

THE SHRINE OF WISDOM

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“THE GREAT KING OF GLORY”

From the Mahâ-Sudasanna Sutta

THE FOUR CONTEMPLATIONS OR JHANAS

“NOW the Great King of Glory, O Ananda, ascended into the Chamber of the Great Concourse; and when he had come there he stood before the portals, and there he uttered the intense and heartfelt prayer:

Stay here, O thoughts of lust!

Stay here, O thoughts of anger!

Stay here, O thoughts of hatred!

Thus far only, O thoughts of lust!

Thus far only, O thoughts of anger!

Thus far only, O thoughts of hatred!

And when, O Ananda, the Great King of Glory had entered the Chamber of the Great Concourse, and had seated himself upon the couch of gold, having put away all passion, anger, sloth, restless brooding, and doubt, he entered into and remained in the First Mystic Contemplation (*Jhâna*), a state of pleasurable interest or zest and joyous ease, born of concentration, conjoined with reflection and sustained mentation.

Then, suppressing reflection and sustained thought, he entered into and remained in the Second Mystic Contemplation (*Jhâna*), a state of zest and joyous ease, born of serenity, at rest from reflection and mentation, a state of simple exaltation and inward calm.

Then, stilling zest of interest, equilibrated, alert, and self-possessed, he entered that state, with body at ease, which the noble ones announce as: “a man is balanced, contemplative, and well at ease,” he entered into and remained in the Third Mystic Contemplation (*Jhâna*).

Then, passing beyond pleasure and pain, transcending gladness and sorrow, he entered into and remained in the Fourth Mystic Contemplation (*Jhâna*), a state of serene and rapturous equilibrium.”

THE FOUR SUBLIME MEDITATIONS OR BHAVANAS

Then, O Ananda, the Great King of Glory went forth from the Chamber of the Great Concourse, and entered the golden chamber and seated himself down on the silver couch.

And he let his mind pervade one quarter of the world with thoughts of Love (*Mettâ*), and so the second quarter, and so the third, and so the fourth. And thus the whole wide world, above, below, around, within, did he continue to pervade with heart of Love, far-reaching, grown great, and beyond measure, free from the least trace of anger and ill-will.

And he let his mind pervade one quarter of the world with thoughts of Compassion (*Karunâ*); and so the second quarter, and so the third, and so the fourth, and thus the whole wide world, above, below, around, within, did he continue to pervade with heart of Compassion, far-reaching, grown great, and beyond measure, free from the least trace of anger and ill-will.

And he let his mind pervade one quarter of the world with thoughts of Joy (*Muditâ*); and so the second quarter, and so the third, and so the fourth. And thus the whole wide world, above, below, around, within, did he continue to pervade with heart of Joy, far-reaching, grown great, and beyond measure, free from the least trace of anger and ill-will.

And he let his mind pervade one quarter of the world with thoughts of Serenity (*Upekkhâ*); and so the second quarter, and so the third, and so the fourth. And thus the whole wide world, above, below, around, within, did he continue to pervade with heart of Serenity, far-reaching, grown great, and beyond measure, free from the least trace of anger and ill-will."

JEWELS

"For all our life is *three*: in the first we have our Being, in the second we have our Increasing, and in the third we have our Fulfilling.

For the first I understood that the high Might of the Trinity is our Father, and the deep Wisdom of the Trinity is our Mother, and the great Love of the Trinity is our Lord."

* * *

"I it am, the Trinity, I it am, the Unity: I am the sovereign Goodness of all manner of things. I am that maketh thee to love; I am that maketh thee to long; I it am, the endless fulfilling of all true desires."

—Lady Julian of Norwich.

THE CHALDEAN ORACLES

Translated and Systematized with Commentary

THE DESCENT OF THE SOUL*

VERILY those Souls, by far most blest of all, are poured forth to Earth from Heaven. Most blissful they and ineffable their fate, who from thy Shining Self, O King, yea, and from Zeus Himself, are born, under the compelling might of Destiny."—LXXXVII.

The human Soul is a child of Divine Parents, according to the Oracles; it is not born of the earth, nor is it evolved by Nature, nor generated by human parents, nor is it a mere offspring of Chance or of purposeless mechanical or instinctual processes.

In its essential nature the Soul bears an intimate relation and similitude with that which is Divine, and howsoever far it may seem to journey into darkness and oblivion, it for ever retains in its inmost deeps the seal and memory—howsoever dim—of its divine origin.

It is essentially immortal, although it puts on, as it were, a mortal and corruptible vesture in its descent into generation. But in itself it is distinct from the corporeal and natural body which is generated in conjunction with human parents and Nature. Through the instrumentality of these, the Soul is born in a physical body, which is derived from Earth, but the Soul itself comes from Heaven.

The heavenly part of man is spiritual and is called Intellect or Nous in the Oracles; this is blended with the corporeal part which the Soul puts on in its descent, and thus man is a spiritual-corporeal being, with a supernatural destiny as well as a natural heritage or fate.

LXXXVIII. "Binding Mind (*Nous*) in Soul, and Soul in dull Body, the Father of Gods and men established them therein."

LXXXIX. "These things the Father conceived, and man became a living Soul."

* The previous articles of this series appeared in issues Nos. 23 to 27, and deal with (1) The Paternal Profundity, (2) Archetypal Ideas, (3) The Sevenfold Creative Fire, (4) The Ruling, Vivific, and Solar Principles, and (5) Nature and Matter.

“ Placing Intellect in Soul, but Soul in body, He (The Demiurgus) fabricated the all.”—(*Plato in Timæus*).

“ The Demiurgus (or Zeus) produces all things simultaneously and eternally; for by His very being, and according to an eternal intelligence of wholes, He generates from Himself supermundane and mundane beings, intellects, souls, natures, bodies, and matter itself.”—(*Proclus on Timæus*).

“ Placing Soul in the middle, He (Demiurgus) extended it through the whole of the world.”—(*Plato in Tim.*).

“ But the Soul, unfolding herself to the extremity of the universe, from the middle, circularly covered it as with a veil, herself being convolved in herself.—(*Ibid*).

The Soul is a tri-unity; it possesses an essence peculiar to itself; a power or potentiality characteristic of the principles which are above itself; and an energy or activity through which it unfolds its latent capacity and becomes identified with that which is below as well as above itself. These three—essence, power, energy—are united in the Soul, as Proclus says, and make it what it is.

“ Having mingled these two with essence and made one thing of the three, He again divided this whole into appropriate parts.”—(*Proclus on Timæus*).

XC. “ Blending the spark of the Soul with two concordant unities, Mind and Divine Breath, to these He added a Third, Pure Love, Who bindeth all things in holy bonds and is master of all.”

The blending of these three unities in the Soul give to it, throughout all its peregrinations, an unquenchable thirst for beauty, an ineradicable tendency towards goodness, and an inextinguishable yearning for truth.

XCI. “ With deep love ” filling the Soul.

XCII. “ The Father leapeth not (into the Soul) with fear, but infuseth persuasion.”

“ The Paternal Mind (Nous) hath sown Symbols in Souls.”—(*Psellus*).

“ Love is neither to be placed in the first, nor among the last of beings. Not in the first, because the object of love is

superior to love: nor among the last, because the lover participates of love."

"Love, therefore, must be established between the object of love and the lover—it is posterior to the Beautiful, but prior to every nature endued with love."

"There are Three Hypostases in the Intelligible Gods: the first is characterized by the Good and comprehends the Good Itself, abiding for ever where, according to the Oracles, the Paternal Monad abides; the second is characterized by Wisdom and abides where the First Intelligence flourishes; and the third is characterized by Beauty and abides with the most beautiful of the Intelligibles."

"These three subsist unically and causally in the Intelligibles, but unfold themselves into light in the ineffable Order of the Gods as 'Faith, Truth, and Love.'"—XCIII.

"Faith establishes all things in the Good, Truth unfolds all the Knowledge in beings, and Love converts all things and assimilates them into the nature of the Beautiful."

"Love, therefore, supernally descends from the Intelligibles into mundane natures, calling all things upward to Divine Beauty. Truth proceeds through all things, illuminating them all with Knowledge; and Faith proceeds through the universe, establishing all things unically in the Good."

"Hence, as the Oracles assert, 'all things are governed by, and abide in, these three,' and on this account they exhort mystics to conjoin themselves with Divinity through this triad."—(*Proclus in Theology of Plato*).

