



THE BUDDHIST RAY.

"HAIL TO THEE, PEARL, HIDDEN IN THE LOTUS!"

VOL. I. SANTA CRUZ, CAL., U. S. A., DECEMBER, 1888. No. 12.

DEVOTED TO BUDDHISM IN GENERAL, AND
TO THE BUDDHISM IN SWEDENBORG IN
PARTICULAR.

*** A Buddhist brother wrote us a while ago that he had forsaken a governmental position to devote himself to the spread of the Good Law; and we answered him: "In doing this you did not lose much." The Buddha said: I regard the dignities of kings and princes as dust-motes in the sun-beam; the value of gold and jewels as that of a broken platter; and the dresses of finest silk as worthless scraps.

*** We believe that our Karma has the past year been very good;—not as good perhaps as that of the Thibetan Buddhist Initiate, who, in conversation with the author of "Swedenborg the Buddhist," said that for many years no other bad Karma had re-acted upon him (the Initiate) save that which had ultimately itself through the bite of one mosquito;—yet it has been very good: very good for un-Initiates.

*** Our good Karma lies before us now in the shape of the first volume of the first periodical, which, within a nominally Christian land, has gone forth gratuitously into thousands of homes, with the message of the Law of Righteousness: has gone forth scattering seed which, small though they be, will some day, warmed by the breath of the Nirvanic Host, germinate and grow and bear fruit in a glorious Divine Manhood; for many of the spots into which they have fallen have a plastic soil, and are fit for germinative and fruit-bearing purposes—being the souls of men.

*** On earth, love is plainly graded: its lowest manifestation is as family love; its middle, as patriotic; and its highest, as cosmopolitan; thus, as love rises in dignity, it expands or widens its horizon of activity. Above earth it widens its horizon infinitely and incomprehensibly—taking in, first, planetary chains; then, solar systems; and, at last, Infinite Space. On earth, then, it is the highest love, the cosmopolitan or universal, that we should strive to attain unto.

*** Therefore, when we ask our friends to subscribe for the RAY, to get others to subscribe for it, and to contribute to its Sustaining Fund for the coming year—no matter about the amount: let it be a dime or an eagle—we ask it with this feeling in our heart that, *though all men are not spiritual equals, they are yet all brethren*; and with this feeling, founded upon a long and laborious research, that the Lord Buddha's Good Law, being the most cosmopolitan in existence, is the Law for those that recognize practically the Brotherhood of man.

*** As the preservation of mankind from extinguishment in the abyssal pit of materialism, cannot be brought about by church-habits, spirit-communications, and initiations into societies, but solely by a *gradual self-produced inward change*, and as the Good Law is the only law that openly teaches this, it is eminently the humanizing and begodding law that mankind needs in this age.

*** As we began this volume so we end it: May the blessings of all the Arahats and of the LORD BUDDHA, now and hereafter, be upon it.

SOME OF THE LORD'S NAMES AND TITLES.

[From Jayasakere's "Buddhism and Christianity Compared."]

NOTE.—"To the pious Buddhist it seems irreverent to speak of the Buddha by his mere ordinary and human name, Gautama, and he makes use, therefore, of one of those numerous epithets which are used only of the Buddha, the Enlightened One."—RHYS DAVIDS.

1. DASABALA, one who has ten powers; which are said to be ten kinds of knowledge; namely, the knowledge of

- a. Causes and effects;
 - b. The laws of transmigration;
 - c. The effects of merits and demerits;
 - d. The various properties of things in general;
 - e. The wishes and desires of beings;
 - f. The different inherent characteristics of Panchendriya;
 - g. The different inherent characteristics of Jheana, etc.;
 - h. The previous states of existence;
 - i. The subsequent states of beings;
- and
- j. The means for Nirvana.

