des Mahāvastu* (Leipzig, 1909), that much of *Mahāvagga*, 1–24, is reproduced with verbal dependence in its last section. Its contents appear to be of various ages. Some of its verses are of the old ballad type scattered in some of the Pāli books; but it mentions the late school of the Yogâcāras, and it refers to Chinese and Huns. It has doubtless received successive additions, and while the origin of the compilation may well be ancient, its present form can hardly be earlier than the sixth century. Cp. Barth, *Journal des Savants* (1899), p. 628 f.; Winternitz, *Gesch. der Ind. Lit.*, ii. (erste Halfte), 187. The Mahāsaṅghikas belonged to the so-called Hīna-Yāna (below, p. 63[2]); but this did not exclude some exalted views of the person of the Buddha.

exaltation of his person. At the council of Patna in the reign of Asoka, about 246 B.C., the presiding elder Tissa brought forward a work known as the *Kathā-Vatthu*, or "Subjects of Discourse."[1] It deals with a great variety of disputed themes, psychological, ethical, metaphysical, "that there is a persisting personal entity," "that everything exists" (*i.e.* there is a direct perception of external objects, a form of realism opposed to the empirical idealism of the true faith), "that an Arahat could fall away" because previous Karma may cause him to sin (an implicit determinism repudiating all spontaneous initiative or personal effort), "that animals may be reborn in heaven," "that the sphere of Infinite Space is unconditioned." Few problems are suggested concerning the Buddha, but they already show that faith and imagination are at work to elevate his person above human limits. "Was not his ordinary *vohāra*," his habit, usage, practice, "*lokuttara*, above the world," supermundane?[2] Was it not wrong to say that the Buddha had lived in personal contact with the world of men?[3] Beneath the query, the commentator explains, lay the belief that he had remained in the Tusita heaven, sending to earth a specially created form.[4] This involved the further question who taught the *Dhamma*? to which two answers were given, the phantom shape produced from above the sky, and the venerable Ānanda.[5] Bolder still was the speculation that Buddhas could "stand" (*i.e.* pervade or persist) in all directions, in the four quarters, the nadir or the zenith.[6] This was especially attributed to the Mahāsanghikas, and plays a conspicuous part in the *Mahā-Vastu*.

[1] Translated by Shwe Zan Aung and Mrs Rhys Davids, under the title *Points of Controversy* (1915). Prof. de la Vallee Poussin has expressed grave doubt of the accuracy of the tradition. Cp. *ante*, p. 41.

[2] ii. 10, p. 134. Mrs Rhys Davids points out that *vohāra* "refers to common, worldly matters in general," but in the discussion which follows the illustrations are all confined to speech. The subsequent *lokuttara* doctrine far transcended this limitation.

[3] xviii. 1.

[4] Cp. the early Christian Docetism. On this whole question see Anesaki, in Hastings' *ERE*, iv., "Docetism (Buddhist)"; Oltramare, "Un Problème de l'Ontologie Bouddhique," in *Le Muséon* (3me serie), I. i. (Cambridge), 1915.

[5] xviii. 2. [6] xxi. 6.

The length of this work far exceeds that of the oldest surviving presentation of the sacred story, now embodied in the *Nidāna-Kathā*, at the opening of the commentary of the Jātaka-book,[1] just as it also surpasses the expanded form of the *Lalita Vistara*.[2] Here are numerous birth-stories, some of which belong to the common stock, while others have no known parallels; tales about earlier Buddhas; hymns of praise such as were sung in other devotions to Vishṇu; wonders of ancient sages; a story of creation (i. 338 ff.) following that of the Aggañña Suttanta in the ancient Canon;[3] a scheme of moral discipline for those who sought to become Buddhas. With the grandiosity of Indian imagination the universe is conceived on an enormously extended scale. A single *Buddha-kshetra* or field of action embraces no less than sixty-one Great Chiliocosms:[4] the number of Buddhas existing at any moment defies all reckoning.[5] In these exalted conditions they have nothing in common with the world;[6] everything about them is *lokottara*, "super-natural"; true, they may seem to think, speak, act, suffer like ourselves, but they are only conforming to the world's usage (for the welfare of others), while they conform at the same time to the transcendent doctrine.[7] The miracles of conception and birth are all outside nature; they are self-caused; the Buddhas owe nothing to father or mother, they produce themselves,[8] they are *svaguna-nirvrittā*, "complete by their own qualities," almost equivalent to the designation of Brahmā himself as *svayam-bhū*, "self-existent."[9] This absolute character

[1] Cp. Rhys Davids, *Buddhist Birth-Stories*, 1880, p. 2 ff.

[2] See below, p. 64 [3].

[3] *Dīgha Nikāya*, III. p. 80.

[4] A Great Chiliocosm appears to have comprised a thousand million worlds, each with its sun and moon, mountains and continents, up to the Brahmā heavens; Beal, *Catena of Buddhist Scriptures*, p. 102.

[5] i. 121, 126; and p. XXXII.

[6] "Lokena samaṃ," i. 159 [3].

[7] Cp. i. 168 [8-9].

> "Lokânuvartanāṃ Buddhā anuvartanti laukikīṃ,
> Prajñaptim anuvartanti yathā lokottarām api."

[8] i. 145 [4], "upapādukā bhavanti," the equivalent of the Pāli *opapātika*. M. Sénart refers to his notes in *Journ. Asiat.* (1876), t. ii pp. 477–478.

[9] Cp. Barth, *Journal des Savants* (1899), p. 468.

does not yet belong to the Buddhas, though Dīpankara promises its "likeness" to the future Çākya-muni.[1] No attempt, however, is yet made to connect the innumerable Buddhas with each other, still less to unify them. Imagination can multiply them indefinitely without difficulty; it cannot so far conceive them as One. No single personality as yet embraces them all as manifestations of himself.[2]

The multiplication of the Buddhas and the exaltation of their powers are not, however, the only significant features of this book. As the Buddhas have become practically infinite in number, the multitudes of the Buddhas-to-be, the Bodhisattvas, have increased in like manner. The change is significant. A new moral aim is now set before the believer. The old ideal of the Arahat or saint, intent on working out his own deliverance, has been found too narrow. Personal holiness is, indeed, still essential; but the true disciple looks beyond his own attainment; he, too, must seek to become a Buddha, and take his share in the great process of the world's salvation.

III

It had been the task of primitive Buddhism to conduct the believer across the ocean of existence. Like the early Christian, he was concerned primarily with his own escape from the consequences of ignorance and sin. But, like the Christian disciple, he was no sooner himself converted than he was summoned to convert others. He must, indeed, prepare himself to meet opposition, obloquy, blows; he may be stoned, beaten with swords, or deprived of life. When Punna asks the Buddha's permission to go and preach to the Sunas (? Huns) of the West, these possibilities are successively pressed upon him, and each shall be met, he says, with thankfulness that it is no worse. The story was evidently impressive, for it is related twice in the

[1] i. 4 [10], "svayambhū-samatā."

[2] Mahā-Purusha, of course, is not forgotten, cp. *purushottamatā*, i. 3, 8. Cp. some passages from Vasumitra's *Treatise on the Points of Contention by the Different Schools of Buddhism*, first translated by Kumārajīva, who came to China A.D. 401, reproduced by Suzuki, *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism* (1907), pp. 248–251.

Pāli Canon,[1] and reappears with much greater elaboration in a Nepalese Sanskrit text known since the days of Burnouf as the *Divyâvadāna*.[2] The last suggestion, that the brutal Sunas may actually kill him, only draws from Punna (in the Pāli) the quiet remark: "I shall say to myself—there are disciples who go forth loathing and despising the body and life, to seek the weapons of destruction; now, without seeking, I have found them." The Buddha approves his forbearance, and gives his consent. The later Sanskrit version, however, adds a fresh touch. When Pūrna says that he will think "How kindly are these Çronas to free me from this body with so little pain," the Buddha approvingly bids him depart upon his venture: "Go, Pūrna, delivered thyself, deliver others; arrived at the other shore, guide others over; having attained Nirvāna, lead others thither."

But was the ordinary Arahat equal to this duty? The Buddha had announced that, like all human things, his Order would be exposed to corruption and decline. What provision would then be made for the maintenance and diffusion of the Teaching? Would the Path of Release disappear amid the distractions of the world, and the call to Liberation be heard no more? An answer was found for a time in the promise that a Buddha-to-be, the Bodhisatta Metteyya—the impersonation of that *mettā* which was the Buddhist counterpart to love or charity—should descend from the Tusita heaven where he dwelt in bliss till the appointed hour.[3] No other figure was ever placed beside him in the Pāli tradition, nor was any cultus offered to him in Ceylon, Burma, or Siam. But he played an important part in later faith. The Chinese pilgrims Fah Hien[4] and Yuan Chwang[5] both describe a wonderful statue of him in

[1] *Majjhima Nikāya*, iii. 267; *Saṃyutta N.*, iv. 60.

[2] Edited by Cowell and Neill (1886), p. 24.

[3] Cakkavatti-Sīhanāda-Suttanta, in *Dīgha Nikāya*, iii. p. 76; *Questions of Milinda*, in *SBE*, xxxv. 225.

[4] Tr. Legge, chaps. vi.–vii.

[5] Beal, i. 134; Watters, i. 239. For artistic representations, cp. Foucher, *L'Iconographie Bouddhique* (1900), p. 111; Grunwedel-Burgess, *Buddhist Art in India* (1901), p. 185; Grunwedel, *Mythologie des Buddhismus in Tibet* (1900), p. 120. In a Chinese inscription at Bodh Gayā (date about

the Upper Indus valley beside a great monastery. Carved in wood, it rose to a height of one hundred feet, and on fast-days it emitted a mysterious light. Thrice had the sculptor been taken up to the Tusita heaven (so legend told) by the Arahat Madhyântika to study his person and marks; and Fah Hien piously ascribed to its influence the spread of Buddhism in the West. In the "Lotus of the Good Law"[1] Maitreya is *ajita* or *invictus*. To his heaven Yuan Chwang aspired to ascend when the pirates' knife set him free from the bonds of the flesh;[2] and when he lay on his death-bed in his native land, his labours done, it was with a hymn of praise to Maitreya on his lips that he passed away.[3]

The Pāli tradition looked no further. Its work was done when the saint had perfected his personal holiness. But a whole people of saints could do no more for the world when they died except bequeath to posterity the memory of their example. Meanwhile the great idea of Deliverance never ceased to summon fresh labourers into the field. It impelled Asoka, the first Buddhist sovereign, whose dominions are said to have exceeded the British Empire in India to-day, to dedicate his son to the cause, and send him to plant the new truth in Ceylon. In the midst of incredible perils it was carried by a long succession of teachers, converted Brāhmans, princes, nobles, men of various races and degrees, moved (as the chronicler has it) by a desire to convert the world—"for when the world's welfare is concerned who could be slothful or indifferent?"—over the great mountain barrier through Eastern Asia. Under this potent impulse vast new developments took place. Imagination ranged freely through immense magnitudes of space and time. The picture of the saint, victor over temptation and enjoying his own peace, ceased to satisfy pious aspiration. Were there not beings in other realms, above, below, who needed the saving knowledge just as much as the children of men? Had not the Buddha himself ascended to the Tusita heaven

A.D. 1000) a figure of Maitreya surmounts those of Çākya Muni and his six predecessors; Chavannes, *Rev. de l'Hist. des Religions*, xxxiv. (1896), p. 2.

[1] See below, p. 78. [2] Cp. p. 5.

[3] *Life*, tr. Beal, p. 217. Cp. Duṭṭhagāmini in Ceylon, above, p. 48.

to preach the *Dhamma* to his mother? His purpose, therefore, must embrace all orders of existence, and extend itself from heaven to hell.

So a new type of devotion was elaborated. As the Buddhas were multiplied, the Buddhas-to-be were increased to match. The disciple was presented with a fresh task. A larger demand was made upon his energy. His own salvation ceased to be his first object; his personal escape from the sorrows of transmigration was merged in a wider summons. He must enter the warfare with evil on behalf of the whole world's emancipation, and share the perpetual labours of universal release. For this end he, too, must make his toilsome way along the far-stretching road to Buddhahood and prepare to engage in the long contest with ignorance and suffering and sin. The elder Buddhism had already created the imaginary type of the great choice between personal escape from liability to rebirth and the rescue of others from the pains and perils of the *samsāra* in the vow of the hermit Sumedha. Far, far back in the days of the Buddha Dīpankara,[1] he had realised that he might, if he pleased, then and there cut off the roots of life and cease to be. "But why," he thought to himself, "should I attain deliverance alone? I will embark on the ocean of existence in a ship that will convey men and *devas*." The discipline which would open the way to perfect knowledge was summed up in the practice of Ten *Pāramitās* or transcendent virtues, which were illustrated in the stories of the Buddha's previous births.[2] What emotions might be roused by

[1] The love of gigantic numbers is already at work. Between Sumedha's vow and the birth of Gotama the future Buddha must labour for four *asaṅkheyyas* and 100,000 world-ages. An *asaṅkheyya* was $10{,}000{,}000^{20}$, or 1 followed by 140 cyphers. During all this period his purpose could never falter, and its ultimate achievement was foreseen by Dīpankara. See the *Nidāna-Kathā*, tr. Rhys Davids, in *Buddhist Birth-Stories*, p. 13. Fah Hien (tr. Legge, p. 106) and I-Ching, tr. Takakusu, p. 197, only reckoned three *asaṅkhya kalpas*, cp. p. 213.