"There are three lives of the Soul, of which the best and most perfect is that according to which it is conjoined with the Gods and lives a life most allied to theirs, and through the highest similitude is united to them, not subsisting merely from itself, but from them, energizing according to its own Intellect, inspired by the ineffable idea of the ONE which it contains, and, connecting like with like, its own light with the Light of the Gods, and that which is most unitive in its own essence and life, with the ONE, Who is above all essence and life.

The second life to this in dignity and power has a middle allotment in the centre of the Soul, according to which it is converted to itself, descending from a divinely inspired life,

and, identified with Intellect and Knowledge as the principles of its energy, it unfolds the multitude of its innate reasons, surveys the all-various mutations of forms, unites the objects of intellect with intellect itself, and expresses its conceptions in an intellectual and intelligible mode.

The third life of the Soul is that which accords with its secondary powers, and energizes together with them, employing phantasy and irrational faculties, and is immersed in things of a subordinate nature."—(*Proclus on Republic*).

"The descent of the Soul into body separates it from divine Souls, from whom it is filled with intelligence, power, and purity, and conjoins it with generation and nature and material things, from which it partakes of oblivion, aberration, and ignorance. For, in its descent, multiform activities and various vestments become associated with it, which draw it down into a mortal composition and darken its vision of Real Being."—(*Proclus on First Alcibiades*).

But in the very core of its essence, the Soul for ever preserves a spark of the all-nourishing Fire of Almighty Zeus, which as it were the Soul, like Prometheus, plucks from the Divine Fire as it descends from on High.

Wherefore, as Proclus says, "comprehending intellectually the works of the Father—

XCIV. They escape the reckless wing of allotted fate; they abide in God, drawing to themselves the topmost glory of the flaming Beacons streaming down in light from the Father. From these, as they descend, the Soul plucketh of their empyrean fruits the Soul-nourishing flower."

The nature of the Soul is such that it escapes precise definition and can only be expressed by analogy and paradox. Although it is said to be placed in body, yet since, mystically, it unfolds itself to the extremity of the universe, it comprehends all space and therefore, in this sense, the body is in the Soul.

According to fragments of the Oracles, the Soul is—

XCV. "A part of the Divine Fire," and a "gleaming fire," and "a thought of the Father," and therefore, her form is immaterial and self-subsistent.—(*Psellus*).

In her descent into generation, from the Empyrean realm, the Soul may be conceived as collecting the essences or elements

of the bodies or vehicles through which she is to manifest herself, as Proclus, quoting the Oracles, says: she "collects" the body, taking "a part of the Sun and the Moon and that which is contained in the air."

She does, indeed, pass through the ethereal worlds, the inerratic sphere or sphere of fixed stars, and the seven planetary spheres, before she is born in the sublunary region with a physical body. Thus man, in terms of himself, is an epitome of the great universe.

"Man is a microcosm; for he has Intellect and reason, an immortal and a mortal body, and a nature that is differentiated in an analogous manner to that of the universe. Hence also, as some are accustomed to say, his intellectual principle is analogous to the sphere of the fixed stars, but his reason, which is theoretic, is analogous to the planet Saturn, while his ordinative and political part is compared to Jupiter, his irrational and irascible nature to Mars, his power of expression and speech to Mercury, that which is epithumetic to Venus, that which is sensitive to the Sun, and that which is vegetative to the Moon. The luciform vehicle is analogous to the heavens, but the mortal body to the sublunary region."—(*Proclus on Timaeus*).

The Soul is the mysterious unity by which the manifold and diverse parts of man's nature are harmonized and blended into a single human being, and because he is a miniature of the macrocosm, in knowing himself he comes to know all that the universe stands for.

XCVI. "O Man, bold nature's handiwork."

"The Soul, by verging to a material life, kindles, indeed, a light in the body, but becomes herself involved in darkness."—(*Proclus on Theol. of Plato*).

"The corporeal-formed life which proceeds from the Soul and has the relation of splendour to it, is said by Plato to be divisible about bodies. For Intellect, indeed, is analogous to the Sun, Soul to the light proceeding from the Sun, and the partible life to the splendour of the light."—(*Proclus on Timaeus*).

XCVII. "From every side extend reins of fire to the unformed Soul."

“ For together with the Intellectual Light of the Father she calls into existence the works of Nature. For it is the Soul which hath adorned the vast heaven and adorneth it with the Father’s aid. But her head is established on high.”—(*Proclus in Timaeus*).

XCVIII. For the Soul being “ by the Power of the Father a radiant fire both remains immortal and is mistress of life, and hath power to fill with plenitude the many wombs of the cosmos.”

Whilst Souls dwell on high in union with the Father they live a supernal life according to Divine Providence and transcend the limitations imposed by the laws of Fate; but when they descend into manifestation, although these laws are announced to them by the Demiurgus, as Plato says, yet they drink of the waters of Lethe or forgetfulness, and lose temporarily the memory of their pristine purity and bliss.

“ When Souls become mundane, then also they survey the power and dominion of Fate, supernally suspended from Providence, and receive the Laws of Destiny. For the Demiurgus revealed Nature to them, as something different from themselves, but He announced to them the laws of Fate, as innate in them.”—(*Proclus on Timaeus*).

“ But the Oracles celebrate in a particular manner the Fountain of all empyrean Soul, that is, the empyrean, etherial and hylic; and they distinguish this Fountain from the whole Vivific Goddess, from whom they suspend also the whole of Fate, and indicate two processions or orders, the one that of Soul, but the other that which we call Fatal, that is, the order of Fate or Fortune. And they derive the Soul from the former, but say that it is sometimes subject to Fate when it becomes irrational and changes its lord, serving Fate instead of Providence.”—(*Proclus on Providence*).

“ Fate is comprehensive of all the mundane laws, which the Demiurgus reveals to Souls, that they may, through Him, ultimately be led to a knowledge of universal wholeness and be enabled to choose that which is adapted to them in their particular elections of different lives and activities.

A selfish life tends to darkness and negation, but a pious life leads the Soul to the celestial realms and is characterized by universality. Each of the lives of the Soul is according to

the laws of Fate, but Souls lead themselves, as Plotinus says, whither the law, which is within them, announces. For this is the peculiarity of the Providence of the Gods, to conduct inwardly the objects for which it provides.

Nature, also, inserting material and corporeal and formal powers in bodies, moves them according to these powers; in a much greater degree, therefore, do the Gods move Souls through the powers which they disseminate in them. Hence, if they lead Souls according to the laws of Fate, these laws, also, are innate in Souls.

And they presubstist intellectually in the Demiurgus, for the Divine Law is established with Him. But they are inherent in perfected Souls and according to them they govern the world; and they conduct themselves to their allotted places, themselves moving themselves; and through deliberate choice they act erroneously or with rectitude; but through the law they produce for themselves an order of life in conformity with the effects of their actions."—(*Proclus on Theol. of Plato*).

"The rational and intellectual Soul, in whatever way it may energize, is superior to body and sense, and in itself is essentially independent of these; hence, when it energizes according to its own nature it transcends the influence of Fate, but when it falls into sense and becomes identified with that which is irrational and corporeal, it follows the natures that are inferior to itself, and, living with them as with intoxicated neighbours, is held in subjection by a cause that has dominion over things that are contrary to the rational essence."

"Not only Plato, but likewise the Oracles have revealed these things to us; for in the first place they ordered those men who were thought worthy to be the auditors of those mystic discourses to—

XCIX. "Look not upon Nature, for her name is Fate."
"They also order them to—

C. "Increase not thy Fate, of which there is no end."

"And, again, they exhort then to turn from the life which is according to Fate."

CI. "For theurgists fall not among the fate-driven herd,"

by all which they withdraw us from the senses and the corporeal desires, for through these we become corporeal and are then acted upon from necessity by Fate."—(*Proclus on Providence and Fate*).

CII. "According to the Oracles the multitude of men 'who go in a herd' is to be avoided."—(*Proclus in Alcibiades*).

By the "herd," the Oracles signify the multitude of unawakened and unregenerated human beings who are contented to follow a life according to the dictates of natural instincts and impulses and who, as Proclus says, become identified with inferior natures as with intoxicated neighbours.

CIII. "Do ye not know that God is wholly good? O ye impatient of toil, be sober."

CIV. "But man, since he hath an intelligible principle, must bridle his Soul that she may verge not to the unhappy earth but find salvation."

