

**THE CHRISTIAN LIFE
AND MESSAGE
IN RELATION TO
NON-CHRISTIAN SYSTEMS**

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CHRISTIANITY AND BUDDHISM¹

KENNETH J. SAUNDERS, LITT.D.

I. DIVERSE VIEWS OF BUDDHISM

AS I set to work to draft this report, two letters from experienced missionary leaders of great sympathy and insight reached me. The first is from an old friend who has made a careful study of Buddhism during sixteen years of pioneer work in Ceylon : he writes, ' Buddhism here has no spiritual values—if that phrase refers to any relation to higher powers.' The second letter is from one who has spent a much longer period in China : he writes of Buddhists, monks and others, who ' may give to the Christian Church something of the wonderful treasures which Christ, as the Eternal Logos, has bestowed upon them through Buddhism.' And he goes on to speak of some 5000 Buddhist monks with whom, in the past few years, he has lived in spiritual fellowship.

These two attitudes are the two extremes among many expressed by missionaries. Both writers speak

¹ Two papers in this series deal with Buddhism : Dr Reischauer deals with Northern Buddhism, particularly as manifested in Japan ; Dr Saunders gives the greater part of his space to Southern Buddhism, but writes also out of his experience of Buddhism in other fields. It will be observed that on certain points the two writers are not agreed, especially, perhaps, as to the meaning of Nirvana, and also on certain aspects of the Buddha's own teaching. In a realm where the best authorities differ, it has seemed well to leave these divergent views to be studied side by side.

from experience and in love : both are close students and men of great ability, and their opinions deserve the most careful attention. I take it that it is such questions, above everything else, that the Jerusalem Meeting desires to discuss. Therefore, I throw out only one or two suggestions. Are both correct ? Is Ceylon Buddhism as unspiritual as this ? Is it the environment of China which has made this great difference ? Are the Chinese, then, more religious than the Sinhalese ? The question sounds like a paradox, in view of all accepted positions on this subject, and it is worth noting that it was a Sinhalese Buddhist, Dharmapala, who in 1893 did so much to awaken the monks of China. Part of the answer lies, of course, in the difference between the *Mahayana* and the *Hinayana*¹ forms of Buddhism ; yet the former had its chance also in Ceylon ; and it was something more like the latter which first entered China.

I suspect that the two writers have a different view of what is 'spiritual.' But even if we confine it, as the first writer does, to that which has a reference to outside powers, it must be noted that Buddhists in Ceylon use a phrase which occurs in one letter to me, 'By the grace of the Triple Gem' and 'By the mercy of God' ; and any one noting the amusing and amazing adoption of Christian hymns by Southern Buddhists will see that there must be something in them which finds the expression of Christian piety congenial and necessary. And if it be argued, as my first correspondent does argue, that they are not Buddhist in so far as they show such manifestations of piety, my reply would be that they call themselves

¹ 'Greater Vehicle' and 'Lesser Vehicle,' i.e. Sanskrit and Pali Buddhism.

Buddhists, and that Buddhism, in spite of many textbooks, has always had a vast outer circle of lay people less rationalist and more pious than the monks. The Founder intended that it should be so, and there is much evidence to support the Pali text which says, 'Whosoever would attain to a heavenly rebirth, let him attach himself with love and faith to me.'¹ As the monuments prove, there has always been a lay-Buddhism which can only be described as a *bhakti*—a cult of devotion and faith.

Let us hear the detached scholar. Here we are fortunate in having a charming and scholarly article from one who knows Ceylon Buddhism better than any one else in Europe.²

Dr William Geiger, who has studied Ceylon and loved its people during a long lifetime, lately visited it once more. He has given us a vivid account of his impressions of Buddhism,³ which Buddhists and Christians will alike welcome as sympathetic and impartial. Here is a picture of a scene so familiar to the missionary that it may almost pass unnoticed: 'Before the Bodhi tree opposite the Dalada temple in Kandy we came upon a man with his little daughter. He was kneeling with the child before the tree, and folding her hands and rehearsing a prayer to her, she repeating it word for word after him. Our coming did not disturb their devotions. That side by side with this there are thousands who are tepid and indifferent goes without saying. The same, for that matter, may be said of so-called higher civilizations

¹ *Alagaddupama Sutta*, 'Yesam mayi saddha mattam pema mattam sabbe te saggaparayana.'

² It is perhaps significant that the humblest and profoundest things I have to quote from western scholars are from Germans.

³ 'Memories of Ceylon,' *Journal of the Pali Text Society*, 1924-7.

—more properly to be called younger civilizations—and of these perhaps in a higher proportion.’