[2] According to the *Buddhavaṃsa*, they were "giving," morality, renunciation of the world, wisdom or knowledge, energy, forbearance or patience, truthfulness, resolution, charity or love, equanimity. The enumeration is quite unsystematic. Each virtue might be practised in three degrees, *e.g.* "giving" rose from ordinary alms or the bestowal of ordinary goods through the sacrifice of limbs or eyes to the surrender of child or wife or life. Cp. the frequent enumerations of similar virtues in the Mahābhārata, Lect. III.

their moving incidents was recorded by the pious Fah Hien on witnessing a semi-dramatic presentation of them at a great festival in Ceylon.[1]

To this end now was the disciple of the higher devotion himself summoned. How the impulse to take part in the world's deliverance first acquired this form we cannot tell. It was the natural sequel of the *Imitatio Buddhæ* which had been held up before believers from the first. That which had been possible for the Buddhas of the past must be no less open to the efforts of the future. To Gotama the whole scene of existence had appeared wrapped in flames. As he sat on a hill called Gayā-Head, near the place of the Great Enlightenment, surrounded by a thousand disciples who had all been worshippers of the sacred Fire, he declared that everything was burning.[2] The flames of lust and anger and ignorance, of birth and death, of grief and lamentation and suffering and despair, were consuming all outward objects and all inward feelings. The parable is presented anew in a famous text, the "Lotus of the Good Law,"[3] under the image of a house on fire. The householder sees his children within playing with their toys, unconscious of danger even though scorched by the flames, and calls them out into safety by promises of delightful carts drawn by bullocks, goats, or deer, waiting outside for them to play with.[4] They represent three "goings" or "courses," and so three modes of transportation, three forms of transit across the world of transmigration into the safety of Nirvāna. The ordinary disciple who takes refuge in the authority of the Buddha and the observance of his precepts for the acquisition of the knowledge of the Four Truths, cares only for his own deliverance, and chooses a cart yoked with deer. Others for the same end seek the higher knowledge independently, without a teacher aiming at self-restraint and tranquillity, and the comprehension

[1] Legge, p. 105 f.

[2] *Mahāvagga*, i. 21, in Vinaya Texts, *SBE*, xiii. 134 Tradition said that the figure was suggested by the outbreak of a fire on the opposite hill; Rhys Davids, *Buddhism* (SPCK), p. 59.

[3] See below, p. 76, *SBE*, xxi. 72 ff.

[4] In the sequel of the story only bullock carts are actually provided, a symbolic detail, of which more hereafter.

of causes and effects. They are the Pratyeka-Buddhas, "singly enlightened," who attain the truth themselves but cannot impart it to others.[1] Theirs are the carts drawn by goats. Yet a third group desire a yet fuller knowledge, the knowledge which secures also the powers of the Tathâgata himself, "for the sake of the common weal and happiness, out of compassion to the world, for the benefit, weal, and happiness of the world at large, both gods and men, for the sake of the complete Nirvāna of all beings." These choose the largest carts, to which the bullocks are harnessed. They are the Bodhisattvas who, "coveting the Great Vehicle, fly from the triple world."[2]

[1] Individual Buddhas who bear the same relation to the supreme Buddha which the Pratyeka-Brahmās bear to the supreme Brahmā; Sénart, *Mahāvastu*, i. 457. Cp. Devadatta, *ante*, p. 48[4].

[2] *Lotus*, p. 80. These three classes are recognised in the Pāli Canon, *e.g. Aṅguttara Nikāya*, ii. 245; *Khuddaka N.*, canto viii. 15; according to the late commentary on the *Buddhavaṃsa* (PTS, 1882), ed. Morris, p. 10 f., each of the three has a *vachana*, "word" or teaching. The term "Vehicle," employed by modern students since the days of Burnouf, was used by Rémusat in his translation of Fah Hien (*Foe Koue Ki*, 1836, p. 9), as the equivalent of the Chinese *ching*. *Ta ching* is first rendered by "la grande translation," or "révolution." Its counterpart is *siao ching*, "la petite translation." *Ching* denotes not only "le passage d'un lieu à un autre," but also the means of transport, such as a car. It is thus the equivalent of the Sanskrit and Pāli *yāna*, which has the same meanings. Rémusat goes on to observe that the "véhicule" which is common to all these "translations" is the contemplation of the Four Truths. The term "Vehicle" then became the accepted equivalent of *yāna*. Three *yānas* are recognised in the *Mahāvastu*, ii. 362[8], where they provide the means by which homage to the Buddha leads to Nirvāna; they are not, however, separately characterised. The *Lalita Vistara* already mentions the two terms afterwards so clearly distinguished by the Chinese pilgrims, the *Hīna-Yāna* ("low" or "little Vehicle") and the *Mahā-Yāna* (the "great Vehicle"), see Prof. Vidyābhushana's citations, *JRAS* (1900), p. 29. But the Hina-Yāna is there contrasted with the *Udāra-Buddha-Dharma*, the "glorious Buddha-religion," as if it was an altogether different "course" or method of deliverance. Ārya-deva, who passed in later generations as one of the great masters of Mahā-Yāna "in antiquity," and is several times cited by Yuan Chwang as a disciple of Nāgârjuna (in the second century; cp. Beal, ii. 97, 302; Watters, ii. 100, 200, etc.), also contrasts the "people of the Hīna-Yāna," "afraid of death at every step," with the "man of the Mahā-Yāna," "clad with the armour of mercy"; and there certainly seems some ground for the suggestion of Prof. Vidyābhushana that the term

The figure has changed since Sumedha resolved to traverse the ocean of existence in a ship which would hold men and *devas* besides himself. The vessel which would make its laborious course over life's stormy sea is now presented as a majestic car, driven through a field of battle in the great warfare with ignorance and sin. The charioteer is "clad with the armour of mercy"; his weapons are sympathy and morality; he is "intent on rescuing the world";[1] "great in force, efficient in means, firm in purpose, unwearied, he conquers in the strenuous fight and sets others free." For selfish ends men will submit to suffering from cold and wind; "Why," asks the poet, "will they not suffer for the sake of the world?" This is the note of the new Buddhism, as the disciple is challenged to enter the fellowship of the Bodhisattvas, and devote himself to the welfare of beings of every rank.[2] In the gigantic expansion of the universe and the boundless multiplicity of its Buddhas, the Mahā-Yāna texts summon myriads of Bodhisattvas to attend them, numerous as the sands of the Ganges, or even nine or twenty such sacred streams.[3] In practical application the

may have been originally used of non-Buddhists, *i.e.* Brāhmans. Its use by the Chinese pilgrims is, however, quite clear; it is applied to the older Buddhism of the Pāli Canon. Prof. Bendall (in a note on the communication of Prof. Vidyābhushana, *ibid.*, p. 41) quotes from an early Mahā-Yāna Sūtra (of course without a date) the identification of the Hīna-Yāna with "the *yāna* of the Çrāvakas ("hearers" or disciples) and Pratyeka-Buddhas." Pandit H. P. Çāstri, in the *Journal of the Buddhist Text Society* (1894), ii. 6, proposed the terms "Higher Road" and "Lower Road," on the ground that the word "Vehicle" did not convey all the meanings involved in the word *yāna*.

[1] *Jagad-uddharaṇa*, Ārya-deva, in *JRAS* (1900), p. 31.

[2] This aim was not unrecognised in the older teaching. The *Buddha-vaṃsa*, after relating Sumedha's vow, enumerates eight conditions (*dhammas*) as necessary for success; the aspirant must be a human being, male, an arahat, must make his vow before a Buddha, have attained the necessary knowledge and virtue, have abandoned the world, and possess the needful resolution and steadfastness of purpose. See ver. 69, and the commentary, *Jātaka*, i. 14; and Warren, *Buddhism in Translations*, p. 14. But no discipline was laid out for his advance.

[3] So the *Lotus*, and the *Lalita Vistara*. In the latter book the career of the Bodhisattva Gautama from birth to Buddhahood is related on the basis of the older tradition as a wondrous "sport" with every fantastic supernatural embellishment. Its date is unknown. Chinese records

surrender of this high aim for the more modest effort of the Hīna-Yāna was considered an act of selfishness. The welfare of others was subordinated to individual security. When Dinnāga followed the suggestion of the sovereign in whose dominions he was residing, and resolved to devote himself to Arahatship, the Bodhisattva Mañjuçrī[1] himself deigned to remonstrate with him: "Alas, how have you given up your great purpose, and only fixed your mind on your own personal profit, with narrow aims, giving up the purpose of saving all!"[2]

Such a purpose, however, could not be undertaken lightly. The future Gotama passed, as we have seen, from age to age in the prolonged practice of the Ten Perfections. When the followers of "the Great Assembly" began the imaginative expansion of the universe and peopled its vast spaces with innumerable Buddhas, it became necessary to provide its immensities with corresponding hosts of Buddhas-to-be. But the task of saving others was not to be easily accomplished. It made the highest demands on the combined energies of heart and will and mind. The force of compassion must never slacken; the ardour of self-devotion must be perpetually maintained at its highest tension; the powers of reflection and insight must be cultivated to their utmost clarity. The early teaching of the Founder of Buddhism had thrown his system of moral culture into certain fixed forms of personal practice. He who aspired to reach Nirvāna must make the appointed progress along the Eightfold Noble Path. A similar course was provided for the believer who sought to give himself to the rescue of his fellow-beings.[3] The *Mahāvastu* contains what is apparently the earliest extant scheme of discipline for the duties

mention various "translations," of which the first and third have been lost. The second was made by Dharmaraksha, A.D. 308, but whether it reproduced the present Sanskrit text is not known. Cp. Foucaux, in the *Annales du Musée Guimet*, vi. (1884) and xix. (1892); Nanjio, *Catalogue of the Chinese Translation*, etc., Nos. 159, 160; Winternitz, *Gesch. der Ind. Lit.*, ii. (erste Halfte), 194 ff.

[1] See below, p. 70.

[2] Yuan Chwang, in Beal, *Records*, ii. 220, with correction of Watters, ii. 212–214, and a similar case, *ibid.*, i. 271 (Vasumitra).

[3] Cp. Suzuki, *Outlines of Mahā-Yāna Buddhism* (1907), chaps. xi. and xii.

and privileges of the Bodhisattva.[1] It was laid out in ten *bhūmis* or stages, and the later teachers of the Great Vehicle arranged their preparatory course with the same number of steps. Each *bhūmi* had its own subdivisions, in some systems ten in number, with monotonous regularity.[2] Each required that the proper dispositions suitable for advance should have been attained. At the outset these were the results of previous lives already planted in the character, together with the tempers and emotions generated by the believer's own experience. How each aspirant might be led to dedicate himself to the service of the suffering world, could not be determined beforehand. There was no sudden call from on high, no divine constraint diverting one or another from his secular path. The word of the preacher might suggest it; the praises of the Buddha might quicken it; compassion for human misery might foster it. When once the thought arose, "May I become a Buddha," the foundation of the first stage was laid. But no grace from heaven prompted it,[3] nor did any election guarantee final perseverance.

Impressed with the mutability of human impulses, the scheme of the *Mahāvastu* tabulates various causes which may lead to the aspirant's relapse as far as the seventh stage. It starts on the lowest level with the demand for renunciation,[4] compassion, untiring zeal, freedom from pride, the study of the Scriptures, strength, abandonment of the world, steadfastness. No special order seems to mark the believer's progress; he must be active in doing good to all creatures; he must maintain a firm faith in the Buddha, and despise the doctrines of heretics; he must practice charity without pride or expectation of recompense in heaven; he must be averse to slaughter or to criticism on the

[1] Cp. Sénart's Analysis, i. pp. xxvi–xxxvi, and Poussin, in *ERE*, ii. 744.

[2] These were aids to memory, of which Christianity, like Buddhism, furnishes abundant examples.

[3] On this element, however, see below, pp. 106, 101, in the worship of Amitâbha Buddha, and the *Bodhicaryâvatāra* of Çāntideva.

[4] *Mahāvastu*, i. p. 78, l. 16. *Tyāga* (rendered by "almsgiving," Mitra, *Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepal*, 1852, p. 116) seems rather to mean the surrender of all claims to personal merit on account of good works. But it is used also of gifts on a great scale, such as the Bodhisattva's bestowal of himself to feed a hungry tiger.