CV. "Lest being plunged in the frenzies of earth and the compelling necessities of Nature" its life should be destroyed.

The consequences of the Soul's fall from the intrinsic dignity of its true self is that man becomes the slave of his lower nature, which holds him as in a prison, wherein he experiences the scourges of the Furies, as well as the bondage of the Fates.

CVI. "The Furies are the throttlers of men."

"As Psellus explains, the powers that punish guilty souls bind them to their material passions, and in these, as it were, suffocate them; such punishment being finally the means of purification, nor do these powers only afflict the vicious, but even such as convert themselves to an immaterial essence; for these, through their connection with matter require a purification of this kind."—(*Thomas Taylor in Orphic Hymns*).

But howsoever low the Soul may fall from its real estate, it can never become the Soul of a sub-human creature. As Proclus says: "that the passing into irrational beings is contrary to the nature of Souls, the Oracles teach us when they declare that—

CVII. "This is a law from the Blessed Ones that naught can break" and that the human Soul "completes its life again in men and not in beasts."

"But the transmigrations of Souls, if they take place into such as are rational, then they become the Souls of particular bodies; if into such as are irrational, then they follow these *externally* in the same manner as our presiding daemons attend us in their beneficent operations; for the rational part never becomes the Soul of an irrational nature. But the truth of transmigration is evinced by the circumstances which are associated with the birth of individuals; for why are some born blind, others imbecile, and others with a vicious temperament? Moreover, since Souls are essentially adapted to function according to their peculiar purposes in bodies, it is not proper that when they have once deserted them they should remain indolent for ever; for if Souls did not return again into bodies, it is necessary that either they should be infinite in number, or that others should continually be produced by divinity. But there can be nothing actually infinite in the world, for that which is infinite can never exist in that which is finite. But neither is it possible that others can be produced, for everything in which something new may be generated is necessarily imperfect, but it is requisite that the world should be perfect, because it is produced from a Perfect Source."—(*Sallust on The Gods and the World*).

Therefore, although man cannot himself descend to the animal kingdom, yet he can become so closely identified therewith that the light of heaven seems almost quenched.

CVIII. "Thy vessel the beasts of the earth shall inhabit."

CIX. "Hard to turn, with burden on back, without share in the light."

For those who lead an evil life

CX. "They are no great way off from dogs irrational."

In the light of such disasters that may befall the erring Soul, the exhortations of the Oracles are pregnant with significance.

CXI. "Stoop not down, for a precipice lieth beneath, sheer from the earth, drawing down by a descent of seven steps, neath which is the Throne of dire Necessity."

The seven steps are the seven subterranean hells which are the antitheses of the seven celestial spheres.

CXII. "Nor stoop down to the darkly-gleaming world, beneath which is ever spread an abyss, formless and obscure, wrapped in befouling gloom, joying in shadows, where the Intelligible hath no place; precipitous and winding, a blind depth, ever turning, in perpetual embrace with an unseen body, inert and lifeless."

CXIII. "Store not in thy mind the earth's vast measurements, for the Tree of Truth groweth not upon earth; nor assemble thy calculations to measure the measures of the Sun; not for thy sake doth he run his course, but by the Eternal Will of the Father. Let go the rush of the moon; for she circleth ever by the operation of Necessity. Not for thy sake was the starry procession brought forth. Never true is the wide flight of birds through the high air, nor the dissections of sacrificial entrails: all these are toys, the support of mercenary fraud. Flee thou from such, if to the Holy Paradise of True Piety thou wouldest enter in, where Virtue, Wisdom, and Good Law together dwell."

Every species of divination is necessarily qualified by the limitations of time and space, but the Soul's victory over temporal and spatial conditions depends upon its introduction or initiation into that which is eternally and immutably established above all that belongs to time and space and motion. Hence, the Way of Return is to be found first within the deeps of the Soul where the seal or word of divinity is concealed, and by the interpretation of which the Soul enkindles the light of divine ideas which makes plain the pathway of the Great Ascent.

CXIV. "But the Mind of the Father receiveth not her (the Soul's) will until she cometh out of oblivion and speaketh the Word, restoring to herself the memory of the Holy Covenant of the Father." *(To be continued)*

PLATO AND THE HUMAN GNOSTIC FACULTIES

The most vital question which any system of philosophy is required to answer is whether truth is attainable by the human soul. If this is not decided at the outset and the fact that the soul has inherently the capacity to attain truth is not established, then the system of philosophy is like a superstructure without foundations, a speculation as to the nature of something which may have no reality.

The implications which follow when it is postulated that truth cannot be known are so appalling that the human mind instinctively revolts from them. Man is born in the physical world surrounded by countless objects the nature of which he has to learn, acted upon by forces which at first he cannot understand, and with a purpose of which he is ignorant. The whole of life is a process of learning, of acquiring the knowledge of the world around him, of the powers which operate in it and in himself, and of the purposes for which both he and it exist. If in the course of this process, never easy and sometimes painful, he could not attain to any truth, if all the result of his experience, his labour, and his suffering was but to store his mind with fallacious shadows of reality, the whole of existence would be a stupendous farce and a hideous nightmare, all thought, effort, and experience would be useless, and an abyss of nothingness would yawn before all humanity.

Yet in spite of this some of the systems of philosophy which have flourished in the last two hundred years have caused a doubt to arise as to whether the human mind does possess the capacity to know absolute truth. Moreover the theory of Relativity is sometimes interpreted so as to suggest or imply that truth itself is relative and that absolute truth is therefore either a figment of the imagination or beyond the reach of human intelligence.

Truth may be defined as the conformity of thoughts to things, of the order of ideas to the order of existences. Certitude, which is the conscious attainment of truth, is reached when the correspondence between existing things or actual events and the ideas and causes which are behind them is fully realized, when the relations between the subjective and the

objective, the inner and the outer, the above and the below, are perceived by the intelligence in such a way that they can be accurately demonstrated.

Man is not only a physical body; he has a spiritual as well as a corporeal nature; he lives in the world of ideas as well as in the physical world; hence he has faculties which enable him to contact that which is noumenal, ideal, and subjective, just as he has faculties which enable him to contact that which is phenomenal, actual, and objective.

To establish fully man's capacity of attaining truth it is necessary to know the nature of the human gnostic faculties and the objects to which they address themselves, and to prove that these faculties are completely reliable when used for their proper purposes.

In a profound passage of the "Republic" Plato classifies the faculties by which the soul gains knowledge, together with the divisions of the field of the knowable to which they severally address themselves.

Socrates has been discussing the kind of education which it will be necessary to give the guardians of his ideal state in which the kings are to be philosophers, and has come to the conclusion that only the vision of absolute goodness, truth, and beauty will enable them to direct it safely. Glaucon, with whom he is conversing, is somewhat amazed by the notion of absolute goodness—which Socrates describes as that which not only enables all known things to be known but gives them their very being—but presses him to continue. Socrates then divides the whole sphere of things into two sections: that of the intelligible and that of the visible or sensible. Each of these he again sub-divides into two, thus splitting up the whole field of that which is knowable into four regions. Of the divisions of the sensible, the first is that of images, such as of shadows and reflections in water and in smooth and polished surfaces. The next is that of the things of which these are the resemblances, that is of actual existing things, such as animals and all natural and artificial objects. Socrates compares the difference between the image and the object which causes it to the difference in the degree of truth attained by opinion and knowledge.

He then goes on to the division of the intelligible section, and distinguishes its two subdivisions by the fact that in the lower the soul investigates by means of hypotheses "using

the imitations which we have just now detailed as images; and does not ascend to a first principle but descends to a conclusion; but in the other she proceeds beyond hypothesis and images, and approaches ideas by means of ideas." Glaucon has some difficulty in understanding this, and Socrates in explanation gives, as an example of the lower sub-division, the processes of geometrical mathematical investigations, in which the investigator assumes such self-evident facts as odd and even numbers and simple geometrical figures. Beginning from these visible forms (which themselves have reflections in water) he proceeds by means of them to the investigation of the properties of the absolute square and the absolute diameter, "seeking to see those things themselves which cannot be seen except by reason."

He goes on:

"Then I spoke of this kind as intelligible*—although the soul is compelled to make use of hypotheses in the investigation of it, and does not go to a principle, being unable to ascend above the hypotheses, but using as images the things which themselves are reflected by that which is below them, and those which are believed to be illuminating in relation to the others (the ideas themselves) and are prized for this quality.