2. SATTHU, the teacher, or preceptor.

3. SABBANNU, he who knows all things; one of boundless knowledge; or infinite wisdom; omniscient.

4. DIPADUTTAMA, the highest among bipeds.

5. MUNINDA, the chief of sages.

6. BHAGAVANTU, the adorable; the worshipful.

7. NATHA, the master, or lord.

8. CHAKKUMANTU, the one of (deep) sight;—which, according to the Buddhists, consists of

- a. Bodily or natural sight (Mansa); the power of which is so great that one can discern the smallest object at a distance of sixteen miles;
- b. Divine, or supernatural sight (Dibba); far surpassing the natural;
- c. Sight of wisdom (Panna); capable of an insight into superlative wisdom;
- d. Sight of knowledge (Buddha); that sight which no one but a Buddha possesses;
- e. Boundless sight (Samanta).

9. ANGIRASA, the lovely body;—having reference to the beautiful person of the Buddha, which shone like a bright flame, free from smoke or ashes.

10. MUNI, a reverend ascetic.

11. LOKANATHA, the chief of the world.

12. ANADHIVARA, the peerless one.

13. MAHESI, the greatest sage.

14. VINAYAKA, chiefless; the only chief; the greatest spiritual preceptor.

15. SAMANTA-CHAKKHU, the one with eyes on all sides.

16. TATHAGATA, the one who has come in the same manner as the other Buddhas:—the rightly come.

17. SUGATA, the one who has gone to happiness, or has attained the height of bliss:—the rightly gone.

18. MARAJI, the conquerer of Mara (the Tempter.)

19. NARASIHA, the chief of mankind.

20. NARAVARA, the best of men.

21. DHAMMARAJA, the most virtuous; the King of the Law; the King of Righteousness.

22. MAHAMUNI, the greatest of the sages.

23. DEVADEVA, the God of gods.

24. LOKAGURU, the teacher of the world.

25. DHAMMASSAMI, the lord of the Law.

26. SAYAMBHU, he who attained to Buddhahood by his own exertions.

27. SAMMA-SAM-BUDDHA, of all the most supreme Buddha.

28. VARAPANNA, the wisest of men.

29. NAVAKA, the leader; chief.

30. JINA, the conqueror of birth and death.

31. BHURIPANNA, the wisest of men.

32. SAKYA-SINHA, the lion of the tribe of Sakya.

33. SARVAJNA, the omniscient one.

34. SIDDHARTHA, the one who has accomplished his aim.

35. SAKYA-MUNI, the sage of Sakya.

36. BUDDHA, the Enlightened One.

MANKIND have gone back from the learning of the Ancients, which lead to wisdom.—SWEDENBORG.

GEMS OF THOUGHT.

[From T. L. Harris' "Two-In One."]

The nearer the Christian Church the farther from the Divine Life.

It is the competitive life that crucifies humanity.

Christianity has not been slain by attacks from without; it perishes from slow suicide.

The divinity in the priests' thought is wrapped in epithets drawn from the diabolisms of their theologies.

Men preach and pray because they have lost the practical secret of the Kingdom [Nirvana].

Men as they advance into truth and freedom, leave the multitude for the few, and at last become solitaries.

The palled and jaded intellect of the [newspaper-reading] public, under ordinary circumstances [does not want the truth, but] merely craves the stimulus of novelty.

The civilized man entrenches himself in the midst of the plausible, and worships mediocrity.

The world brooks no interference with its vital evils; but its superficial evils are admitted to criticism in place of all other criticism.

The "Holy Ghost," who was to guide the "faithful" into all truth, never seems to have taught the Christian Church anything that heathen sages and illuminati had not said beforehand.

To put temptation in a woman's way, though it be of those decorations that are her weakness, is to lie in wait for her soul; even as it is to offer a man the sports that are his weakness; and in the balances of justice [future Karma] these things weigh against each other.

In nominal Christendom, intelligent men are able to earn a livelihood by preaching what is styled "Gospel," but no one has the hardihood to say that a livelihood can be earned by practicing "Gospel" [i. e., by living without "wine, women, and song,"—an ascetic life].

We have had a Stone age, an Iron age, and so on; this epoch of Christendom will be called the Pulpit age—the Age of wind.

The more the Christian church

heightens itself, and makes its advanced members clean from the corruptions of the social world, the more grave and venerable and saintly become their habit, style, speech, and general demeanor—the more do they approach the point of Absolute Satanhood, where the remains of the general humanity petrify within them.