Buddha's character; he must see the whole world on fire with passion and hatred; he must face cheerfully all the perils of temptation. Once, however, let him gain the seventh stage of self-control, and he was safe against further danger of fall. With the ascent to the eighth a heart of great compassion would arise within him; his works would be no more mixed with good and evil; perfectly purified, they would bear him on to the *paripūraṇa*, the fulfilment or completion of his toil. After serving in successive births as a *chakravartin* king, he would enter in the ninth stage on the rank of *yuva-rājā* or heir apparent to the sovereignty of the *Dharma*; in the tenth he would receive in the Tusita heaven the *abhisheka* or royal unction for his high office; and he would be ready to descend for his last incarnation to gain the knowledge and undertake the labours of Buddhahood.

The first seven of these stages belong to the ordinary experience of moral endeavour. The disciple who aims at becoming a Buddha is a man frankly struggling upwards towards a higher life. The schemes of the "Great Vehicle" are conceived upon a somewhat different plane. The first degree of attainment, known as *pramuditā* or "Joyful," finds the believer already secure of success in his great quest; he has entered the supernormal order (*lokottara-gati*); he is raised above all risk of relapse;[1] full of joy that he is "born into the family of the Buddhas," he has reached a point of departure from which he will never fall away.[2] All fear of life's difficulties, of ill-repute, death, or future evil-births, fades from his thought. He has gladly given himself for the welfare of others, he is willing that their sins should "ripen" in himself, *i.e.* that he should bear their penalty in hell, and so release them from the "fruits" of guilt. So he advances to the second stage of freedom from all stain, *vimalā*, the "Immaculate," making ten Great Resolves of which the central purpose is to mature all creatures for Buddha-

[1] Not, however, of temptation. On the efforts of Māra, which are apparently sometimes successful, cp. the Ashtasāhasrikā Prajñā-pāramitā, xi., tr. H. P. Çāstri, *Journal Buddhist Text Soc.* (1894), ii. 8.

[2] Prof. Poussin points out that as the eighth stage is called *acalā*, "unshakable" or "immovable," the Mahāyāna system must have originally corresponded in this respect with that of the Mahāvastu.

hood. Higher and higher he rises on an ethical progress which brings increasing clarity of mind. Purity of character was ever for the Buddhist the ground and condition alike of intellectual insight and of transcendent power. In the vision of the Buddhas in the fifth *bhūmi*, the "Invincible" (*durjayā*), imagination, memory, judgment, "capacity for assimilating the truth,"[1] are all strengthened. The wondrous might gained in the seventh enables him to make a hundred universes tremble, and he passes into the "Immovable." Undistracted by the appeals of seemingly outward things on his attention, he is no longer conscious of duality, of self and not-self,[2] in the simplicity and concentration of his purpose; and he goes forward to the "Arrival at the End," the sovereignty of the *Dharma*, when he is wrapped in its beneficent "Cloud" and rains down on all creatures its fertilising power.[3] He is a Bodhisattva who has become a *Tathâgata*, "he who has reached the Truth."

IV

Such was the conception of the heroic life demanded of those who vowed to devote themselves to the far-reaching aim of universal deliverance. The disciple made his slow advance in the presence of innumerable witnesses, partners in the great enterprise, and under the guidance of those who had completed their course, yet still refrained from claiming the supreme privilege of Buddhahood that they might continue to devote themselves to their beneficent toil. Among these "Great Bodhisattvas" two acquired especial prominence and became the objects of special religious homage. When Fah Hien visited India he found the followers of the Great Vehicle making their offerings to the *Prajñā Pāramitā*, an extensive collection of works under the general title of "Transcendent Knowledge,"[4] and the two eminent Bodhisattvas, Mañjuçrī and

[1] Mitra, *Literature of Nepal*, on the *Daçabhūmîçvara*, p. 83, translated into Chinese by Dharmaraksha under the Western Tsin dynasty, A.D. 265–316 (Nanjio, *Catalogue*, 110).

[2] Cp. Lect. IV., p. 197.

[3] See the use of this figure in the *Lotus*, below, p. 83 f.

[4] Or "Perfect Gnosis." Cp. Mitra, *Nepalese Buddhist Literature*, p. 177 ff.

Avalokiteçvara.[1] The tendency to arrange sacred persons in groups of three, which affects so many religions, was no less conspicuous in Buddhism. Even the impersonal Dhamma and the generalised Sangha could be associated with the Buddha as the three "Jewels" of the faith. In Ceylon and Siam art presented Gotama in the centre with his two chief disciples, Sāriputta and Moggallāna, upon either hand. The Mahāyāna replaced them sometimes by Mañjuçrī and Avalokiteçvara, or by Avalokiteçvara (in the form of Padmapāni, the "lotus-handed") and Vajrapāni;[2] while a third arrangement placed Avalokiteçvara in the centre, with Mañjuçrī and Vajrapāni on his right and left. Only the last of these three figures has been derived from the older Buddhism, where he appears as a degraded form of Indra, thunderbolt (*vajra*) in hand, ready like a common demon (*yakkha*) to split the head of an obstinate unbeliever.[3] Tradition related that when the Buddha visited his father Suddhodana he was escorted by no less than eight guardians of the same name.[4] To later imagination he became a Bodhisattva in whom the demonic power was vested on a transcendent scale.[5] His association with the other two members of the Triad may perhaps symbolise the control of evil by the supernatural force of the Supreme Enlightenment. But in the personal work of deliverance he takes no share.

[1] Legge, p. 46. The worship of the Bodhisattvas was noted by I-Ching (Takakusu, p. 14) as the distinctive characteristic of the Mahāyāna.

[2] See the instances in Fergusson and Burgess, *Cave Temples of India* (1880), and Burgess, *Elura Cave Temples* (1883). Cp. a Chinese stela, dated A.D. 554, figured by Anesaki, *Buddhist Art* (1916), pl. ii. Cp. Soderblom on "Holy Triads," in *Transactions of the Third Congress of the History of Religion* (Oxford, 1908), ii. 399 ff.

[3] *Dialogues*, i. 117.

[4] So Yuan Chwang, Beal, *Records*, ii. 22.

[5] Cp. Watters, *On Yuan Chwang*, i. 229, cp. 295, ii. 224. In this aspect he is not without analogies with Çiva. In later days he was degraded into a figure of magic: cp. Waddell, *Buddhism of Tibet* (1895), p. 150; Grünwedel, *Mythol. des Buddh.*, p. 158. In the *Actes du Congrès des Orientalistes* (Alger, 1905), i 127, Sénart connects his development into a Bodhisattva with the intrusion of Tantric doctrines into later Buddhism, and compares it with the *vajrâsana* or "thunder-seat" of the Buddha.

Mañjuçrī first appears in the *Lotus*,[1] where he is designated "prince," as one who is already consecrated to the sovereignty of the *Dharma*, and he seems to take precedence of the companion so often afterwards associated with him. Under the name of "Sweet (or Gentle) Glory" he is presented as constantly engaged in the task of rescue, or in personal attendance on the Buddha. As he rises in princely dignity upon a hundred-leaved lotus out of the sea,[2] and goes to hear the Buddha on the traditional seat of his teaching, the hill named the Vulture's Peak, above Rājagriha, another Bodhisattva inquired, "How many hast thou led forth?" Straightway thousands upon thousands rise on lotuses out of the sea (symbol of the ocean of existence), and fly through the air to the Peak like meteors to prove the activity of their deliverer. Did he not say when he took his Bodhisattva vow, "I do not wish to become a Buddha quickly, because I wish to remain to the last in this world to save its beings"?[3] His special function was that of revelation. He was the Teacher with the "gentle voice" (*Mañjughosha*[4]); he was the embodiment of wisdom and learning, author of the scriptures of the "Transcendent Knowledge," *Vāg-īçvara*, "Lord of Speech."[5] In his right hand he wielded a sword, with which to cleave the dark clouds of ignorance; and in his left he carried a book (often resting upon a lotus-flower), the treasured *Prajñā-Pāramitā*.[6] To him the disciple must resort for perfect knowledge; he is the founder of civilisation, the giver of order and of law.[7] Hymns and prayers were addressed to him in

[1] Tr. Kern, *SBE*, xxi. 34.

[2] *Lotus*, p. 248.

[3] Quoted by Poussin (Hastings' *ERE*, viii. 405*b*, note 2) from the *Mañjuçrī-guṇakshetra-vyūha*, tr. into Chinese, A.D. 300.

[4] So in the *Lotus*, p. 11.

[5] Koeppen, *Religion des Buddha*, ii. (1859), 21; Sir Monier Williams, *Buddhism*, p. 201. Cp. the parts played by Apollo and Hermes in the later Greek theology.

[6] Burgess, *Rock Temples of Ajanta* (1879), fig. 18; *Elura*, p. 17; Grunwedel-Burgess, *Buddhist Art in India*, p. 199.

[7] Cp. the story of Sudhana in the *Gaṇḍa Vyūha*, one of the nine Dharmas of Nepal, Mitra, *Nepalese Buddhism*, p. 90 ff. A number of legends connect him especially with China and Nepal, cp. Sylvain Lévi, *Le Népal*, i. (1905), 330 ff.; Paṇḍit Haraprasād Çāstrī on the *Svayambhū Purāṇa*, in *Journal of the Buddhist Text Society* (1894), pt. ii. p. 33; Foucher, *Iconographie*

pious adoration, and finally he came to bear the name Brahmā, and was elevated to the loftiest rank as Ādi-Buddha, the Primordial Source of all existence.[1]

With Mañjuçrī Fah Hien found another Bodhisattva associated as an object of worship, Avalokiteçvara. Of unknown origin, he gathered manifold attributes into his personality, and became the exalted expression of the passion for universal salvation. Mystery hangs about his name as well as his source.[2] But there is no obscurity about his character. He is *Mahā-karuṇa*, "of great mercy," or "the great and merciful." Unknown, apparently, among the disciples of the Great Assembly, for he does not appear in the *Mahāvastu*, he is probably to be recognised among the 32,000 Bodhisattvas of the *Lalita Vistara* under the epithet *Mahā-karuṇā-chandrin*,[3] "radiant with great compassion," just as Mañjuçrī is indicated under the title *Dharaṇîçvara*, "lord of mystic wisdom." But it is in the *Lotus*

Bouddhique de l'Inde, p. 114. The question is complicated by the possibility that there may have been a real person of the same name. Yuan Chwang reported a Stūpa in his honour at Mathurā associated with others of historical significance, dedicated to early disciples like Sāriputta, Upāli, Ānanda, and others. I-Ching relates that he was regarded by Indians as a contemporary sage in China (Takakusu, pp. 136, 169). For his Tibetan incarnations, cp. Waddell, *Buddhism in Tibet*, pp. 35, 231.

[1] Cp. Poussin, *ERE*, viii. 406*a*; and Getty, *The Gods of Northern Buddhism* (1914), p. 96. Hodgson, however, found that in Nepal he was equated with *Viçva-karman*, the Creator or Architect of the universe, who constructed the world at the command of Ādi-Buddha; see his *Essays* (1874), p. 43. On Ādi-Buddha, see below, p. 113.

[2] *Avalokita*+*īçvara*. The first term is a passive participle, but (as Sanskrit admittedly allows) such forms may be occasionally used actively, and Burnouf observed that the early translators so understood it, "the Lord who looks down" (*en bas*), *Introd.*[2], p. 201. It is generally recognised now that the preposition *ava* has in this combination no special local significance; the word simply denotes the constant outlook of the Bodhisattva over all beings in the universe whom he labours in his great mercy to deliver. As such he is designated *samanta-mukha*, "with a face on every side" (*Lotus*, xxiv.). On the expression of this in art see below, p. 74. Interpreted passively, the name yielded the meaning "the Lord who is seen" or manifested (Beal, *Catena*, pp. 282[2], 284). For another suggestion by Mr F. W. Thomas cp. Prof. Poussin's important article in Hastings' *ERE.*, ii. 257*a*.

[3] *Lal. Vist.*, i.

that he is first celebrated in extant literature.[1] How should all beings be rescued from ignorance and suffering and sin? The Buddha relates the story of Prince Vimala-garbha, "of the Stainless Womb," who devoted himself for many hundred thousand myriads of koṭis of auspicious ages (*bhadra-kalpas*) to practising the meditation on the "Abandonment of Evil by all beings."[2] To achieve this end Avalokiteçvara gave himself unceasingly. Endowed by his attainments of knowledge and virtue with the utmost capacity of magic power (*riddhi*),[3] he could pass from world to world, assuming the form of *deva*, man or demon, able to convert the dwellers in the upper spheres, to rescue the sinful from their animal incarnations, and to deliver the condemned from hell.