I suppose, he said, that you mean those which are used in geometry and its sister arts?

Then you may understand that by the other division of the intelligible I mean this which reason itself lays hold of by its dialectic power, using hypotheses not as first principles, but actually as hypotheses, like stepping-stones and starting points, so that it may proceed as far as the unhypothetical to the supreme principle of all, and, having gained a grasp of that, it may, holding fast to the attributes of that, so descend again to the conclusion, not availing itself of the sensible at any point whatever but, using ideas themselves and proceeding by means of ideas to ideas, may find its end with them.

I understand, he said, though not fully—for it seems to me that you refer to a work of some magnitude—that you wish to distinguish the vision of that which is, and of the intelligible, which is attained by the science of dialectic, as being clearer than that attained by what are called arts, for the first principles of these are hypotheses, and those who attain to the

* Plato's Republic, End of Book VI.

vision which they give are compelled to do so by means of the reason; but because they behold it, not by ascending to their first principle but by starting from hypotheses, you do not think that they exercise intellect (nous) in regard to them, although such arts are intelligible after their beginning. But you seem to me to call skill in geometry and similar arts reason (dianoia) but not intellect (nous), as though the reason were something mid-way between intellect and opinion.

You have understood me, I said, most completely. And you may take it that the soul has these four faculties, corresponding to the four divisions—Pure Intellect (Noesis, the exercise of Nous) corresponding to the highest division, but Reason (Dianoia) to the second. Now put Belief (Pistis) in the third and Inference (Eikasia, the knowledge derived from images) in the last, and arrange them: in proportion as each partakes of truth, so you may think of it as partaking of clarity.

I understand, he said, and agree, and I am arranging them as you say."

The divisions of the field of the knowable and the human gnostic faculties may therefore be tabulated thus:

Field of that which is knowable	Intelligible	—	Pure and Universal Ideas ...	Noesis (Intuition)	Faculty
		—	Relatively Universal Ideas ...	Dianoia (Reason)	
	Sensible	—	Material Objects	Pistis (Belief)	
		—	Impressions and Images	Eikasia (Inference)	

Thus, beginning from below, the first objects of knowledge are the images and impressions of things which are contacted by the senses. But each separate sense contacts a different quality of the object perceived: the sight its colour and shape, the touch its texture, and so on. But the faculty of Eikasia is something more than the functioning of any one separate sense. All the senses, as such, are passive; but Eikasia has an active quality, for it is the faculty which announces to the consciousness the nature of the image, *as a wholeness*. By itself, although perfectly reliable within the range of its proper objects, it is not adequate as guide to the ordering of life; for, because it is purely instinctual, it can only draw inferences from the data with which the senses supply it, and has not the capacity to distinguish an object from its image or to state

which is the reflection and which the original. This capacity belongs to the faculty above Eikasia which Plato calls Pistis or Belief.

This is the faculty which announces to the consciousness that certain things are so. In dealing with concrete objects it can distinguish them from their images. It is the natural tendency to accept that which is presented to the mind. It is opinion based on the evidence of the instincts and senses and is sometimes called the Estimative Faculty, because in using it the mind decides by a species of selection or irrational judgement as to the degree of truth contained in any statement. Its sphere is that of concrete facts and the objective realm generally. It is able to know that a thing is but not to announce why it is.

The cause or reason which lies behind any event or phenomenon is not concrete but abstract, and consequently the faculty which deals with the reasons of things must belong to the division of the intelligible. It is because man is a rational or reasoning being that he is able to ascend from effects to causes and embrace with his consciousness both the objective and the subjective. The lower sub-division of the intelligible is the sphere of Dianoia, which is the Discursive Reason. Reason is able not only to deal with concrete objects and by inductive processes to extract, as it were, the ideas which they express and arrive at a conclusion or generalization, but also to deal with ideas in themselves and by deductive or eductive processes to arrive at further ideas. The first may be termed the Logical Reason, the second the Dialectic Reason.

In a mathematical demonstration certain self-evident facts are assumed as first principles and a chain of reasoning is extended from these until a conclusion is reached. But even the knowledge obtained in this way is not characterized by absolute certitude because, as Plato points out, the facts or axioms which are assumed in the first instance are not related to their own first principles, but are assumed as the first principles of the demonstration. Hence in order to reach absolute certitude we must ascend to the highest sub-division of the intelligible realm, the contacting of which is effected by Noesis or the exercise of Nous or Pure Intellect. Here the hypotheses are assumed not as first principles but merely as hypotheses, and the argument instead of descending

to a conclusion ascends to the Supreme Principle of all things, which is unhypothetical. Having become thus established on an unhypothetical foundation "it may, having gained a grasp of that and holding fast to the attributes of that, so descend again to the conclusion, not availing itself of the sensible at any point whatever but using ideas themselves and proceeding by means of ideas to ideas." This is the exercise of the Dialectic Reason which, by relating things to their first principles and these first principles to the First Principle of all principles, attains to a knowledge of them in their subjective and objective natures, in their beginnings and endings. The exercise of Nous in its highest aspect completely transcends the processes of the discursive reason, for at its summit the dialectic reason verges into pure spiritual intuition which is the subjective contemplation of real universal ideas.

All these four faculties are inerrant when used for their proper purposes and in their own fields of operation. Error and confusion only arise when it is attempted to make one faculty do the work of another.

It is often affirmed that the evidence supplied by the eyes is fallible because they are deceived by what are termed optical illusions; but the eyes are not deceived, they faithfully transmit to the sensorium the impressions which they receive. The faculty of Eikasia or Inference then operates and an instinctive impression is produced on the consciousness. But the capacity to interpret this impression belongs to faculties higher than the instincts and senses, and the conclusion which is eventually arrived at will be true or false according to whether these higher faculties are operating normally and fully and whether they are in possession of all the necessary data.

Thus in the case of a conjuring trick the eyes are affected by certain stimuli and an impression is received through the faculty of Eikasia that certain events have taken place. But here the next faculty, that of Pistis, steps in and announces to the consciousness that a feat of sleight of hand is being witnessed and that therefore it is probable that the apparent events are not what has actually occurred. Each faculty, when functioning normally, is perfectly reliable within its own domain, and it is only when the senses or instincts are expected to give explanations or to distinguish between fact and appearance that error is the result.

If the lower faculties are reliable within their own domain, the higher ones will be even more certain in their operation.

The fact that the reasoning process is in itself inerrant is proved by the fact that any two human beings reasoning in an accurate manner from the same premises must reach the same conclusion. If this were not the case no demonstration in geometry or any similar science could be relied upon.

Finally, the intuition, which when it is real is a spiritual perception or cognition of pure universal ideas and aspects of truth, must be the most reliable of all, for it sees truth as a wholeness independent of any processes and includes within itself the capacity to demonstrate any aspect of it.

Yet although the gnostic faculties may be classified in this manner the fact that the human consciousness, although so complex, is a unity, makes it difficult in practice to say where one faculty begins and the one below it ends. Inference merges into opinion, opinion is often tinged with some species of reasoning, while Reason merges into Intuition. In terms of these faculties the mysterious division between the subjective and the objective may be said to be bridged by logic, for logic is higher than mere opinion yet lower than pure reason. In its lowest aspects it deduces concrete conclusions from concrete facts, but in its highest aspect, as *Metaphysical Logic*, it is concerned with abstract notions and verges to *Dialectic*.

It is evident, therefore, that since man has faculties which address themselves to every point in the scale of being and existence from the most concrete to the most abstract, and since certitude consists in the realization of the correspondence of the objective to the subjective and the conformity of thoughts to things, it is possible for man, when all his faculties are fully active and consciously exercised, to arrive at *Absolute Truth*. The lower faculties which deal with the concrete and sensible can never enable him to do this, for the right interpretation of the evidence with which they supply him depends upon the use of the higher faculties. But when, by the exercise of the dialectic reason, the ability to relate all things to a few abstract ideas is gradually gained, and when these few ideas are related to the *One Idea* which is *Thought of God*, *Noesis* or *Spiritual Intuition* becomes more and more a permanent possession and there dawns upon the consciousness the vision of *Absolute Truth*.

MYSTIC VERSE

More things are wrought by prayer
 Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
 Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
 For what are men better than sheep or goats
 That nourish a blind life within the brain,
 If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
 Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
 For so the whole round earth is every way
 Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.

—Tennyson.