Men tend to devilhood in two ways:—commonly by descending into the grovelling habit, in which they become putrid; but religiously by ascending into the mere churchly habit, in which they become as stone. In the former case they are weak, pitiable creatures, requiring a strong hand to pull them up; in the latter they become petrified monsters; for their state is monstrosity; and they require for their ultimate salvation the strong hand, as with the blacksmith's hammer, to knock them down.

If you see a man more pious than others, in the sense of churchliness; more decorous than others, in sense of surface propriety in his ways, without being, at the same time, more radically and defiantly unorthodox than others, in the sense of striking out boldly into whatever seems helpful and hopeful for the correction of the inequalities of condition, and the slaveries of mercenary service that make men base,—the very decorousness and dignity by which he is swollen and made conspicuous, are the result of the human elements, that tend to make decorum and dignity, which he draws into himself from the wretched and down-fallen, who waste daily from his appropriations, and the appropriations of the like of him. Is he apparently pure? He draws out of some poor wretch the vital force that is opposed to profligacy; and every Pharisee is built of the ruins of a brother from whom he has absorbed, and so ruinously made profligate. Or, if he is technically honest, he stands upon the ruins of one crushed by his uprise, or rotted down into filth of technical dishonesty. He is rich in seemings god-ward, because others have been made poor god-ward. He is built up out of the robberies and ruins of his race!

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"THIS ANCIENT ONE [THE BUDDHA] IS OUR ANGEL, WHOM WE REVERE AND OBEY."—SWEDENBORG.

—We have in this number given space to a few thoughts by our arch-Christian neighbor, Mr. T. L. Harris, sent us by a friend. They become by re-perusal more and more lucid and instructive.

—Our friends will greatly oblige us by sending in, early in January, their subscriptions, and contributions to the Sustaining Fund of the RAY, so that we may be able to supply them with copies from the first number.

—THE first number of a new Buddhist paper, the *Heladiwruwana* ("The Ceylon Gem") has reached us. It is, with the exception of one column, printed in Sinhalese, and is issued by the Buddhist Publication Society. It promises to "throw much light on the hidden and true meaning of the Sacred Scriptures of Buddhism, and the ceremonials observed in the Buddhist temples in Ceylon." Our new friend will ever receive a warm welcome.

—His Royal Highness, Prince Chardhat Chudhathar of Siam, has honored the RAY, and other Buddhist papers, with a very thoughtful letter, which we publish in this issue. And, since His Royal Highness, like a true Buddhist, invites criticism, or rather, brotherly interchange of thought, we intend in our next issue to publish a few objections to some of His theories and conclusions. In connection with this letter we have thought that it might interest our readers to see the letter which His Majesty, the King of Siam, wrote Sir Edwin Arnold, a few years ago; and we have therefore inserted it under the heading, "A Royal Letter."

A ROYAL LETTER.

"SIR:—My father devoted much time to the study and defense of his religion, and although I, being called to the throne while young, had no time to become a scholar like him, I too have interested myself in the study of the Sacred books, and take a great interest in defending our religion, and having it properly understood. It seems to me that if Europeans believe the missionary preaching that ours is a foolish and bad religion, they must also believe that we are a foolish and bad people. I therefore feel much gratitude to those who, like yourself, teach Europeans to hold our religion in respect. I thank you for the copy of your poem, 'The Light of Asia,' presented to me through my minister in London. I am not a sufficiently good scholar to judge English poetry, but as your book is based upon the similar source of our own information, I can read it through with very much pleasure, and I can say that your poem 'The Light of Asia' is the most eloquent defense of Buddhism that has yet appeared, and is full of beautiful poetry; but I like Book II, very much, and am very much interested in the final sermon. I have no doubt that our learned men would argue with you for hours or for years, as even I can see that some of your ideas are not quite the same as ours; but I think that in showing Love to have been the eminent characteristic of the LORD BUDDHA, and Karma the result of the inevitable Law of life, you have taught pure Buddhism. And I thank you for having made a European speak so beautifully of Buddhism, in the most wide-spread language in the world. To mark my opinion of your good feeling toward Eastern peoples, and my appreciation of your high ability, and the service you have done to all Buddhists, by this defense of their religion, I have much satisfaction in appointing you an officer of our most exalted order of the White Elephant, of which you will soon hear further from Mr. D. K. Mason, my Consul-General in London.