Theologically he is not indeed supreme. He is the son of the Buddha Amitâbha, "of Infinite Light."[4] As befits such august parentage, he shines himself like the sun. But this does not imply his derivation from any solar cult. Such traits had become conventional decorations, poetic trappings thrown around exalted forms, the imaginative expression of the light which they brought to eyes darkened with passion or blinded with self-love. Surveying all things, Avalokiteçvara was "lord" and "protector" of the world, the chief of kings.[5] Now on Amitâbha's right hand, now on his left, he is ever ready to hear the believer's prayer, and rescue him from danger by fire or flood, from perils of goblins or giants, from poison or robbers, and from the impulses of impure desire or hate.[6] So he was *abhayaṃ-dada*, "Giver of Fearlessness" or security, and pious art loved to surround his image with representations of "Eight

[1] See the hymn in xxiv. The first translation of the *Lotus* into Chinese dates between A.D. 265 and 316 (see below, p. 77). Avalokiteçvara, however, is already mentioned in the *Sukhāvatī Vyūha*, first translated into Chinese A.D. 147–186, cp. Max Muller, *SBE*, xlix. (pt. ii.), p. xxii.

[2] *Sarva-sattva-pāpa-jahana*, cp. *SBE*, xxi. 424.

[3] *Lotus*, p. 415, ver. 18.

[4] *Sukhāvatī-vyūha*, § 31, 13, in *SBE*, xlix. pt. ii. p. 48; tr. into Chinese as early as A.D. 148–170, text by Max Muller and Bunyiu Nanjio (1883), p. iv. On Amitâbha, see below, p. 104.

[5] *Lotus*, p. 415, ver. 17, *trātār jage sadevake*; p. 417, ver. 28, *lokeçvara rāja-nāyako*.

[6] *Lotus*, pp. 406, 413.

Saving Acts," sometimes designated the "litany" of Avalokiteçvara.[1] For his aid Fah Hien prayed in a tremendous storm on his voyage home; and Yuan Chwang tells how unbelieving merchants in the extremity of want, after a three years' voyage, had vainly called on all the gods to whom they sacrificed, and were then delivered by an act of faith in his name.[2] In the intervals of his visitations to all parts of the world he condescended to dwell, so Yuan Chwang related, on Mount Potalaka; and the disciple who forded its streams and scaled its crags might see him as *Īçvara-deva*, and hear gracious words in satisfaction of his desires. Attempts have been made to locate this mountain on the south-east coast of India or in Ceylon. Yuan Chwang did not himself see it, and the student may well conclude that it was no earthly height.[3]

Art, however, could provide a substitute, such as that of which Yuan Chwang tells in Mahāraṭṭha land, of marvellous efficacy in answering prayer.[4] The representations of Avalokiteçvara at Ajanta and elsewhere (often in his character as *Padma-pāṇi*, "lotus-handed," an epithet also of Brahmā and Vishnu), show him with a lotus in one hand and a rosary and vase of the drink of immortality in the other, said to be the insignia also of Brahmā.[5] Upon his forehead or twined in his hair he often bears a small figure of his Sovereign-Father Amitâbha.[6] Sometimes this figure appears at the top of a strange pile of eleven heads, arranged in three tiers of three, with a tenth and eleventh in single order above.[7] Yet another effort was made

[1] Fergusson and Burgess, *Cave Temples of India* (1880), at Ajanta, caves iv. and xxvi. Cp. at Aurangābād, *Archæol. Survey, W. India*, vol. iii. pl. liii. The Ajanta frescoes are described by Waddell, *JRAS* (1893), p. 9 f. For China, cp. Edkins, *Chinese Buddhism* (1880), p. 245 f.

[2] Legge, p. 112; Beal, ii. 125 f.

[3] Cp. Watters, ii. 231.

[4] Watters, ii. 239.

[5] Waddell, *JRAS* (1894), p. 57.

[6] Poussin conjectures that this practice may be of Greek origin, as it is met with at Palmyra; cp. Hastings' *ERE*, i. 97*b*.

[7] Legend attributed this polycephalic character to his distress at discovering the wickedness of the world and the hopelessness of the aim at universal salvation, for as soon as one sinner was converted and delivered another took his place. His head split into ten pieces, and Amitâbha thereupon made each one of them a head; cp. Getty, *The Gods of Northern*

to indicate at once his all-embracing gaze and his readiness to succour the distressed. He was endowed with a thousand arms, and in the palm of each hand was placed an eye! In view of the curious change of sex which Chinese Buddhism subsequently effected, so that Kwan-Yin became a goddess of pity, somewhat resembling the Virgin Mary of Catholic devotion, it is not uninteresting to notice that in one instance in the caves at Elurā[1] he wears a woman's robe. Yuan Chwang, however, knew Avalokiteçvara in his male dignity. When the famous king Çīlâditya Harshavardhana, who paid the Chinese pilgrim such distinguished attention, was called to the throne (about A.D. 610[2]), it was to a famous statue of Avalokiteçvara that he repaired for guidance. His father was dead. The elder brother who had succeeded him had been treacherously murdered by the intrigues of a neighbouring sovereign. The councillors of state at Kanauj summoned him to the duties of the crown, but he shrank from assuming its responsibilities. In his distress he betook himself to a sacred image in a grove near the Ganges, and there with fasting and prayer sought for direction. Like Yahweh to Solomon at Gibeon, the Bodhisattva vouchsafed to appear to him. No burnt-offerings were needed to win the divine favour. His good *karma* had secured him his royal birth. Let him, therefore, fulfil his duty to the realm, raise up the true religion after the persecutor's oppression, and show his zeal by love and pity for the distressed. Then he should secure increase of wisdom and prosperity, and no enemy should triumph

Buddhism, p. 64. The multiplication of heads symbolised the extension of his vision; and the later fancy added a thousand arms, when the palm of each hand was endowed with an eye, to combine the widest outlook and the readiest help. In the statement that there are no polycephalic images in India, Dr Waddell (*JRAS*, 1894, p. 59) appears to have overlooked those at Ajanta (Fergusson and Burgess, *Cave Temples*, p. 357) and at Kanheri (an island of Salsette at the head of the Bombay harbour), Grunwedel-Burgess, *Buddhist Art in India*, p. 203. On the different types of representation cp. also Foucher, *Iconographie Bouddhique*, p. 97 ff. They may be traced even in Ceylon, *ibid.*, p. 109, catal. i. 20, p. 193, and ii. 28, p. 212.

[1] Twelve miles east of Aurungābād, in the Nizam's territory (Fergusson and Burgess, *Cave Temples*, p. 375).

[2] Cp. Max Muller, *Indian Antiquary*, xii. 234. Watters, *Yuan Chwang*, ii. 347, prefers 612.

over him. The promise was abundantly fulfilled by the conquests and splendour of his reign.

With the advance of theological speculation yet higher functions were assigned to Avalokiteçvara. Among the Scriptures of Nepal Hodgson had early noticed two, one in prose and one in poetry, in praise of the "Lord of the World," Padma-Pāni.[1] From the first of these Prof. Cowell translated an account of the Bodhisattva's descent into hell, which he compared with the narrative in the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus.[2] Long ages back the Buddha Çikhin saw Avalokiteçvara approaching him with a present of flowers from Amitâbha. Where, he inquired, was the Bodhisattva performing his works of devotion? And Avalokiteçvara answered that he had made the Great Resolve not to grasp the perfect knowledge of a Buddha until all beings had been not only delivered from punishment and guilt, but were established in the world of Nirvāna. In pursuance of this vow he was visiting the innumerable hells of the universe. In due course he came to Avīci, the dread abode of "joylessness." Its iron realm, girdled with walls and ramparts, seemed one mass of flame. As he drew near the hideous fires cooled, and when he entered lotuses large as chariot wheels burst forth to greet the bringer of Deliverance. As the sufferers were converted and rescued, Yama, the infernal king, stripped of his power, did homage to him and departed. In his next visit to the city of the *pretas* or famished ghosts, abundance was poured around them, and they, too, were set free. The second version[3] portrayed similar activities on earth. He converted the demon *Rākshasas* and their wives in Ceylon, as well as King Bali, whom Vishnu had sent to hell. He repaired to Benares and relieved even the insects and worms from their low estate;[4] he saved the inhabitants of Magadha from famine. Thus the whole world-systems in the deeps of space were open everywhere to his activity. Nothing to him was too small for his beneficence, nothing was too great for his power. For was

[1] The *Kāraṇḍa Vyūha* and the *Guṇa-Kaṛaṇḍa-Vyūha*. Cp. *Essays*, p. 17.

[2] *Journal of Philology* (1876), p. 224 ff.

[3] Described by Burnouf, *Introd.*[2], p. 198 ff.

[4] On birth as worms or flies cp. *Chhāndog. Upanishad*, v. 10, 8, in *SBE*, i. 82, and *Brihad. Up.*, vi. 2, 16, *ibid.*, xv. 209.

he not now the son of one older and mighter even than Amitâbha, the mysterious Ādi-Buddha, the Primal Origin of all? In the recesses of unimaginable time this ancient Being, conceived as Dante figured the Central Power of Paradise under the emblem of simple flame, gave himself to the meditation styled the "Creation of the Universe." Thence was born Avalokiteçvara, who produced sun and moon from his two eyes, Çiva (like Athena) from his forehead, Brahmā from his shoulders, and Nārâyana[1] from his heart. So he became a vast and all-embracing Providence, the author of the visible scene, the hope of the struggling, the conqueror of evil, and the pledge of the final beatitude of all.[2]

V

What, then, was the relation of these multitudinous Bodhisattvas to the no less numerous Buddhas, and how were these Buddhas themselves regarded? Were they really all separate and unconnected beings? The answer to these questions carries us into the heart of the theology of the Great Vehicle, and may best be studied in the famous text commonly known as the "Lotus of the Good Law."[3] First discovered by Bryan Hodgson

[1] See below, p. 265.

[2] The limits of this sketch do not permit of any description of the functions of Avalokiteçvara in China or Japan. See, for example, the very remarkable liturgy written by the Emperor Yung Loh, A.D. 1412, in Beal's *Catena*, p. 398 ff. Dr Timothy Richard informed me some years ago that he had several times himself heard it performed. In *Buddhist China* (1913), p. 170 ff., Mr R. F. Johnston has given an account of a sort of duplicate, the Bodhisattva Ti-tsang, the Chinese form of the Indian Kshiti-garbha ("Womb of Earth,") who was credited with a similar vow and a corresponding beneficent activity. Cp. Beal, *Catena*, p. 59; Nanjio, *Catal.*, 65. Hodgson, quoted by Dr Waddell, *Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 181 (note to p. 179), mentions him as eighth in a group of nine Bodhisattvas saluted by the candidate for initiation into the Vajrâcārya order in Nepal. For his Tibetan form cp. Grunwedel, *Mythologie des Buddhismus in Tibet*, p. 141.

[3] "Saddharma Puṇḍarīka," in *SBE*, xxi., tr. Kern. The term *Dharma* has many senses, and might be rendered here by "religion." Beal, *Catena*, p. 12, observes that the title has no reference to the moral law, and that *the object of the Sūtra is to exhibit the infinite extent of the Lotus creation*; the term *Dharma* is thus equivalent to the "cosmos." On the symbolism of the Lotus-flower, see Waddell, in *ERE*, viii. 144; Anesaki, *Buddhist*

among the nine Sanskrit *Dharmas* of Nepal, it was translated by Burnouf in 1852, and in the absence of works of the Pāli Canon was accepted as a standard of Buddhist doctrine. In the hands of Kern[1] it supplied hints for his interpretation of the Buddha on the lines of solar mythology which further investigation led him to modify. Its Chinese translations are included in the Imperial canons, the earliest being dated between A.D. 265 and 316.[2] It served as the foundation scripture of the great Tien-dai sect, and is said to be found at the present day on the lecterns of all the twelve denominations of Japan. The time and place of composition are unknown, but pious tradition ascribes it to the last years of the Teacher's life, between the ages of seventy-one and seventy-nine.[3] Even Kern thought that some of its material might be of very early date. Its chapters are partly in prose and partly in verse, and sometimes the poetical form seems the older, while in other cases the prose perhaps takes priority.[4] Its contents were not always precisely fixed; there are traces of omission and incorporation; fragments of "Central Asian" texts from Khotan and Kashgar show some divergences from the Nepalese.[5] What devotion it inspired may be gathered from the statement of I-Ching that Huihsi, his second teacher, "read it once a day for more than sixty years; thus the perusal amounted to twenty thousand times!"[6]

The central figure is still the Buddha Çākya Muni. He sits with his disciples on the familiar hill, the Vulture's Peak, near Rājagriha. But he is no longer human; his personality is

Art (1915), p. 15. Prof. Anesaki happily translates the title as "The Lotus of the Perfect Truth," implying the identity of the Buddha with "the eternal Truth which manifests itself as the phenomena of the visible universe."