* * *

Give all thou canst; High Heaven rejects the lore
 Of nicely-calculated less or more.

—Wordsworth.

* * *

Be not afraid to pray—to pray is right.
 Pray, if thou canst, with hope; but ever pray,
 Though hope be weak, or sick with long delay;
 Pray in the darkness, if there be no light.

—Hartley Coleridge.

* * *

He is a path, if any be misled;
 He is a robe, if any naked be;
 If any chance to hunger, He is bread;
 If any be a bondman, He is free;
 If any be but weak, how strong is He!
 To dead men life He is, to sick men health,
 To blind men sight, and to the needy wealth—
 A pleasure without loss, a treasure without stealth.

—Giles Fletcher.

* * *

TO THE SUPREME BEING

The prayers I make will then be sweet indeed
 If Thou the spirit give by which I pray;
 My unassisted heart is barren clay,
 That of its native self can nothing feed:
 Of good and pious works Thou art the seed,
 That quickens only where Thou sayst, it may;
 Unless Thou show to us thine own true way
 No man can find it. Father! Thou must lead.
 Do Thou, then, breathe those thoughts into my mind
 By which such virtue in me may be bred
 That in Thy holy footsteps I may tread:
 The fetters of my tongue do Thou unbind,
 That I may have the power to sing of Thee,
 And sound Thy praises everlastingly.

—Wordsworth.

JEWELS

“ Love, on account of its friendly alliance with faith, makes men believers; and faith, which is the foundation of love, in its turn introduces the doing of Good.”—*Clement of Alexandria*.

* * *

“ Since then love is the Artificer of all virtue, let us with all exactness implant her in our souls, that she may produce for us many blessings, and that we may have her fruit continually abounding, the fruit which is ever fresh and never decays.”—*St. Chrysostom*.

* * *

“ Love is not paid away in the same manner as money; for, whereas money is diminished, love is increased by paying it away.”—*St. Augustine*.

* * *

“ In the Beautiful no limit is to be found, so that love should have to cease with any limit of the Beautiful. This last can be ended only by its opposite; but when you have a Good, as here, which is in its essence incapable of a change for the worse, then that Good will go on unchecked into infinity.”—*St. Gregory of Nyassa*.

* * *

“ Labour fosters patience, gentleness extinguishes anger, loving-kindness treads down hatred, unclean desires are slain by holy aspirations, avarice is cast out by liberality, and burdensome wealth becomes the means of virtuous acts.”—*Pope Leo the Great*.

* * *

“ Love is alone sufficient by itself; it pleases by itself, and for its own sake. It is itself a merit, and itself its own recompense. It seeks neither cause, nor consequence, beyond itself. It is its own fruit, and its own object and usefulness.”—*St. Bernard of Clairvaux*.

* * *

“ Think with thyself, O man, that there is nothing so forcible to inflame thee in the love of God as the remembrance of His infinite benefits.”—*St. Bonaventura*.

* * *

“ Love is a true virtue, which not only maketh things like unto each other, but also uniteth them, and it always leadeth the Soul unto its like and not unto its opposite.”—*Angela da Foligno*.

* * *

“ If thou suffer not the memory of God to slip whether prosperity come or grief; in that certain thou showest thyself a true lover.”—*Richard Rolle*.

* * *

“ Merit consists in the virtue of love alone, flavoured with the light of true discretion, without which the Soul is worth nothing.”—*St. Catherine of Sienna*.

“ The spectrum of love has nine ingredients:—

Patience: ‘ Love suffereth long.’

Kindness: ‘ And is kind.’

Generosity: ‘ Love envieth not.’

Humility: ‘ Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.’

Courtesy: ‘ Doth not behave itself unseemly.’

Unselfishness: ‘ Seeketh not her own.’

Good Temper: ‘ Is not easily provoked.’

Guilelessness: ‘ Thinketh no evil.’

Sincerity: ‘ Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the Truth.’”

* * * —Henry Drummond.

“ We have been placed in this life, not only to do the works, but also that we may know, so that our works may grow out of knowledge, as fruit grows out of the tree. Therefore, our work in this life is to gain more knowledge and so to come nearer to God.”—*John Tauler.* * * *

“ As soon as any man rises up and resolutely turns away from sin, God, in His Goodness, acts as though that man had never fallen into sin; and never, for a moment, will He retaliate upon him.”—*Eckhart.* * * *

“ God cannot always give us what we ask for. It is not from any failure on His part—He is a thousand times more ready to give than we are to take—but we outrage Him and wrong Him by hindering His natural action through our unpreparedness. Before we can be in a right state to receive we must learn to get right out of ourselves, and not consider anything as our own; nor must we be on the look out for our own profit, for joy, fervent feelings, melting emotions, reward.”—*Ibid.* * * *

“ God, since He is the Highest Good, would not let evil be in His works unless He was so Almighty and good as to bring good out of evil.”—*St. Augustine.* * * *

FROM LADY JULIAN OF NORWICH

“ I desired to learn assuredly as to a certain creature that I loved, if it should continue in good living, which I hoped by the grace of God was begun. And in this desire for a *singular* Shewing, it seemed that I hindered myself: for I was not taught in this time. And then I was answered in my reason, as it were by a friendly intervenor: *Take it generally, and behold the graciousness of the Lord God as He sheweth to thee: for it is more worship to God to behold Him in all than in any special thing.*” * * *

“ Prayer oneth the soul to God. For though the soul be ever like to God in kind and substance, restored by grace, it is often unlike in condition, by sin on man’s part. Then is prayer a witness that man willeth as God willeth; and it comforteth the conscience and enableth man to grace.”

MAHAYANA BUDDHISM

II. TRUTH AND THE Gnostic FACULTIES*

BUDDHA, the Enlightened One, is the Personification of Truth. But in the Mahâyâna System this Light of Buddha is not to be sought merely in the realms of external phenomena: He is to be found enshrined in the deeps of the heart.

When the Buddha had assembled his disciples prior to leaving them and entering Nirvâna, they were overcome with grief, and exclaimed: "Too soon has the Exalted One died. Too soon has the Happy One passed away. Too soon has the Light gone out in the world." Yet, in his last Sermon to them, he had prepared them, saying:

"Be ye lamps unto yourselves. Be ye a refuge to yourselves. Betake yourselves to no external refuge. Hold fast to the Truth as a lamp. Hold fast as a lamp to Truth."

"Whosoever, either now or after I have passed away from your midst, shall find that lamp within themselves, that refuge in themselves, who betake not themselves to any external refuge, but, holding fast to Truth as their refuge, and holding fast as their refuge to Truth, shall look not for refuge to anyone outside themselves, these among my aspirants (*Bhikshus*) shall reach the very topmost Height—but they must be ever zealous to learn."—(*Mâha Parinirvâna Sutra*).

And the Exalted One had addressed the venerable disciple Ananda, saying:

"It may be, O Ananda, that in some of you the thought may arise: 'The Word of the Teacher is ended, we have no Teacher now.' But it is not thus, Ananda. The Truths and the Norms of the Order, which I have taught and laid down for you, let them, after I am gone, be your Teacher."—(*Ibid*).

The fundamental Truths of the Buddha are eternal and immutable: they are untouched by time and their essence is ever the same. To become conscious of these Truths is to become enlightened, to awaken the Buddha-enwombed-in-the-Soul.

Thus, as the disciple Mahâkâsyapa exclaimed: "O ye my fellow disciples, weep not, neither lament, this

* See previous issue for article on the History of the Mahâyâna.

is not an empty world, and the Tathâgata lives on for ever, He suffers no change; so likewise lives on the Doctrine (*Dharma*) and the Order (*Sangha*).”—(*Ibid*).

Tathâgata is a name of Buddha as “He who truly comes” or “He who fulfils all things,” He is the Source of inspiration of all the great Mahâyâna Sages, who, utilizing all the scriptures of Primitive Buddhism as a basis, have, in the Light of the Tathâgata, carried the Teaching of Buddha onwards to its more and more complete fulfilment.

In the progress of Buddhism, the nature of Truth and Reality, and the means whereby they are to be known and attained, have become more and more completely unfolded.

Thus, in the Primitive Buddhism, which perhaps even unwittingly appears to have been dominated by the belief that the Light of Truth was extinguished by the passing of Buddha, there was a distinct tendency towards Agnosticism. No definite attempt seems to have been made to explore the realms of the noumenon, and consequently no direct effort was exerted to unfold the nature of the Ultimate Truth by means of metaphysical and philosophical speculation.