I am yours faithfully,
(Manû Regiâ) CHULALOUKORU, King.

FROM A BUDDHIST PRINCE.

BRETHREN: Allow me to converse with you about my own conviction relating to the Universe and the Nature of Man, or rather about what I understand from the truths taught by our beloved, merciful and omniscient LORD BUDDHA, to whom we all owe our morality in our present lives, and our destiny in future.

The LORD taught us that all things, both known and unknown, are, without exception, subject to the law of impermanency or changeableness; and that the cause of man's re-birth is no other than his own ignorance of Nature, together with his good or evil actions in life, which will make him reap sweet or sour fruit in his future existence. What the LORD has taught us is that which will remain permanent and everlasting—Akasa and NIRVANA.

The former means the Universe, which I understand to comprise all matter, force and space; and if this idea be correct, all the heavenly bodies are, of course, included in this term. This Akasa (or Universe) although it is self-existing, absolute, infinite, universal, and perfect, without beginning and without end, is yet subject to the immutable law of changes. I think that all the heavenly bodies are but the inhabitants of infinite space; just in the same manner as we, ourselves, are the inhabitants of this earth,—the difference, I suppose, being only in the scale of construction and perfection both physically and psychically. If this belief be reasonable, I then infer that the heavenly bodies are born in somewhat the same manner as ourselves: that is, by virtue of existing species. The factor of this virtue is, I understand, the force of attraction inherent in the molecules of matter, either dormant or active; because we all know that we move, work, and do all actions by the forces which are inherent in our bodies: and not by the mere lifeless matter of which they are made up.

This important idea being understood, I will go on further to suppose that if this our solar system, which in-

cludes the sun, the moon, and the planets, were to be destroyed, or die out by efflux of time, the matter which constitutes it would naturally decay and be turned into elements, while its forces would become dormant; just as is the case with ourselves—our bodies when we die will be turned into the elements out of which they are made. When such an event occurs, according to my own conviction, all the other systems of heavenly bodies existing in space, will naturally, by virtue of their affinities to this system, form out of the molecules of matter and dormant forces a new system to supply the vacancy. And this process, of course, is performed entirely by mutual attractions or forces!

Now we come to the vegetable and animal kingdoms, and to these again I suppose that the same law applies—that, by virtue of the living species new beings are made up by the attractions of their affinities from the remains of those which have died long before. Thus from heavenly bodies down to animal and vegetable, the same principle of reproduction is going on round and round without end. When one has lived long enough and died or changed the substance of its body, by virtue of the forces or attractions of the rest, the dead one or the changed matter and dormant force are brought to life again; and so on the existence is kept up by mutual dependence. But in considering such a process of reproduction or of attraction, we must not forget that in the course of time the forms and properties of all bodies, both heavenly and earthly, are undergoing a series of unknowable changes. Now I will pass from materialism into the abstract, and in doing so, I must summarize what I have before mentioned; when I say there are forces or attractions inherent in all matter or molecules of matter either dormant or active, I also say that we move, work, and do all our actions by the forces that are inherent in our bodies, and not by the mere lifeless matter which constitutes these bodies. By this conviction we can, therefore, plainly see that the important factors in all bodies are only their

forces or attractions, while physical matter is but of secondary importance.

Let me now proceed to a more complex and critical part of Nature than that regarding which I have spoken—that is to say, to the Soul of man and its succession of re-births. The Soul is conceived by many persons as an immortal entity in man, which governs his body in life; but how at his death it leaves him to be re-born or to live with an imaginary god, is beyond my comprehension. What I call a Soul is nothing but the active force or attraction in man which, when he dies, must die with him.

Brethren, because of my thinking thus I hope you will not take me for an unbeliever in the verified law of re-birth and of Karma; but hear me patiently, and you will see that I am a true Buddhist. I believe that our Soul in this life is but the result of attractions or volitions created through ignorance of Nature by men at the time they die, and is not the Soul of the dead that is within our body. In short, I believe that we are but the images or representatives of men's good or evil characters during life, taken by a process of natural photography. If this belief can be granted as being reasonable, I infer further that the power of volition or attraction in man is as inconceivably great as that in Nature itself, that is to say, man has power to exercise mentally, more or less, his attraction over the forces of beings; that he can form out of such forces any imaginary of his thoughts, or put them in motion in somewhat the same manner as he does physical objects. But so long as he lives, the pictures of his thought, or the forces that he has put into motion, will be imperfect, so that they cannot take a re-birth.