[1] *SBE*, xxi. (1884).

[2] Nanjio, *Catalogue*, No. 138.

[3] Nanjio, *Short History of the Twelve Japanese Buddhist Sects* (1886), Tokyo, p. xviii.

[4] Winternitz suggests a date for the whole work about A.D. 200. Poussin, *ERE*, viii. 146, favours an earlier date.

[5] Cp. Poussin, *JRAS* (1911), p. 1067, on passages in the collection of Sir Aurel Stein.

[6] Takakusu, p. 205.

"everlasting"; he sees all *dharmas* as ever-present, *sub specie eternitatis*.[1] The presentation may not satisfy the metaphysic of theology, but for the religious consciousness it has the value of God. He bears the epithet "Supreme Purusha" (*Purushottama*), which belongs to Vishnu; and while the Mahāvastu could only assign him *Svayambhū-samatā*, "likeness to self-existence," the Lotus does not shrink from ascribing to him the full title, "the Father of the world, the Self-Existent," the solemn designation of Brahmā.[2] The difficulty arises from the traditional conception of the Buddhahood as the goal of a long process when the Perfect Enlightenment is reached at last. This cannot properly be harmonised with the conception of Absolute and Eternal Being. A God who develops in character and wisdom and thus ascends to the topmost heights of existence, may not satisfy the demands of philosophy, and a Greek would have found him inadequate. But by carrying back the attainment through countless *kotis* of ages, and veiling it in abysmal deeps of Time, Indian imagination secured for the Tathâgata a practical or working Deity, which sufficed for the purpose of universal Deliverance. This is the real theme of this Buddhist Apocalypse.

It opens with a vast concourse of beings of every rank, human and divine, gathered around the Lord, who has entered on the *samādhi*, known as the "Station of the Exposition of Infinity."[3] As he sits motionless in perfect tranquillity, a shower of heavenly flowers falls on the assembly. The whole Buddha-field is shaken in six ways, and a wondrous ray issues from between his eyebrows, and illuminates eighteen thousand Buddha-fields, down to the hell Avīci and up to the limit of existence. The immense multiplicity of the inhabitants of all these worlds is suddenly revealed to Maitreya. He sees all orders of beings in incessant

[1] *Sadā sthitaḥ*, "perpetually stablished"; *pratyaksha-dharmā*; text by Kern and Nanjio (St Petersbourg, 1908), p. 318.

[2] Literally "who is by himself." This is often understood to mean that he had obtained Buddhahood without receiving the teaching from another (so Poussin in *ERE*, "Lotus"). But the other exalted attributes attached to him seem to justify the higher interpretation when compared with the tempered style of the *lokottara-vāda*.

[3] "Ananta-nirdeça-pratishthānaṃ," *SBE*, xxi. 20. *Samādhi* was an ancient term for the sacred trance.

passage from one condition to another: Buddhas preaching to the distressed and weary; Bodhisattvas producing enlightenment according to the degrees of their power; some studying in the forest, some rescuing the sufferers in the hells; some practising energy, or purity, or forbearance under abuse; some making splendid offerings of gifts and devotions; some setting forth the law of quietness or seeking after wisdom.[1] What does the vision mean? It is to be explained by the Buddha's *upāya-kauçalya*, his skilful adaptation of means to ends, his wonderful knowledge and his power to impart it.[2]

For the Buddha has but one sole aim, one lofty object, in coming forth into the world; it is that he may show all beings the sight of the Tathâgata-knowledge, and thus lead them to the supreme goal of Perfect Enlightenment. The various means employed by the countless Buddhas of the past in reasoning and illustration were all adapted to various temperaments and dispositions. They constituted but one *yāna*, one vehicle (or road) to omniscience, and all who travelled by it reached the goal. Still would the Buddhas of the future continue in innumerable spheres the beneficent work in which the Buddhas of that hour were engaged, and everywhere in all worlds, and all time through in every age, the great process of Deliverance should be fulfilled. This is no static universe, it is an infinite flux, in which an endless succession of Tathâgatas arise and pass away; and when Çākya Muni himself has attained "complete extinction"[3] there will be others who will preach fresh discourses and solve old doubts in different ways. Yet there is but one *yāna* and one "way," though there seem to be three,[4] and the Buddhas of the future will reveal the stability of the *Dharma*, its fixed character, its permanent establishment in the world.[5] Yet it is also revealed in its manifoldness to meet the needs of all beings; "I use different means to rouse each according to

[1] These are among the stages of the discipline of Bodhisattvaship.

[2] This is the theme of chap. ii.

[3] *Parinirvuta*; this must be understood in the sense in which Sāriputra afterwards declares it of himself (*SBE*, xxi. p. 61), and says, "My burning has left me."

[4] ii. ver. 68 (Sanskr. *naya*, 69), *SBE*, xxi. p. 48.

[5] ii. ver. 102 (103).

his own character."[1] Here is the primitive tradition of the unity of the Buddhas' Teaching expanded on the scale of an infinite series in an infinite number of worlds. By gigantic accumulations of figures Indian imagination sought to express the boundless majesty of the Lord of the Universe. For as the several Dharmas were all really one and the same, so was it also with the Buddhas. These mighty myriads, past, present, and to come, were not after all really different. They shared the unity of the Truth which they preached; they were all forms of one and the same Buddha who in this book is portrayed as Çākya Muni. "My body has existed in thousands of *kotis* of regions; during a number of *kotis* of ages beyond comprehension I teach the Dharma to beings."[2]

Once more he sits upon the Vulture's Peak, surrounded by crowds of adoring Bodhisattvas.[3] A mighty Stūpa or relic-shrine arises in the sky adorned with arches and terraces, flowers, jewels, and bells. The vast assembly of hearers rise in joy from their seats with outstretched hands, and *devas*, men, and demons are alike filled with wonder. Suddenly a Buddha-ray illuminates the worlds in ten directions, and countless myriads of Buddhas appear, formed in circle after circle like the petals of the mystic rose of Paradise. This boundless multitude awaits with awe the opening of the Stūpa. Cross-legged within sits the Lord Prabhūtaratna, who had entered Nirvāna many hundred thousand myriads of *kotis* of ages before. Faint and emaciated he declares, as if in abstract meditation, that he has come to hear the exposition of the "Lotus of the True Religion," and Çākya Muni rises into the sky and sits beside him on his jewelled throne. They are in fact identical. The hosts around are all the productions of Çākya Muni's own proper body, wrought by his magic power, the manifestations of his omnipresent and unending energy. Not only at Gayā did he attain Supreme Enlightenment, he had really reached it many hundred thousand

[1] ii. ver. 108 (109). The implication is that the various Scriptures are all forms of the same Dharma (cp. chap. xv. p. 301), just as in the Bhagavad Gītā (ix. 23) Krishna declares that offerings made in faith to other gods are really made to himself. Cp. *Malachi* i. 11.

[2] x. ver. 26; *SBE*, xxi. p. 224. A *koti* is ten millions.

[3] Chap. xi.

myriads of *kotis* of ages before.[1] Then in those ages he brought myriads of beings to ripeness. Time after time he appeared to pass away, but it was only an educative device, he really continued to preach the Law. "Repeatedly am I born in the world of the living."[2] So Krishna has taught, "Though birthless and unchanging, I come into birth age after age."[3] From the infinite past the Tathâgata had been proclaiming the Dharma in this and in all other worlds, in different ages satisfying the wants of all orders of beings in their several ways, appearing indeed to be born and die, but always living, infinite and everlasting, seeing the universe as it really is, beholding all things always present to him. That is in truth the vision of the Eternal, and the amazing piles of numbers which are multiplied with such facile extravagance are so many attempts to express in terms of space and time the unity and infinity of God.[4] Finally, as the two Lords sit side by side in the jewelled Stūpa in the sky, surrounded by hosts of Buddhas on their jewelled thrones, on every side in all directions in the different worlds a great Apocalypse takes place.[5] From beneath the earth rise many hundred thousand myriads of *kotis* of Bodhisattvas, all with the gold-hued bodies and the thirty-two marks of Mahā-Purusha. They salute the feet of the two Tathâgatas, who sit on high silent and calm while they chant hymns of praise, and the multitude of the four classes of Hearers remains mute. Fifty æons roll by, and they seem to the vast concourse no longer than one afternoon. Here is a picture of "central peace subsisting at the heart of endless agitation." This is the ultimate reality for faith. The Buddhas in all the worlds who are actually the numberless projections of the Lord, represent the abiding victory of the Truth. They have given themselves for the welfare of gods and men, and their work is done. The Bodhisattvas continue the great strife with evil, and approach continually the completion of their quest, where the world of ignorance and suffering and sin is transfigured into the fruition of achieved knowledge and realised good.

[1] Chap. xv., *SBE*, xxi. p. 299.
[2] xv. ver. 7.
[3] *Bhagavad Gītā*, iv. 6, 8, tr. Barnett. Cp. below, p. 259.
[4] Cp. chap. vii.
[5] Chap. xiv. p. 282.

What is the inner motive of this immense transformation? The older scheme provided a succession of Buddhas, but they followed each other without any regularity. No world-age could ever count more than one, and whole æons might pass through recurring dissolutions and renewals without one. The various ranks of beings must fulfil their several lives unaided by any opportunity of hearing the saving Truth. The advent of a Buddha depended on antecedents in the distant past: had anyone been found, like the hermit Sumedha, the spiritual ancestor of Gotama, to make the Great Resolve and maintain it untarnished through the long discipline of preparation? But meanwhile the needs of conscious beings were for ever fresh. Religion could not be content with leaving their satisfaction to accident. If Sumedha had preferred to cross the ocean of existence on his own merits and escape from life at once, there would have been no Buddha, no Dhamma, and no Sangha.[1] Evil would have had no Conqueror: the veils of ignorance and sin enveloping the world would never have been removed. Once admit into human thought the idea of rescue from apathy and sloth, from lust and pain, from mental doubt and moral guilt, and the religious consciousness will call for some more permanent provision than casual saviours, contingent deliverers, intermittent revealers. It will first demand one always at hand, and will finally plead that his help shall be available for all. The unity of the Dhamma recognised a perpetual Teaching. Where could the Supreme Wisdom exist save in an unchanging Mind? And how could a Being of Perfect Enlightenment and endless devotion to the welfare of all classes of conscious existence from the topmost heaven to the lowest hell fail to achieve his purpose and establish righteousness throughout the world? The peculiar metaphysic of the Great Vehicle may declare everything void, and plunge the Tathâgata, the Four Truths, and Nirvāna into a sea of negation. Its moral energy will culminate in a practical Theism and a promise of universal Salvation.

The process of deliverance may, indeed, be lengthy; two

[1] The "Union" or Order of disciples. On the original use of the term for various forms of association, military, political, industrial, cp. Prof. B. R. Bhandarkar, *Lectures on the Ancient History of India*, Calcutta (1919), p. 143 ff.

remarkable parables throw light upon it. The first[1] has often been compared with the Gospel story of the Prodigal. Wordy and diffuse, it wholly lacks the incomparable art of the Evangelist, but it carries the treatment of the sinner through a much more advanced stage. A son leaves home and wanders for many years in distant lands, seeking at last for food and clothing. The father, searching for him, removes to another country, and there becomes rich, with treasure and granaries, slaves, elephants, horses, carriages, and a great retinue. But he constantly thinks of his lost son, and yearns that he were with him to enjoy his wealth. Seated one day at his palace-gate with attendants from the four castes around him, he sees his son approaching. The wanderer supposes that he has come unexpectedly into the presence of some grandee, and slinks away to find a modest alms in a street of the poor. Meanwhile the father devises a discipline of restoration. The son is engaged to clear away a heap of dirt, and his father watches his steady labour from a window day by day. Putting on old clothes, he goes and talks to him, promises him little gifts and extra pay, and bids him look upon him as a father. Through twenty years this preparation of service is prolonged, until the father, still unknown, makes over his wealth to his son, who by that time is indifferent to riches, inured to duty, and weaned from the temptations of the world. At length, as death approaches, he gathers king and citizens together, and formally presents him as his son and heir. Such is the way in which the Buddha trains his sons. He seems to take no notice; he is biding his time; he tests the temper of his disciples. "Be constant," he says, "in subduing your low dispositions," and to those who overcome he gives his wealth. As *Īçvara* of all the world he is aware of the circumstances of being of every grade. He indicates their duties, considers the variety of their characters, and thus for ever guides them to their goal. Here he is presented as Father and Helper, Providence and Friend.

A second parable[2] tells of a mighty cloud which comes up

[1] In chap. IV. The prose form appears in an address of four leading Elders to the Bhagavat. The subsequent poem is ascribed to Mahā-Kāçyapa only.