In Hînayâna Buddhism there was a most exhaustive analysis of the nature of component things, of the elements which constitute the phenomenal universe, and of the composition of the human personality, all in accordance with a law or wheel of causation, but unrelated with any Ultimate Principle of Reality, save that which is implied by Nirvâna.

In the Mâdhyamika School of the Mahâyâna this analytical process was carried a stage further and the first step was taken to speculate concerning the nature of the noumenon which is behind and beyond all phenomenon, as well as to unfold the nature of Absolute and Relative Truth.

In the Yogâcârya School of the Mahâyâna this development was continued and a most significant advance made in the unfoldment of the higher gnostic faculties, as well as in the exposition of the nature of the three kinds of knowledge.

In the Chinese and Japanese Mahâyâna Sects, the doctrine of the Absolute Reality became fully developed and established as the universal basis of the Mahâyâna System, which is its most characteristic distinction by which it is to be sharply distinguished from the Hînayâna School.

I. TRUTH OR SATYA

“ On Two Truths is the Holy Doctrine of the Buddhas founded—Truth Conditional and Truth Transcendent—those who know not the distinction between these two Truths, know not the essence of Buddhism most profound.”—*Nâgârjuna's Mâdhyamika Shâstra*.

The Transcendent Truth is called *Paramârtha-Satya*; it is the Highest and Absolute Truth and is sometimes termed the Pure Truth or the Supreme Truth.

The Conditional Truth is called *Samvritti-Satya*; it is the Relative Truth and is sometimes termed the Practical Truth. In unfolding the significance of these two Truths the philosophers of the Mâdhyamika School introduce two most profound terms, which are mystical and analogical, hence may be misunderstood when interpreted literally; they are *Sûnya* and *Asûnya*.

Sûnya means the Absolute Void or the entire absence of finite and relative attributes.

Asûnya means the non-void, or the presence of actual attributes and qualities or predicates of the finite intelligence.

According to Nâgârjuna, the Absolute Reality is to be reached by a series of negations, which he designates the Middle Way, that is “ *Mâdhyamika* ”; he opens his Sutra with these eight negations:

“ No birth: no death;
 No permanence: no extinction;
 No oneness: no manyness;
 No coming: no passing.”—(*Ibid*).

In other words the Absolute Reality is beyond all conditionality, all relativity, all attributions, and in this sense is the Absolute Void, that is to say, It is absolutely void of, exempt from, and unindigent of, any conceivable attribute, property, or quality that pertains to existence, as such.

It is a paradoxical void and is not to be regarded as nihilistic or negative in the literal sense. It is beyond the sphere of logic and all that is relative and impermanent, and yet it is not permanence as such, but more real and ineffable than could be any conception of permanence. It is the Mahâyâna Seal* of Absolute Reality.

* There are three characteristic Seals of the Law in the Hînayâna School, to which the Mahâyâna adds a Fourth Seal. The three Seals are:

- (1) All is impermanent.
- (2) Nothing has an ego-substance (all things are conditioned).
- (3) Eternally tranquil is Nirvâna.

“ What is *Sūnya* is Real;
What is Real is *Sūnya*.”

Truth (*Satya*) is *Sūnya*, because it is void of all conditionality. In itself it is beyond all particularization, and in ascending to It, all particular qualities must be denied of It, because It is universal and transcendently beyond them all.

When Truth is considered in Its absolute and transcendent aspect as *Paramārtha-Satya*, it is neither void nor non-void, because it is beyond all ideas of relativity. It is neither subjective nor objective, as such; neither being (*Bhāva*) nor non-being (*Abhāva*).

Although It is the transcendent Plenum of all possible aspects of Truth, yet, contrasted with the apparent fullness of actual, concrete, and phenomenal existence, It is absolutely empty, and possesses nothing which the sensible, and corporeal faculties can contact, hence It is a supernal and abstract nothingness (*Sūnya*).

Absolute Truth possesses nothing in common with relative and finite existence, nevertheless all that IS can bear witness to It and point towards It when the Light of Buddha is enkindled in the heart.

Relative Truth (*Samvritti-Satya*) pertains to all aspects of being, existence, and conditionality. It is Partitive Truth as contrasted with Integral Truth. It is unreal in itself alone, but real or actual when considered as the outer and lower aspect of Absolute Truth.

“ Contemplate that Highest Truth (*Paramārtha-Satya*), which is not a production of the mind, which cannot be illustrated by analogy, which cannot be adequately treated by reasoning.”—(*Mahāyāna-Shraddotpāda-Shāstra*).

II. KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge is not the same as Truth, but may be defined as that which results from the realization of Truth.

According to the Yogācārya School of Asanga and Vasubandhu there are three kinds of knowledge.

- (1) *Parikalpita-lakshana* which is apparent or illusory knowledge.
- (2) *Paratantra-lakshana* which is relative knowledge.
- (3) *Parinishpanna-lakshana* which is absolute knowledge.

Lakshana means mark, sign, character, or attribute. It signifies the attributions or "marks" which the manifested world takes on, as it were, when it is perceived or cognized by the gnostic faculties.

Parikalpita-lakshana is the knowledge derived from the observation of externalities, based upon the apparent nature of things, which does not penetrate below the surface. It is unsubstantial, materialistic, sensible, and even phantastical. The superficiality of this kind of knowledge is compared by Asanga to that of a man who erroneously supposes a piece of rope to be a snake. It is mere conjectural knowledge and relies on the opinions of others, being devoid of any real ratiocination. It is opinionative, instinctual, prejudicial and illusory.

Paratantra-lakshana denotes that which depends upon something else. It is the recognition of the relativity of all finite existence, with its interdependence upon cause and effect, subjective and objective, abstract and concrete, permanence and impermanence. It includes, but goes beyond, the phenomenal and external "marks" or characteristics of objective existence, passing from the mutability and unreality of that which is objective to that which is subjective and noumenal, thus endeavouring to reach the immutable and real universal principles behind and above all particularity. But, since it considers all things in their relationships with other things, it is not, by itself alone, characterized by finality, although it may be conscious that there is no finality in transient existence. Taken alone this kind of knowledge may lead to agnosticism, because it is unable to ascend above the laws of relativity and cause and effect, and cannot pronounce the final truth concerning anything which comes within the sphere of its cognition. Relative Knowledge, as such, is or may be reliable, as far as it goes, but it does not satisfy the mind's hunger for Absolute Knowledge.

Parinishpanna-lakshana is Universal and Absolute Knowledge which transcends and yet includes all particular, relative, and conditional knowledge. It knows the reasons of all things and is able to unfold the fundamental elements or "signs" of an intelligent and all-comprehensive world-view.

It is the Perfect Knowledge which attains to a consciousness or realization of the Final Truth (*Paramârtha-Satya*), dis-

PELLING all illusions and ignorance in its completeness or integrality. To attain this Great End, declared the Yogâcârya School, is the supreme object of the Teaching of Buddha, for this Perfect Knowledge leads to the Eternal Bliss and Final Liberation of Nirvâna.

III. THE Gnostic FACULTIES OR VIJNANAS

Perhaps one of the most immediate and direct means of gaining a general acquaintance with the Mahâyâna Philosophy is that of considering the method according to which it deals with the human gnostic faculties or powers; because this, at the same time, reveals an important direction in which the Mahâyânists have adopted the teachings of the Primitive and Hînayâna Buddhism as a basis and have developed them a stage further in the realms of metaphysics and psychological speculation.

Jnâna means Knowledge; *Vijnâna* means skill or art or the faculty of knowing. It is sometimes translated as consciousness, although this is an effect of *Vijnâna* rather than its essential connotation. Its nearest equivalent in our language is probably gnostic faculty.

In the original Buddhism six *Vijnânas* were outlined—five sensible and one super-sensible; the latter was termed *Mano-vijnâna* and signified the simple pure self-consciousness. Asanga, the founder of the Yogâcârya or Vijnânâmâtra School, made a real advance in Buddhist Psychology. He realized that the sixth *Vijnâna* of the Sarvâstivâdins was incapable of rising to the heights of metaphysical abstraction demanded by the teaching of the Absolute Reality; therefore he perceived the necessity of unfolding the nature of higher gnostic faculties and added a seventh and an eighth *Vijnâna* to the original system. The number of these gnostic faculties became again increased by other sub-divisions so that the total became ten—five sensible and five super-sensible.