This is owing to the exercise of volition being not exhaustive, or to the neutralization of it by turning his attention to other matters. The process, however, takes place very decidedly and effectually at the time he is dying, no matter whether he is sensible or not—his mere habits being quite sufficient for the work. In proof

of which fact Mesmerism stands as witness. Although I am not personally acquainted with this science, yet I sincerely believe it to be a very fact. Now taking for granted that my belief is correct, I may explain further how a dying man takes his re-birth. I believe that in the case of an ordinary man, *i. e.*, a man who is full of passions and inclinations—it may be for this earthly life, to continue his existence, or it may be to cease for ever from existence; in short, who has all kinds of yearnings which assert the psychological force of volition, at the time of death this is what happens: these desires form an exact picture of his thought in the molecules of dormant forces of long dead beings that may be present, and the once dead spirit thus coming into motion again, is taken up in obedience to the law of force by a living person who possesses a disposition similar to that of the dying man himself.

To speak briefly, I believe that the dying man asserts his volition or transmits the picture of his good or bad character to the spirit or dormant force of long dead beings, and when the latter becomes thus charged with motion, it is taken up by the attraction of a living person. As a comparison for illustration, when an artist paints his own likeness, the materials which he uses for colors are not made from material parts of his body, but from ordinary materials outside; so the process of re-birth is effected by a dying man through the assertion of his thinking habits from the elements outside; just as the action of the phonograph is effected by the motions of the voice. The process of re-birth, however, takes place at death only, because then the exertion of physical thought, being exhaustive, is quite fixed for ever, and the connecting links of active attraction cease to generate from the body, just as if the earth's attraction ceased, its attending satellite, the moon must inevitably be displaced from its course.

Thus the great wheel of Sansara goes on without beginning and without end, until one becomes wise and

has acquired in his habits the non-inclination to put in motion, or to assert his psychical image on, the elements or dormant spirits of long dead beings; then he is completely free from the whirling wheel of Nature, and attains the blessed state of NIRVANA, the only everlasting abode of happiness in subjective existence. This explanation will be found to agree with the teachings of our enlightened LORD BUDDHA, particularly with his denial of the existence of a Soul, such as is generally believed to exist. And from this belief we are able to infer that there is no such Soul in man as will leave him when he dies, either for the purpose of taking a re-birth, or to live with "God;" or as can move of its own accord or under any influence of the laws of nature. For if there were actually a Soul like this, there could never be a NIRVANA. As I have already said, our LORD has taught us that the only things that can exist for ever are the Akasa and NIRVANA. And this Akasa, according to my understanding, must include all matter, force and space. Now if there is an objective NIRVANA, it must also be included in the Akasa, because the latter includes even space; and if there is NIRVANA just as there is Akasa, the former must naturally be either matter or space, otherwise a moving Soul cannot live in it. Now, you will see that there can be no such NIRVANA in which a Soul can live to enjoy an everlasting happiness, because if there be such, it must be within the Akasa, and the Soul in it therefore, according to the law of changes or Karma, must inevitably take a re-birth. The true subjective NIRVANA is just as much the reverse of the objective Akasa, as heaven or hell is the reverse of our objective earth. It is true that, to go to heaven or hell it requires a supposed Soul, or a physical image, to impress on the dormant spirits, in order that it may be taken up by the attraction of a deva or a hellish being according to circumstances; but then, heaven or hell is included in the Akasa, because the earth itself is but a speck of the Universe, and consequently the beings

in it are still subject to natural changes. While in the case of NIRVANA, there needs be no Soul, or any picture of thought whatever, as NIRVANA itself is but no-thingness, therefore it requires a free, pure, innocent Soul of no-thingness to live in it. If any one should ask, "If NIRVANA be no-thingness, what good is there in craving for it?" I must then ask him if he really enjoys constant changes, or if he likes the sorrows and sufferings attending life both physically and mentally.