[2] Chap. V.

over the world, and sheds its fertilising rain on mountain and valley throughout the wide earth. The grasses and shrubs, the herbs and trees of every sort, are quickened by the same water. They sprout and grow, they bloom and yield their fruit, each after its kind, by its own laws, still partaking of one and the same essence. Such is the manifestation of the Buddha. Like a great cloud he appears in the world to refresh the withered and promote further growth. To all beings does he proclaim the Dharma without distinction, instructing all alike, depraved and good, sectarian, heretic, and true believer—"Inaccessible to weariness, I spread in season the rain of the Truth." So it is affirmed that in the education of his sons the Tathâgata is equal and not unequal, impartial and not partial. As the light from sun and moon shines upon all, the virtuous and wicked, the fragrant and ill-smelling, so does the wisdom of the All-Knowing guide all beings alike. Here are the Gospel images, the sun that shines on the evil and the good, the rain that falls on the just and on the unjust, symbols of the equal beneficence of God. But the figure of the great loving cloud full of invigorating help for all, is the emblem of something more than natural bounty. It is a type of spiritual energy, of educative grace, for ever working in the sphere of souls. The same idea lies at the heart of yet another parable which has its counterpart in Johannine teaching. A man born blind [1] in consequence of former sin cannot believe what he is told about the scene around. A kindly physician searches on the Himâlaya for four rare drugs,[2] and opens his eyes. He is at first elated by his deliverance, and supposes himself in the possession of all knowledge. Wise seers convict him of ignorance in which he takes darkness for light and light for darkness, and he retires from the world and meditates upon the higher Wisdom. Just so does the Tathâgata, the Great Physician, open the eyes of the ignorant, revealing different truths to different minds, and lead them finally to the vision of the entire Dharma. The age-long process of spiritual training is for ever going on, and powers divine and human are linked in one purpose and co-operate for one end. So as "all beings are his children; . . . he causes all to reach complete Nirvâna";[3] and in the fulness of universal Buddhahood—for

[1] v. p. 129 ff. [2] The Four Truths. [3] iii. p. 81.

the promise runs, "Ye shall all become Buddhas"—the life of communion with the Eternal will be at last attained.

VI

The "Lotus" is a book of religion and not of philosophy. Its author is conscious that his teaching is new, and he does not expect it to be at once or generally received. He is the first herald of an esoteric Truth, the mystery of the doctrine of the *Adhyātmā* or Supreme Spirit.[1] But Buddhism had started as a peculiar blend of philosophical thought and moral culture, and it never insisted upon any form of metaphysical or anti-metaphysical orthodoxy.[2] Just as it accommodated the gods of popular devotion within its field of transitory existence, so also it could be hospitable to different interpretations of the external world, and opposite tendencies to natural Realism and Empirical Idealism soon began to divide its schools. The *Lotus* parades vast multitudes of *devas* under the leadership of Brahmā and Çiva,—Vishnu is significantly absent, though his title *Purushottama* is freely applied to Çākya Muni and the multitudinous Buddhas. And just as it uses again and again the religious terminology of Brahmanism, it glances also at the language of philosophy. When the future destiny of the eminent disciple Çāriputra to Perfect Enlightenment is announced, some of the venerable Elders are moved to confess that in spite of the Bhagavat's instruction they are unable to realise the fact that all is Void;[3] while the Bodhisattvas of high degree delight in hearing of it.[4] The term opens up very different modes of thought. Gotama himself employed it in the polemic against the doctrine of a permanent transmigrating *attan* or self.[5] The world, he taught, was void of self; no soul was to be found in eye or ear or any organs or objects of sense; nor could it be

[1] *Ādhyātmika-dharma-rahasyam*, chap. x. p. 219, "the transcendent spiritual esoteric love of the Law" (Kern).

[2] Even Gotama himself left some important consequences of his main doctrine (of No-Self) undetermined.

[3] Chap. iv. p. 99.

[4] Chap. v. 41, p. 127; iv. 45, p. 114.

[5] The Pāli term *suññata* (Sanskr. *çūnyata*) does not occur in the early Upanishads. Whether Gotama borrowed it from previous philosophical use, or first employed it himself, must remain uncertain.

discovered in the co-ordinating *manas* which organised the sense impressions for thought, or in the higher consciousness.[1] All these were, therefore, in that sense "void." Similarly there was an "Emancipation of Thought" which was "void," empty of the three fires of passion, ill-will, and infatuation, or lust, hate, and dulness, whose extinction brought the blessed calm of Nirvāna.[2] The "Void" accordingly became a designation of this aspect of Buddhist holiness. It was the "pasture" or "field" of the Arahat or saint.[3] But by a process which it is no longer possible to trace in detail, the doctrine of the "Void" received a wholly new philosophical application. A precious link would indeed be available if it were possible to attribute to Açvaghosha, the poet, scholar, and musician at the court of Kanishka, the Kushan sovereign of North-West India[4] (about A.D. 120), the text known as "The Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna."[5] But the incongruity of the doctrines of this book with the poem known as the *Buddha-charita*, which there is good reason to believe was his composition,[6] renders his authorship in

[1] *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, iv. p. 54.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 297, *ceto-vimutti suññā rāgena, suññā dosena, suññā mohena.*

[3] Cp. *Dhammapada*, vii. 92, *suññato animitto ca vimokho yesaṃ gocaro.* The adjective *animitto*, "without marks," is also applied to the *ceto-vimutti* just named. A third term is also applied to *vimokho* in *Dhp. atthakathā* p. 172, *appaṇihita*, "not hankered after" (cp. Aung and Mrs Rhys Davids, *Compendium of Philosophy*, 1910, p. 211), where they are all identified as names of Nibbāna, and *suññato vimokho* is explained by the absence of *rāga-dosa-moha*. The same three terms are also applied to *phasso* or contact, *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, iv. 295, and to *samādhi*, religious meditation, *ibid.*, p. 297. They reappear in the *Lotus*, iv. p. 99, *çūnyatânimittâpraṇihitaṃ sarvam*, where they apparently characterise the "all" or universe. If so, their meaning has been already diverted from the "unconditioned" character of Nirvāna to the metaphysical unreality of the external world. How did this transfer take place unless *çūnya* had already possessed that meaning before Gotama took it over for his own purposes? It seems less likely that later teaching should have appropriated it in a new connection when Gotama had stamped it with a distinct ethical significance.

[4] Cp. Vincent A. Smith, *Early History of India* (1904), p. 225.

[5] Translated from the Chinese version of A.D. 710 (an earlier one is dated 554) by Teitaro Suzuki, Chicago (1900). Cp. Dr T. Richard, *The New Testament of Higher Buddhism* (1910).

[6] Cp. Cowell, in *SBE*, xlix., and Winternitz, *Gesch. der Ind. Lit.*, ii. (erste Hälfte), 203 ff.

the highest degree doubtful.[1] We must be content, therefore, to indicate the new significance of the "Void" as it appears in the doctrine of the Mādhyamakas or school of "the Mean." Its reputed founder Nāgârjuna was a Brāhman from South India. Legend gathered around his name and obscured the details of his life. That he was trained in one of the schools of philosophy before his conversion to Buddhism may be inferred from the metaphysical doctrines which he introduced into the Great Vehicle a generation or two after Açvaghosha had passed away.[2] So great was his fame that throughout the sixteen great provinces of India he was known as a "Buddha without his characteristic marks," and his works were respected as if they had been the Buddha's own words. Prophecy foretold his birth and assigned to him the function of overthrowing the doctrines of the *Āstikas* (Natural Realists) on one side, and their opponents the *Nâstikas* (Sceptics) on the other.[3] Thus, like the original teaching of Gotama, which provided a Middle Way between the Eternalists and the Annihilationists,[4] the founder of the Mādhyamakas sought to mark out a Middle Way between the affirmation and the denial of all existence. A long list of works was attached to his name, and the first Aphorism ascribed to him expressed his homage to the Perfectly Enlightened who had taught that the origin and destruction of the universe were but appearance, it had neither begun nor would it cease to be, it could not be annihilated nor would it last for ever, it never came into being and would never pass away.[5] What was the meaning of these riddles?[6]

The Mādhyamaka philosophy started from the distinction

[1] So two of Suzuki's most distinguished fellow-scholars, Professors, Anesaki and Takakusu.

[2] Kern, *Manual of Buddhism*, p. 122 f., places him towards the end of the second century A.D., and Winternitz, *op. cit.*, p. 253, follows. Watters ii. 204, with some hesitation, adopts the third century. Poussin prefers an earlier date.

[3] Cp. Nanjio, *Twelve Japanese Buddhist Sects*, p. 48 f.

[4] Cp. *ante*, p. 19 f.

[5] Cp. *Journal of the Buddhist Text Society* (Calcutta, 1895), ii. 7; Poussin, *Mūlamādhyamaka-Kārikās* (St Petersbourg, 1903), p. 11.

[6] Cp. Kern, *Manual*, p. 127; Poussin, *Bouddhisme* (1909), p. 195 ff.; Suzuki, *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, p. 95 ff.

between two kinds of truth. The first concerns the world of our common experience, which from the empirical point of view is real enough. We are involved in the round of rebirths; the processes of thought or action are for ever going on; we are laying up merit or demerit; and the moral passion of Buddhism had sufficient vitality to maintain the energy of the ethical life through the most relentless affirmation that metaphysically it was all "empty," destitute of reality, founded upon illusion. The world as we view it is no solid earth or fretted vault of sky; those are only the shifting sense-perceptions of our consciousness; they do not correspond with what *is*. The whole dualism of subject and object is a false division, "void" of truth (*çūnya*), and our object must be to extricate ourselves from this fundamental error and recognise that neither affirmation nor denial on that plane of thought has any meaning. There is, indeed, so much congruity even in these errors that we can classify these appearances and actually reason upon them. And this is a kind of truth, but it is temporary and conditional. It covers the world with a veil of illusion.[1] The Buddha's aim is to deliver men from this illusion, for it is the cause of their misery. They have created all kinds of relations out of "emptiness," and they are entangled in them like the flies in a spider's web. Had not the Teacher laid it down that "there is no wife here, nor husband, no being, no living soul, no person? All these phenomena (*dharmas*) are without reality."[2] A mendicant brother whose sight is affected thinks he sees flies or hairs in his almsbowl, and endeavours to remove them.[3] "What are you doing?" asks some clear-sighted passer-

[1] *Loka-saṃvriti-satya*, according to the Indian interpretation of the difficult word *saṃvriti*. Kern understands it in the sense of "reason," and supposes that the second and higher kind lies outside its domain. But cp. Çāntideva, *Bodhicaryâvatāra*, ix. 2, "Samvritiḥ paramârthaçca satyadvayam idaṃ matam."

[2] Cp. *Lotus*, xiii. 17–20, p. 267. Kern wrongly translates *dharmas* by "laws." The word is a constant difficulty. On p. 222 we read "What is the pulpit of the Tathâgata?" Sanskr. (p. 234), his *dharmâsana*, literally "his truth (or teaching) seat." The answer is with a play on the word *dharma*, his *sarva-dharma-çūnyatā-praveça*, his "penetration into the emptiness of all phenomena."

[3] Poussin, *Bouddhisme*, p. 192, the stock illustration of the Mādhyamakas.

by, looking into the bowl and seeing that it is empty. "I am taking out the flies and the hair." "But there are no flies or hair in the bowl." Yet still the man of troubled sight persists. It is a very homely parable. The sufferer from ophthalmia is the type of the man who is involved in the illusion of pseudo-reality. The questioner who tries to convince him of his error stands for the Buddha and his "supreme truth."[1] He perceives that neither affirmation nor negation of the flies and hair has any real meaning. They do not belong to the field at all. The recognition of this apparitional or dream-like character of our common knowledge is the first step towards the apprehension of the Absolute. The true knowledge is, however, itself a non-knowledge; it refuses to assert anything of the ultimate Reality; it says "I do not know," not in the spirit of agnostic denial, but in the sense that "a God who is understood is no God."[2] Hence this, too, is "void." It transcends all the oppositions of being and not-being, of the abiding and the phenomenal, the permanent and the transient, of subject and object, of mind and matter. It contains nothing concrete or individual, making it an object of particularisation. Contrasted with the empirical reality of sensible existences it is "void"; just as the empirical reality of change and succession in its turn contrasted with the thing-in-itself is "void." Here thought is landed in universal desolation. A hollow illusion and a blank Absolute confront each other. Nothing but an extraordinary vigour of moral enthusiasm could have carried believers through the cult of an illusory Buddha to reach an illusory Nirvāna. It was a singular result of this method that everything was doubted except the doubt. If everything is void, said the objector, if nothing arises or passes away, there can be no Noble Truths, no "fruit" of good or evil deeds,[3] no conduct of life along the Eightfold Noble Path, no Dharma, no Sangha, and no Buddha.