They may be tabulated as follows:

The Sensible Gnostic Faculties—Pure Consciousness when associated with the five senses.

- (1) *Kâya-vijnâna*, consciousness of body and tactile sense
- (2) *Jihva-vijnâna*, consciousness of sense of taste
- (3) *Ghrâna-vijnâna*, consciousness of sense of smell
- (4) *Shrota-vijnâna*, consciousness of sense of hearing
- (5) *Shaksur-vijnâna*, consciousness of sense of sight.

These five *vijnânas* are the same in both systems.

The Super-Sensible Gnostic Faculties—Pure Consciousness when not directly associated with any of the five senses, as such.

- (1) *Karma-vijnâna*, activity consciousness, the incipient stage or awakening of self-consciousness.
- (2) *Pravritti-vijnâna*, progressing consciousness, the perception of mind waves (*vritti*) produced by action (*Karma*).
- (4) *Mano-vijnâna*, the normal waking self-consciousness proper: the representative consciousness, which also has the power to cognize the non-sensuous and the abstract. In its pure state the "ego" as *Manas* is said to be like a clean mirror which reflects the objects of consciousness.
- (4) *Klishto-mano-vijnâna*, the particularizing consciousness which discriminates between the various elements of that which is cognized. *Klishto* means perfumed or defiled; it has to do with the manner in which objects of knowledge are qualified or characterized in the mind that perceives or cognizes them.
- (5) *Alaya-vijnâna*, the receptacle of consciousness; also called the Essence of mind, the All-conserving Mind, the Repository of Mind: it has various sub-divisions.

The use of Reason is implied in all the five super-sensible *vijnânas*. The principle called *Manas*, which is the same in both systems, may be considered as denoting Reason in its pure state, unqualified by the objects of consciousness. It enters into the operations of all the *vijnânas*, and is the principle through which man is a rational independent individual being, hence it is sometimes translated as the Ego.

In the *Mahâyâna-Shraddotpâda-Shâstra* or "the Awakening of Faith in the Mahâyâna," which is one of the finest Mahâyâna treatises in the Chinese language, there is an endeavour to systematize the two schools of Nagarjuna and Asanga. An example of this synthetic process is afforded by the following extract which refers to the five *vijnânas*.

"In the All-conserving Mind (*Alaya-vijnâna*) nescience or ignorance (*Avidya*) originates; and from non-enlightenment there begins that which perceives, that which represents, that which cognizes the objective world, and that which constantly particularizes. This is called the Reason (*Manas*).

Five different names are given to Reason (*Manas*) according to its different modes of operation.

The first name is activity-consciousness (*Karma-vijnâna*), according to which, through the agency of ignorance, an unenlightened mind begins to be disturbed or awakened.

The second name is progressing-consciousness (*Pravritti-vijnâna*) according to which, when the mind is awakened or disturbed, there unfolds or evolves the perception of the external world.

The third name is representative-consciousness (*Mano-vijnâna*) according to which Reason (*Manas*) represents or reflects that which is objective or external. As a clean mirror reflects images of all descriptions, it is even so with the representative-consciousness; when it is confronted, for instance, with the impressions of the five objects of sense, it represents them at once, spontaneously and without any effort.

The fourth name is particularizing-consciousness (*Klishtomano-vijnâna*), according to which the Reason discriminates between different things—defiled as well as pure.

The fifth name is successive-consciousness (*Alaya-vijnâna*), according to which, being continuously directed by awareness (*Manaskara*), the Reason retains and never loses or suffers the destruction of the effects of action (*Karma*), good or bad, which have been sown in the past, the retribution of which, painful as well as agreeable, it never fails to mature, be it in the present or in the future; and also according to which, it recollects things that are past and, in imagination, anticipates things that are to come.”—(*Mahâyâna-Shraddotpâda-Shâstra*).

In order to understand the relationship of *Vijnâna* with other principles in the Buddhist System it is necessary to consider the nature of the five *Skandhas*, or “Aggregates” of the transient personality.

These are:—

- (1) *Rûpa*, material form and corporeality.
- (2) *Vedanâ*, sensation and feeling.
- (3) *Samjnâ*, instinctual impressions.
- (4) *Samskâra*, active disposition.
- (5) *Vijnâna*, gnostic power.

These terms are common to all schools of Buddhism but their significance and classifications vary. Their fundamental characteristics are unfolded by Vasubandhu in his *Abhidharma-Kosha*.

Concerning *Rûpa* he says: "All things possessing form, whether past, present or future, whether internal or external, whether coarse or fine, whether small or large, whether remote or near—all such things constitute one aggregate, called *Rûpa Skandha*.

Vedanâ he says: "is the sense-feeling arising from sense impressions."

Samjnâ he says: "has for its essence the grasping of differences of qualities, the grasping of images or impressions; it seizes impressions of qualities, such as of colour, of size, of the pleasant and the unpleasant."

Samskâra is the sum total of all the fluctuating dispositions, tendencies, attitudes and traits of character of the personality, which qualify or modify all conscious activities.

In showing the relations of the *Skandhas* to each other he makes use of the following simile: "*Rûpa* is like a plate or dish; *Vedanâ* is like food or liquid contained in the dish; *Samjnâ* is like a sauce; *Samskâra* is like the cook; and *Vijnâna* is like the eater."

Thus, *Rûpa* constitutes the material basis of the personality and includes the various elements of which it is composed, as well as the sense organs and objects. *Vedanâ* includes the various kinds of feelings and sensations resulting from the contact of *Rûpa* with the external world. *Samjnâ* includes the various sensible species or impressions received from externalities by the brain. *Samskâra*, which has numerous and extensive classifications, includes all the mental, moral, and emotional tendencies of the personality—acquired or inherited. *Vijnâna*, as the last of the *Skandhas* or aggregates of being, acts as a substratum of them all, blending them, through *Manas* and *Alaya* into the unity in a single self-conscious personality with all its multifarious peculiarities and distinctive qualities.

"As waves are stirred in the sea,
Even so are the seven modes of mentation (*Vijnâna*)
Awakened in the mind and united therein.
When the waters are troubled in the ocean,
The waves roll each in its own way;
So with the mind all-conserving (*Alaya-Vijnâna*),
When stirred, diverse mentations arise therein:
Ideation (*Citta*) Reason (*Manas*) and Self-consciousness
(*Mano-Vijnâna*).

These are distinguished as attributes (*Lakshana*),
 Yet essentially they differ not from each other;
 For they are neither attributing nor attributed.
 The sea-water and the waves, one varies not from the other;
 Even so is it with the mind and its operations;
 Between them no demarcation can be set.

Citta is karma accumulating.

Manas reflects the objective realm.

Mano-vijnāna is the knowledge-acquiring faculty, and
 The Five *Vijnānas* are the differentiating senses.”—
 (*Lankāvatara Sutra of the Yogācārya*).

Citta has no exact English equivalent, but may be considered as denoting ideation, thought, and mentation generally. With the activity of *Manas* or Reason, there is an unfoldment of *Citta* and the resultant consummation of self-consciousness as the mind-waves (*Vritti*) are awakened or stirred-up in the ocean of the universal and all-conserving Mind (*Alaya-Vijnāna*). The seed or germ of self-consciousness is, as it were, in *Alaya-Vijnāna* and becomes unfolded or “evolved” through *Manas* and *Citta*, in conjunction with the *Skandhas* and other factors.

IV. ALAYA-VIJNANA

Alaya is sometimes spelt *Aliya*: this is the form used in the older Chinese texts, which became changed into *Alaya* when Hsüan Tsang adopted this spelling in his translations.

It is called the “*Vijnāna* of Seeds” and “The Storage of Seeds.”

According to the modern Japanese Mahāyānist D. T. Suzuki, *Alaya* is described by the Buddha in one of the Suttas of the *Mahāyāna-Adhidharma*, as “subsisting from eternity and constituting the foundation of all things, and without which no paths are possible, nor is there any attainment of *Nirvāna*. This *Vijnāna* supports and sustains everything; it is a storage where all the germs of existence are contained; therefore it is called *Aliya* (or *Alaya*). This I teach only to the higher men.”