This is a sufficient answer to the question why wise men wish for NIRVANA.

Just a few words more about the non-existence of a Soul which survives death. Suppose any one holds that there is such Soul in man, I must then ask him whether he knows, or can guess, out of what such a soul is evolved. The answer may be that, it is made of matter, or force, or space, or a combination of these, or one or two of these without the other; or perhaps that "God" made it out of nothing. Now, my brethren, you notice that this answer means that in course of time a day will come when all the Souls which are made out of the substances enumerated will all enter NIRVANA, or else ascend to heaven somewhere outside the Universe, and no more beings will exist; nay, even all the heavenly bodies, or space itself, will exist no more, because then all matter or force, and even space which forms the Universe, are all used up. What will then be the aspect of the empty Universe? This is the reason why I am unable to believe that an immortal Soul exists.

I must now go back to the beings which we call inanimate, which includes all the heavenly bodies and the whole of Nature with the exception of animals. These again are, according to the law of force, subject to a nearly similar process of re-birth. The only difference is that which arises from the fact that the animate and the inanimate differ in their construction and mode of existence. To explain the process I must repeat again something of what I have said with regard to

man; that the dying body asserts powerfully though ignorantly its inclinations or its attractive forces as its habit may dictate when in health, so that if in the case of a heavenly body the nebulous matter or the elements of long dead heavenly bodies become charged with action, by the aid of attractions from all other heavenly bodies, these gradually assume the form and property of the dying body, as in the case of re-birth with man. Thus goes on the process of Akasa whirling its great wheel round and round with myriads of imaginable and unimaginable changes.

All I have said will, I hope, be found in harmony with the teaching of our enlightened LORD, as well as with the belief in spiritualism, mesmerism and all other natural powers by which phenomena are produced by man. And you will see at a glance that there cannot exist a personal or intelligent "God" who is supposed to be the "Guardian of the Universe," for the system of all natures I have enumerated is so perfectly complete in itself, that by virtue of the mutual dependence of matter, force, and space, the system is able to keep up its self-existence for ever, without requiring any beginning from a "God" at all. Brethren, we also see that all things which form the Universe, from the heavenly bodies down to ourselves, are not different in nature, and what we glorify as a reality of happiness or what we hate as an actual sorrow in life, is in truth no other than nothingness. The worlds, stars, vegetables, animals, and all things, which we take to be different, are nothing but the results of changing operations of matter, forces, and space, which form the Universe.

Brethren, we now plainly see that nothing material or immaterial, either in our body or our mind can be a soul that will survive death; our true Soul and Self that will take re-birth is simply the good or bad actions done in life. So then, Brethren, while we are as yet but at the threshold of NIRVANA, let us strive to cultivate a uni-

versal love, which will undoubtedly tend to good actions, the only tools with which we can paint our perfect likenesses at death.

In conclusion, I may mention that my conjecture is in perfect harmony with the principles of Nature:

1. That all natures exist in pairs, or opposites.
2. That all natures act and exist only by mutual dependence.
3. That no nature can ever produce something out of nothing.
4. That all natures act on objects in succession.
5. That all natures seek to unite with their affinities.

All these rules apply to physiology as well as psychology.

Now, Brethren, for want of time, I must close; and if you take pleasure in my conjectures or the truths I have stated, I shall be very pleased to converse with you further in another letter on subjects relating to the law of Karma, heaven, hell, the causes of fate and chance, and other matters of interest.

As I do not wish to mislead any one, I ask you to consider this as the statement of only my own convictions in relation to the teachings of our Blessed LORD. If you will be so kind as to criticize it I shall be exceedingly obliged to you.

I wish you all, Brethren, a long life, happiness, and prosperity.

CHANDRDHAT CHUDHATHAR,
Prince of Siam.

NEW-BIRTH makes consanguinities and affinities in a higher degree than natural birth.—SWEDENBORG.

WHEN dignities and wealth are blessings they are spiritual and eternal and when they are curses they are temporary and perishable.—SWEDENBORG.

EVERY affection of a man, yea, every idea of his thought, is an image of him, and is of such a character that all things of his life are within it.—SWEDENBORG.