[1] *Paramârtha-satya.*

[2] Cp. the old Upanishad formula, "neti neti," and the "negative" theologies of the West, Lect. VI., below, pp. 325, 342.

[3] This denial of the results of action was a heresy of the gravest kind; it cut off the roots of good, and led men to hell. Adherence to "voidness" was said to be "incurable," and kept the adherent in the *saṃsāra* without means of escape (Poussin).

Not so, replied Nāgârjuna; beneath the conventions of our common life, concealed by apparent truth, lies the doctrine of the Supreme Truth which quenches all craving and brings inward peace. For who will continue to desire that which he knows does not exist?[1]

In due time philosophy avenged itself on these negations. The experience which was thus described as "empty" was, after all, a fact. What, then, was its nature, what was its origin, what determined its form, what explained its matter? "Empty" was the opposite of "full": fulness implied something contained and something containing. What was it that kept the contents together? Where was the principle which supplied the outline, or constituted the boundary, that marked out an interior into which, or out of which, experience could flow? The answer to such questions was found in the second great school of Mahāyānist doctrine, known as the *Yogâchāra* or "Yoga-Rule,"[2] founded or developed by Asanga in the latter half of the fourth or early in the fifth century. He was the oldest of three brothers, belonging to a Brāhman family in Peshawar.[3] What influences led them to take orders in Buddhism is not recorded; they all joined the school of the *Sarvâsti-vādins* or Realists. But in the midst of Mahāyānist teaching Asanga sought to understand the conception of the "Void," and strove by meditation to free himself from the bonds of desire. Deeply engaged in the austere practices of Yoga which had played a great part in Buddhism (as in all the higher systems of philosophy[4]) since its first days, he aspired to attain the vision of "Supreme Truth." Legend attributed to him the intention of suicide in his failure

[1] On the type of religious experience generated in this school, cp. Çāntideva's *Bodhicaryâvatāra*, below, p. 100. The "Void" was also the theme of the group of works included in Nepal under the title of *Prajñā-Pāramitā*, the "Perfect Gnosis" or "Transcendental Knowledge"; cp. Mitra, *op. cit.*, p. 177 ff., which began to be known in China by the end of the fourth century (Nanjio, *Catal.*, 19). Yuan Chwang was engaged in translating the Great Sūtra (in 200,000 Sanskrit verses!) in the years 660–661, and completed the work before his death (Beal, *Life*, p. 217).

[2] Also as the *Vijñāna-vādin*.

[3] Cp. Prof. Sylvain Lévi, *Mahāyāna-Sūtrâlaṃkāra* (1911), ii. 2; Winternitz, *op. cit.*, p. 255.

[4] See Lect. IV., p. 211 ff.

and despair. Rescued by the Arahat Pindola, who discerned his danger afar off, he ascended to the Tusita heaven, and there received the instruction of the future Buddha Maitreya on the mystery of Vacuity. After all, the inward apprehension of sublime Reality required something positive to apprehend. In universal negation there was no road to the ultimate solution of the whole problem of the relation of phenomenal experience to the Absolute.

Behind Asanga lay the philosophies of the Brahmanical schools and the opposing schemes of early Buddhist Empirical Idealism and the Natural Realism which he had himself embraced. Foreign influences had penetrated the north-western culture; Greek art had exercised a far-reaching influence on Buddhist sculpture; Greek science had lent terms to Hindu astronomy; different types of Gnostic speculation were spread through Western Asia, and the religion of Manes had made its way from the Mediterranean to Turkestan. What commerce of ideas may have been promoted by travel and trade it is not possible to define. But it may at least be noted that Christian writers from the fourth century onwards connect the origins of Manichæism with a certain Terebinthus-Buddha who claimed miraculous birth and taught a doctrine of transmigration.[1] If these names and ideas could have gained a footing in Syria, it is not impossible that suggestions of Platonic or Neoplatonic thought might have reached India. But the ultimates of metaphysical speculation are few, and there is no need to invoke an alien stimulus for the course of Asanga's inquiry into the constitution of his own mind. What, he asked himself, was the real organ or instrument of knowledge? It was easy enough to show that our senses often play us false, and give inaccurate reports of the external world. What lay at the back of sensation and rendered its various forms possible? Buddhism had early fixed attention on the *manas* as the agent which co-ordinated the impressions of sense and with the help of *vijñāna* (sometimes equivalent to "consciousness," sometimes more narrowly limited

[1] See the account of the Disputation of Archelaus with Manes (Routh, *Reliquiæ Sacræ*, v. 3–206, lii.), supposed to have taken place about A.D. 277. The work (whether genuine or fictitious) was known to Jerome and Epiphanius in the fourth century.

to "cognition") turned them into perceptions and laid the foundations of knowledge. Beneath their endless variety and transient succession there must be some permanent element, some "home" or "abode" of this power (*ālaya-vijñāna*), where these transformations took place and the edifice of thought was reared. Here was the ground of the whole fabric of our interior activity. It was not a person or a soul, it had no separate individuality; to that doctrine of early Buddhism Asanga remained faithful. It could only be regarded as a kind of principle or energy involved in all feelings and judgments, and it was expressed in the bottom-affirmation of consciousness, "I am."[1] Here was the potency which gave all fleeting impressions their form, and was consequently superior in value to them all. It dwells in each as a common element from mind to mind throughout the whole hierarchy of existence, and provides the means for the mystical apprehension of the Final Unity. Of this apprehension the agent or instrument was *Bodhi*, the "Enlightenment" which was the abstract essence of the *Dharma*, and was concretely realised in the infinite multitude of the Buddhas. Here is the true Absolute, which excludes all duality, and the aim of the disciple is to rise to its full discernment through the ten stages of Bodhisattvaship from the first entry on the course in Joy up to the final Unction in the sacred Cloud, when he is prepared to attain Perfect Illumination and become a Buddha.[2]

To this type of thought Prof. Max Muller proposed to give the title Bodhi-ism, to distinguish it from the early teaching of Gotama. It is laboriously expounded in the Chinese translation of the Surangama Sūtra, ascribed to Kumārajīva, A.D. 384–417.[3] Its vast extent (Beal reckons it as long as the New Testament)[4] has probably prevented scholars from attempting to grapple with it, and the abstract by Prof. Beal must be received with some reserve. But the main course of its argument seems fairly clear. Seated in the preaching hall

[1] Cp. Lévi, ii. 20.

[2] Cp. *ante*, p. 68. Lévi, *op. cit.*, ii. 21–27, has delineated the special forms of the Ten Stages in Asanga's scheme.

[3] Nanjio, *Catal.*, 399.

[4] *Catena*, p. 286.

of the famous Jeta-grove, the Buddha inquires of Ānanda what causes led him to become a disciple. He saw the thirty-two marks, he replies, in their golden splendour, and he felt in his mind the delight of love. "Then where is your sight," is the Buddha's next question, "and where is your mind?" "In my eyes without me in my head," is the answer, "and in the understanding heart within." A series of Socratic thrusts drives Ānanda from one position to another, till the final suggestion that the mind is without local habitation, indefinite and unattached, independent in fact of space, is triumphantly refuted. The Buddha then introduces the fundamental distinction between the conditioned mind entangled in the net of sense-experience, and the True Nature, the ultimate ground of all thinking. Sitting on his lion throne he lays his hand on Ānanda's head and declares: "Every phenomenon that presents itself to our knowledge is but the manifestation of Mind. The entire theory of the causes of production throughout the infinite worlds is simply the result of Mind, which is the true substratum of all."[1]

When Ānanda respectfully suggests that this involves the heresy that there is a true personal Ego diffused throughout the universe, the conclusion is evaded by a reference to the unreality of the world as we know it. A man afflicted with cataract sees a five-coloured shadow round the light of a lamp. The circular halo has no existence independent of the lamp or of the diseased eye. The visible scene, in the same way, with its mountains and rivers, is the result of a kind of cataract on the True Sight. Banish the influences which have mingled with the True, and you may put an end to the causes of life and death and reach "the Perfection of Bodhi, the Ever Pure and Composed Heart, the Changeless Condition of Accomplished Wisdom."[2] Under these and similar exhortations the whole assembly by the Buddha's power perceives that all things in the universe are all alike the primeval Heart of Bodhi which comprehends all things in itself; and in a rapture of aspiration they desire to be the means of converting endless worlds of beings and causing them to experience the same deep heart of gratitude. "Thus would we return the boundless love of

[1] Beal, p. 303. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 329.

the Buddha, and rescue the countless beings yet immersed in sin, and in the end with them find Rest."[1]

VII

The Great Vehicle thus exhibits the Buddha in incessant activity and yet presents him as "completely extinct." Its teachers inherited the language which described him as dead, and at the same time declared him to be everywhere and for ever alive. To harmonise these opposites and provide the believer with an imaginative form in which they might dwell together was the object of the perplexing doctrine of the *Tri-kāya* or "Three Bodies."[2] Undeveloped in the *Lotus*, it comes into view in the later literature, and held its own for centuries; its last definite trace occurs in an inscription by a pious Chinese pilgrim named Yun Chu at Buddha-Gayā in 1022. It has some analogy with the Hindu *Tri-Mūrti* or "Triple Form,"[3] and in the employment of the sacred number Three it could lend itself to something bearing a remote resemblance to the Christian Trinity.[4]

It had already been observed that a very close relation was early established between the Buddha and his Dhamma. Among his titles was *Dhamma-kāya*, "Dhamma-bodied."[5] So intimately were they connected, so complete in fact was their identification, that the Buddha could say to the venerable Vakkali in the Bamboo-grove at Rājagriha, "He that sees the Dhamma sees me, and he who sees me sees the Dhamma."[6]

[1] Beal, p. 343 f. Cp. the similar doctrines of extreme idealism in the "Diamond-Cutter," *SBE*, xlix. pt. ii. (with Max Müller's introduction), first translated into Chinese, 384–417, and the larger and smaller *Prajñā-Pāramitā-Hridaya Sūtras* in the same volume.

[2] M. Poussin has lavished upon it a wealth of learning in the *JRAS* (1906), "The Three Bodies of a Buddha," p. 943 ff.; and it is expounded in less technical form by Suzuki, *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, x. and xi.

[3] Brahmā, Vishnu, Çiva; cp. Lect. V., p. 276.

[4] Cp. Beal, *Catena*, p. 10, on the works of a Chinese Buddhist, Jin Ch'au of Pekin, published by the Emperor Wan Leih in 1573, on the relation of the three Bodies to the one Substance. Cp. Soderblom on "Holy Triads," in *Transactions of the Third Congress for the Hist. of Rel.*, Oxford, ii. 400.

[5] Lect. I., *ante*, p. 40.

[6] *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, iii. 122; *Itivuttaka*, p. 91.

After his death the Dhamma and the Vinaya will take his place as Teacher.[1] The Dhamma is thus a kind of continuum of his living energy, a survival of the Master's moral activity unembarrassed by decay of his material form. It is an impalpable presence which provides a permanent standard of truth and a fountain of energy for all believers. When King Milinda asks the venerable Nāgasena whether the Buddha can be pointed out as here or there, the Elder promptly answers, "No, the Blessed One has come to an end, and it cannot be pointed out of him that he is here or there. But in the *Dhamma-kāya* he can be pointed out, for the Dhamma was preached by the Blessed One."[2] The doctrine thus started with an imaginative conception of the abiding presence of the Buddha in his Teaching. For there was, as we have seen, an ideal and unchanging Dhamma which was proclaimed in the same terms by every member of the long succession; and the unity of the Dhamma provided a basis for the later doctrine of the unity of the Buddhas.[3] The Truth was immutable, and those who revealed it were no more many but One. Behind an everlasting Dhamma stood an Absolute and Eternal Buddha.

In the presence of this transcendent Reality the *Dharma-kāya* received a totally new interpretation. It ceased to be a religious tradition, it became a metaphysical entity. What was the relation of the Buddha in his immutability to the world of our experience? He was the ground of all existence, the ultimate source whence all phenomena proceed, the principle of identity beneath all diversity. To this principle scholastic

[1] *Dīgha Nikāya*, ii. 154; *Dialogues*, ii. 171.

[2] *SBE*, xxxv. 114. In particular it came to be identified with a famous Sanskrit verse, "Whatever *dharmas* arise from some cause, of these the Tathâgatas have declared the cause, and their cessation (or destruction) likewise has been declared by the Great Çramana." A Sūtra translated into Chinese by Divâkara, A.D. 680, relates that this was spoken by the Buddha to Avalokiteçvara in the heaven of the Thirty-three Gods (under the lordship of Indra, on the summit of Mount Mēru). It was to be written down and placed in a memorial shrine as the Buddha's *Dharma-kāya*; cp. Nanjio, *Catalogue*, 523. On the wide diffusion of the formula in cave-inscriptions as well as in literature, see Burgess, *Report on the Elura Cave Temples* (1883), p. 13.