“Asanga says that the Buddha did not teach it to the novices (*Shrāvakas* or “Hearers”) ‘because it is too subtle to be comprehended by them. They have not yet the gnostic power that will enable them to acquire Universal Knowledge (*Sarvajñāna* or All-Knowledge) but the *Bodhisattvas* have it.’ And

in the *Ekottara-Agama* it says: 'to those people in the world who take delight in the *Alaya*, long for the *Alaya*, exercise themselves in the *Alaya*, cling to the *Alaya*, the *Tathâgata* preaches the right doctrine in order to let them do away with the illusion or misconception of *Alaya*.'

"It is called *Alaya* because all living beings, and defiled or particularized objects, are therein mysteriously stored in the form of a seed, and also because this *Vijnâna*, being mysteriously stored within all objects, is the *raison d'être* of their existence, and because all sentient beings, taking hold of this *Vijnâna*, imagine it to be their own ego; therefore it is called *Alaya*."

He then quotes the *Sandhinirmocana Sutra*:

"The *Vijnâna* that bears and sustains, is deep and subtle; Wherefrom the seeds of beings perpetually flow: To the vulgar I preach this not, Lest it should be conceived by them as an ego-substance."

The seeds of *Alaya* may be regarded as the types or formative principles of all existence, which emerge from potentiality into actuality.

In its cosmic aspect *Alaya-vijnâna* is behind all the kingdoms of Nature, and its unfoldment may be called the evolution of Nature.

In its microcosmic aspect *Alaya-vijnâna* is the root or basis of consciousness: it is followed by *Klishto-mano-vijnâna*, the differentiating or particularizing consciousness, and by *Mano-vijnâna*, the self-consciousness or consciousness of "self."

Manas or Reason is a self-active power which operates through all the *Vijnânas* and thus releases the potentialities of *Alaya*. According to the *Mahâyâna*, *Manas* is the power which affirms: "It is I that thinks, or does this or that." It supplies energy to the whole field of mentality, and the result of its operation is *Vâsana* or "habit-energy," which is latent in *Alaya* and is a subtle spiritual essence that emanates from every thought and action of *Manas*. This becomes the "odour," "perfume," or so-called "defilement" (*Klishto*), which tends to modify subsequent thought and produces the *Klishto-mano-vijnâna*.

Manas is distinct from the *Vijnânas* in the same way that pure Reason is distinct from its effects, such as discrimination, judgement, and other mental powers.

The seeds of which *Alaya* is the store, are like the innate ideas of Plato, and, as these are unfolded from latency into actuality, so the character of *Alaya* seems to change. Hence, although, as a unity, its essence is stable, yet in the multiplicity of the activities that follow from it, it appears to undergo continual modification. Thus, it is said to be "perfumed" or defiled by the activity-force (*Karma*) of the individual in whom it inheres.

Without the *Alaya-vijnâna*, as Asanga declares, there would be nothing permanent in the individual that could extract the essence or "perfume" of all experiences, and thus all existence would be void of ultimate significance and value, all speculation concerning enlightenment would be idle and profitless, and all aspiration to the attainment of *Nirvâna* would be futile, for there would be nothing that could attain it. But, as Asanga states, in the highest states of contemplation (*Samadhi*), wherein the Ultimate Reality is approached and the ordinary finite mental activities are quiescent, then it is that *Alaya* abides alone, pure and serene.

It is *Manas* and all the gnostic faculties that are in need of enlightenment, for prior to this the nature of *Alaya* is not realized, but is regarded as the unreal and transitory "self" or empiric ego which *Mano-vijnâna* sees, as it were, reflected in itself.

As Suzuki says: "As soon as it realizes the full import of *Aliya*, it is denuded of its egoistic assumptions and opens the way to *Nirvâna*. *Manas*, therefore, is the pivot on which turns the entire destiny of our spiritual life; according to the way it is set up, we are delivered or doomed. The six senses, as well as the *Aliya*, are *Manas*' neutral and innocent co-workers, or even its subordinate officers who are "perfumed," sweetly or odiously, according to the arbitrary will of their ever-vigilant master. The whole force of the Buddhist discipline is thus naturally concentrated on the enlightenment and subjugation of *Manas*. When *Manas* ceases to create its ill-scented and highly infectious germs for the absorption of *Aliya*, the latter is no more contaminated and will forever maintain its original healthy neutrality and absolute tranquillity."—(*The Eastern Buddhist*, Vol. II, No. 3-4).

Alaya is originally pure and immaculate: it is Void (*Sâmya*) of all attributes. But as the result of the activities of the various gnostic faculties—sensible and super-sensible

it becomes conditioned or defiled, and is then non-void (*Asūnya*).

The Real Void (*Sūnya*) is the Supreme Truth (*Paramārtha-Satya*); but the false and unreal void is Ignorance or Nescience (*Avidya*). Both of these, paradoxically, are within *Alaya*.

In the progressive unfoldment of the various gnostic faculties, Ignorance (*Avidya*) is first changed into apparent Knowledge (*Parikalpita-lakshana*); but as the influence of Reason (*Manas*) on the *Vijnānas* becomes predominant over the influence of the lower aggregates (*Skandhas*) of the personality, so Relative Knowledge (*Paratantra-lakshana*) takes the place of illusory Knowledge, and when *Manas* itself is subjugated, it no longer reflects itself in *Alaya* and produces the illusion of the relative or separate "Self," with its Relative Knowledge, but passes beyond and above this by becoming identified with the All-conserving and Universal Mind and attains to the Absolute Knowledge (*Parinishpanna-lakshana*) which is the realization of the Transcendent and Integral Truth (*Paramārtha-Satya*).

(To be continued)

SEED THOUGHTS

If pain be an evil, either it is in regard of the body; (and that cannot be, because the body of itself is altogether insensible) or in regard of the soul. But it is in the power of the soul, to preserve her own peace and tranquillity, and not to suppose that pain is evil. For all judgement and deliberation; all prosecution, or aversation is from within, whither the sense of evil (except it be let in by opinion) cannot penetrate.—*Marcus Aurelius*.

* * *

All men are made one for another: either then teach them better, or bear with them.—*ibid*.

* * *

To them that ask thee, where hast thou seen the Gods, or how knowest thou certainly that there be Gods, that thou art so devout in their worship? I answer first of all, that even to the very eye, they are in some manner visible and apparent. Secondly, neither have I ever seen my own soul, and yet I respect and honour it. So then for the Gods, by the daily experience that I have of their power and providence towards myself and others, I know certainly that they are, and therefore worship them."—*ibid*.

MAHAYANA JEWELS

“ Having great compassion, our Eternal Father lighteneth the dark night of ignorance, manifesting Himself in that Land of Joy as the Buddha of Infinite Light, which enlighteneth all worlds with its immeasurable glory.”—(*The “Wasan” or Buddhist Hymns of Shinran Shonin*).

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“ Take refuge in the Mighty Consoler. Wherever His Mercy shineth throughout all the world, men rejoice in its gladdening light.”—*ibid.*

* * *

“ Though our eyes are so blinded by illusions that we discern not that Light whereby He embraceth us, yet that great mercy forever shineth upon us and is not weary.”—*ibid.*

* * *

“ Seek refuge in the true Illumination, for the Light of His Wisdom is infinite. In all the worlds there is naught upon which His Light shineth not.”—*ibid.*

* * *

“ The power of the King of Righteousness far surpasses that of all beings; He, unmoved in the comprehension of the Absolute Truth, ever bestows upon all beings the wealth of righteousness; He abides in the state of sovereignty in all things. Therefore, adoration is due to the King of Righteousness.”—*Vimalakirti Nirdeca Sutra of Madhyamika*.

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“ The Great Sage, the King of Righteousness, is the only refuge of all beings; there is none who remains unhappy when once he, with serene mind, beholds the Lord; everywhere he beholds the Lord before him.”—*ibid.*

* * *

“ The Lord preaches with one language, one only; yet beings who hear Him preach, deeming it their own, understand Him according to their kind.”—*ibid.*

* * *

“ The spiritual body of the Tathâgata is incomprehensible, With no form, no materiality, nothing is comparable thereto; But He assumeth a form for the sake of sentient beings, Whereby making Himself manifest to those who receive His Word.”

—*Avatamsaka Sutra*.

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“ The Buddha’s voice reacheth throughout all the quarters of the world,

In response to the yearnings of all beings;

And never ceaseth unto all eternity.

Rising from the overflowing ocean of mercy,

And exhausting all possible means of deliverance,

The Buddha revealeth Himself to the eyes of all beings.”

—*ibid.*