[3] Cp. *ante*, p. 41.

philosophy gave the awkward name *Tathatā*, "trueness," *i.e.* "true nature,"[1]—that inner essence which was the foundation and support of the whole universe, with all its infinite variety of phases and conditions determining the *samsāra* under the Law of the Deed. These conditions had very early received the name of *dhamma*, and from this point of view the *Dharma-kāya* acquired quite a new meaning. It came to denote that which lay beneath all phenomena, but continually manifested itself through them. It was identical with Supreme Enlightenment, with the Perfect Knowledge.[2] Herein lay the *dharmatā* of all the Buddhas, the primal element common to them all. This intrinsic nature (*sva-bhāva*) of course transcended the temporal incidents of birth and death It was declared to be invisible, undefiled, unchanging. The modern Japanese scholar who finds the word "God" unsuitable to describe the object of his religious faith, because it suggests the idea of an arbitrary Creator and does not recognise the truth of moral causation, of the Deed and its fruit,[3] tells us that the *Dharma-kāya* is actually his God. This is the Reality beyond all limitations of the transient and apparent. This is the omnipresent immanent energy of the whole universe, and in it we "live and move and have our being." On this the disciple meditates with a kind of triumphant joy, and to realise communion with it is the aim of long moral discipline and spiritual concentration. "Homage to the incomparable *Dharma*-body of the Conquerors," sang the philosophical poet,[4] "which is neither one nor multiple, which supports the great blessing of salvation for oneself and for one's neighbour . . . unique in its kind, diffused, transcendent, and to be known by every one in himself." As the pious pilgrim Yun Chu contemplates its sublime and mysterious Reality above the phenomenal sequence of causes and effects, abiding throughout all time without entanglement in a world of change, the

[1] Sometimes more fully *bhūta-tathatā*, "trueness of being."

[2] *Bodhi, Prajñā Pāramitā.*

[3] Or because of Christian associations with a Being who "caused the downfall of mankind, and, touched by the pang of remorse, sent down his only Son to save the depraved" (Suzuki, *Outlines*, p. 219).

[4] Poussin, *JRAS* (1906), p. 955, suggests Nāgârjuna (?); cp. Lévi in M. Chavannes' article on the Chinese Inscriptions at Buddha-Gayā, in *Rev. de l'Histoire des Religions*, xxxiv. 17; and Nanjio, *Catalogue*, 1066.

language of gratitude and praise is exhausted, the meaning of his religion breaks upon him as though he had never understood it before, "I have met for this time this Body pure and calm."[1]

By its very nature the *Dharma-kāya* could not be compacted into a human form. When a Buddha appeared among men or in any one of the innumerable worlds, he needed, therefore, a body of some other kind. Historic Buddhism provided one of flesh and blood like that of an ordinary man, nourished with food, refreshed by sleep, subject to all natural processes from birth to death. It was, indeed, adorned with the Thirty-two Marks of Mahā-Purusha, and in that respect surpassed the common frame which the believer was taught to regard as a mere bundle of loathsome impurities. Piety soon began to demand that the Buddha should be lifted above all liability to weakness or defilement, and the early efforts of thought in this direction have been already described.[2] In the *Lotus* the Docetic tendency is full blown; the Buddha only seems to be born and die, to enter into Nirvāna, to become extinct. Whether on this earth in the fashion of Çākya Muni, or in other realms among other beings, he assumes a temporary body, fabricated for the specific purpose, and condescends to transform himself so as to become visible to gods or demons. Such bodies could be produced and laid aside, as his manifestations were repeated from age to age and world to world; they went by the name of *Nirmāṇa-kāya*, "creation-body," wrought by the Buddha's wondrous power to bring succour to men, said Yun Chu, in the midst of life's "fire,"[3] the cure for all ills, for the children of his great compassion.

But there was yet a third form corresponding to the incessant activity of the Buddha to save and bless. He is the Eternal Teacher, for ever sending forth the Truth which will rescue the various orders of creatures from their suffering and sin. As he sits in scene after scene in the *Lotus* upon the Vulture's Peak, he is at the same time engaged in his beneficent work in myriads

[1] Chavannes, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

[2] Cp. *ante*, p. 56.

[3] Chavannes, *op. cit.*, p. 11. For the figure, cp. the Fire Sermon *ante*, p 62.

of worlds. The Buddhas in these distant "fields" are really so many projections of his own personality, his *ātma-bhāva*, or "self-being," his spiritual essence made visible in radiant form. They have had, as it were, their own separate careers; they have fulfilled the long courses of self-denial, of patience, and the other stages of Bodhisattvaship; some of them are, in fact, only potential Buddhas, whose ripened merits qualify them for Nirvāna,[1] while they refrain from claiming this supreme attainment that they may continue their labours of deliverance. On the wondrous appearance of the celestial Stūpa[2] innumerable multitudes of these Buddhas are revealed by a ray from the brow of the Lord Çākya Muni in crystal fields with jewelled trees. Slowly they assemble with their attendant Bodhisattvas round the Centre of their Being, each one on his own jewelled throne five leagues in height at the foot of a jewelled tree created for him ten times as high. "All these," says the Lord, "are my *ātma-bhāvas*," the manifold reproductions ("made of mind," said other texts, using an ancient phrase descriptive of the Ātman-Brahman[3]) of himself. This glorified existence came to be known by the name of *Sambhoga-kāya* or "Enjoyment-Body"; it was an attempt to express imaginatively the combination of two ideas, on the one hand the original view of the Buddhahood as something won by age-long concentration of beneficent purpose, and on the other the conception of it as an infinite and eternal energy—not, however, in its character of the metaphysical ground of the universe, but as a perpetual organ of Revelation, a constant teaching for the enlightenment of all. "Homage," sang the poet, "to the Enjoyment-Body which develops in the midst of the assembly for the joy of the meditative saints, his large, manifold, supramundane, uncogitable manifestation, acquired by numberless good actions, which shines into all the Buddha's worlds, which uninterruptedly emits the sublime sound of the Good Law, which is enthroned in the kingship of the Law."[4] And Fa Hien, bowing before its wondrous union of

[1] They possess a *vipāka-kāya*, a "body of ripeness," due to their devoted toil for the universal welfare.

[2] *Lotus*, chap. xi., *ante*, p. 80.

[3] *Brihad-Āraṇ. Upanishad*, iv. 4, 5; v. 6, 1. *Tait.*, i. 6, 1, etc.

[4] Poussin, *JRAS* (1906), p. 961.

power and tranquillity, beheld it as a centre of light like the sun illumining all, full of compassion, transforming and saving the multitude of Bodhisattvas.[1]

The vow of Bodhisattvaship thus became the ideal of universal duty, and for its fulfilment the help of the Buddha was ever at hand. The primitive ethical Buddhism was thus transformed into a religion of communion between the Lord and the disciple. The Tathâgata, "who is born in this world to save," is for ever preaching with the same voice, and his theme is *bodhi*, "enlightenment"; the lustre of his wisdom shines like sun and moon on all;[2] and to those who proclaim the discourses of the *Lotus* to others, or meditate on it themselves, exceptional blessings are promised. The preacher must, indeed, renounce all falsehood and pride, all calumny and envy. He must speak no disparaging words of others; he must be always sincere, gentle, and forbearing;[3] he must prepare to endure without resentment threats and abuse, injuries and blows;[4] when he enters the abode of the Conqueror, he must put on his robe and sit down upon his Dharma-seat. For the Conqueror's abode is the strength of charity, his robe the apparel of forbearance, his Dharma-seat is "penetration into the emptiness of all phenomena."[5] There he learns that though he searches for phenomena they are not to be found, as they have never existed.[6] Let him be concentrated in mind, firm as Sumēru's peak, and look on all *dharmas* as having the nature of space void of all essence and reality.[7] Then as he dwells alone engaged in meditation among the hills or in the forest, the Buddha will reveal to him his shining spirit-form,[8] and recall the lesson that had slipped from his mind.[9] Wondrous are the transcendent powers of sight and hearing, smell and taste, gained by the preacher of the Lotus-Sūtra;[10] and so intimate was the communion of the Lord with one who kept it in the path of piety on the way to Enlightenment for

[1] Chavannes, *op. cit.*, p. 16.
[2] *Lotus*, v. 17, 19, 46.
[3] *Lotus*, xiii. 39 ff., cp. xvi. 53 ff.
[4] *Lotus*, x. 11, 29; xii. 3.
[5] *Sarva-dharma-çūnyatā-praveça*, *ibid.*, x. 23, 24.
[6] *Ibid.*, xiii. 17, *ajātatvā*; cp. p. 19, *ajātakā*.
[7] *Ibid.*, xiii. 21 f.
[8] *Ibid*, x. 41, *ātmabhāva-prabhāsvaram*.
[9] Cp. *SBE*, pp. 223, 433.
[10] Chap. xviii.

the welfare of the world, that the Buddha could say of the place where he had walked or sat, "That spot of earth has been enjoyed by myself; there have I walked myself, and there I sat; where that Son of Buddha stood, there I am."[1]

VIII

The philosophy of the Void was not incompatible with a lofty ethical purpose and a tender piety. In the seventh century Çāntideva, a teacher of the Mādhyamaka school, contemporary with Yuan Chwang, the Chinese Master of the Law, wrote a little "Guide to the Devout Life" for those who aspire to become Bodhisattvas and take their share in the labour needed for the world's deliverance.[2] The experiences which it describes have many common features with those depicted in Christian manuals. Here are confessions of sin and aspirations after purity, prayers for strength in weakness, and warnings against anger, worldliness, or pride—the familiar themes of temptation and self-conquest which belong all the world over to the discipline of the soul. But the atmosphere is different. Not only is the scenery that of the Indian forest, with its gentle glades and silent breezes, its elephants and its snakes, or its field the vast Buddhist universe with its multitudinous domains full of beings working out the issues of interminable pasts from hell to heaven, but the writer is not concerned for his own happiness, he has dedicated himself to the healing of "the sick in body and soul" in every realm, he aspires to help all beings from demons to *devas* to "cease from sin and everlastingly do righteousness," so that they "may lie for ever in bliss and the very name of death may perish." All thought of self has disappeared. The Great Resolve of absolute devotion to the welfare of all is in process of fulfilment, and the saint can aspire to bear the sufferings and overcome the sorrows of the whole world.[3]

[1] xvi. 62.

[2] See the *Bodhi-caryâvatāra*, tr. Poussin, Paris (1907); and the English translation (abridged) by Dr L. D. Barnett, under the title of the *Path of Light* (Wisdom of the East series, 1909). In this edition the verse-numeration is discarded, and the work is printed as prose. A useful introduction and notes have been added.

[3] See the extract from chap. x., tr. Barnett, p. 28.

It is a far-reaching purpose, it requires ages for its accomplishment. Modestly does Çāntideva approach the task of setting forth "the way whereby the Sons of the Blessed Ones enter the godly life":[1]

"Nothing new will be told here, nor have I skill in writing of books; therefore I have done this work to hallow my own thoughts, not designing it for the welfare of others. By it the holy impulse within me to frame righteousness is strengthened; but if a fellow-creature should see it, this my book will fulfil another end likewise."

The secret of the self-discipline which he has undertaken lies in the *Bodhi-chitta*, the "Thought of Enlightenment," which contains within it the summons to the high Endeavour. The Mahāyānist literature was deeply concerned with this emotion of pity, and treatise after treatise was devoted to its origin and operation.[2] While still entangled in the life of the world the word of a preacher might light on the believer's heart, awakening him to the great Reality; he might hear the praises of the Buddha or think of his wondrous body; or he might be roused to compassion for the vain struggles of his fellows amid the delusive pleasures of the fitful joys of sense. Or he might not know whence the impulse came;[3] but it opens the fountains of sympathy and fills his heart with *bhakti* or adoring love, so that he offers himself to the Buddhas without reserve as their slave, while it also lifts him into the great family of their sons.[4] Full of joy in this spiritual birth, and in goodwill towards all beings, he longs to be a soother of all sorrows, a balm to the sick, an unfailing store to the poor, a guide of wayfarers, a ship, a dyke, and a bridge for them who seek the further shore.[5] The path to the fulfilment of this aim is traced on the lines of the Ten Stages of Bodhisattvaship already described. Many a shrewd observation drops from the loving moralist, as he recalls his own conflict with his passions or pleads for watchfulness

[1] Barnett, i. 37.

[2] Cp. Suzuki, *Outlines*, p. 292 ff.

[3] Poussin, iii. 27; iv. 26. Barnett ascribes it to the special grace of the Buddha, p. 96, but Çāntideva is content to confess his ignorance. Cp., however, the description of the effect of the Buddha's *anubhāva*, i. 5.

[4] Poussin, i. 8; iii. 24, 25.

[5] Poussin, iii. 6 f., 17; Barnett, p. 44 f.