In another passage Dr Geiger describes very happily a *paritta*, or *pirit* ceremony, held at Mulkirigala, a remote shrine, in honour of his wife and himself, and for the happiness and success of their journey. ‘I do not hesitate to confess,’ he says, ‘that the little ceremony made a deep impression on us both. The demeanour of the priests was so serious and dignified, the quiet devotion of my friend (a Buddhist layman) was so sincere, that we told ourselves: Here is yet true and genuine piety; the Buddha teaching has here yet spiritual force.’

Here then the trained and sympathetic eye sees that in quiet and unobtrusive ways Buddhism, whether in the innumerable acts of private devotion at wayside shrines, or in the ceremonies provided for special occasions, is still alive and meets the spiritual needs of the people in ways which the missionary will note. He may well seek to provide better opportunities for quiet prayer, e.g., in churches always open, or at wayside crucifixes; and, as the wise monk does, will hold a service for the blessing of the traveller, or of great family occasions such as the building of a new home or the eating of the first solid food by the baby—occasions which Buddhism, in spite of its monastic tendency, has always been eager to serve.

Dr Geiger is out of sympathy with the attempts to graft Buddhism on to western conditions, to which he considers it is alien, and also with those Europeans who resort to Ceylon, Burma, or Siam, to lead there the life of a *bhikkhu*. Yet that there are sincere men amongst these European Buddhists no one who knows them can doubt. They are them-

selves a proof that Buddhism is not merely a matter of ceremonies, nor of a conservative patriotism easily understood in the light of the present nationalist movements. It lives on because of these things, but also because it satisfies many thoughtful minds as the best expression available of religious truth. One of these European converts who was trained for the priesthood of the Roman Catholic Church, and is a *Zen* Buddhist quite akin to the Ceylon monk, writes to me as follows :

‘ You ask me to tell you what is *the* motive-power in Buddhism as I know it.

‘ Of course, as your question indicates, you realize that the motive-power must be something individual, something unique. The motive-power in Buddhism cannot be an emotional wave which would include all people and so give a fundamental explanation. One may obtain a generalization in a way, and I think the generalization would read : Emancipation—i.e. freedom from “ I ”—and the gaining of insight and the assurance of “ salvation.”

‘ Personally, I have a great difficulty in giving you something definite and concise outside of the above statement. The motive-power is complex. Then, you must remember, I have had a long lone struggle to understand Buddhism. The results I have arrived at are from personal contemplation, and not from university lectures, etc. I have had no help, but lots of criticism and abuse.

‘ To me, Buddhism is *true*, i.e. it accords with experience, reason and logic, in so far as the *Dharma* (i.e. law of conduct) is concerned ; this is also the criterion of scientific truth. Knowing this through experience, it has proved the motive-power in my mission work and gave me strength to stand up

bravely against all odds. I knew I was telling the people what was true. Hence I may say that, to me, is the motive-power in Buddhism. I cannot conceive of a better motive-power at present.

‘But that is from the intellectual side only—but the first step. The *deeper* motive-power lies beyond science, reason and logic. I learned in Buddhism that all phenomena—personality, etc.—belonged to the non-I, and knowing that, I turned my power of cognition inwardly to discover the reality in which lies the All of life. Then getting an insight into it and the motive-power it developed became the motive-power which has captured my whole life and impels me to go out into the byways and tell people to look within through the veil of personality, and there discover their happiness and salvation. The touch, so to speak, of the Infinite, the Buddha, God—to give It names—is sufficient cause to exert one’s self and spend one’s life in helping others to freedom and salvation.’

To sum up, we may say that this writer has experienced in Buddhism emancipation from self, and a supra-rational joy—‘beyond reason and logic’—which is of the essence of mysticism.

It is unfair to doubt the sincerity of such a statement from a man who has borne loneliness and misunderstanding for what he believes to be the truth; and scholars are beginning to realize that while it is easy to emphasize the negative and the barren in this rather monastic Buddhism of the South, yet there is something more positive and living. This may be described as the mystical element, and the rational explanation of it. In other words, Buddhism is at once an experience and a philosophy. Dr Otto in

his epoch-making work *Das Heilige* has called attention to this element of experience :

It is the 'Beyond' of the mystic—the 'numinous'—the kernel of religion—which he calls 'Nothingness'—not only because nothing can be predicated of it, but because it is absolutely and intrinsically other than and opposite of everything that is and can be thought. . . . 'But what is true of the strange "nothingness" of our mystics holds good equally of the "sunyam" and the "sunyata," the "void" and "emptiness" of the Buddhist mystics.'¹

'It is only conceptually that "Nirvana" is a negation ; it is felt in consciousness as in the strongest degree positive ; it exercises a fascination by which its votaries are as much carried away as are the Hindu and the Christian by the corresponding objects of their worship. I recall vividly a conversation I had with a Buddhist monk. He had been putting before me methodically and pertinaciously the argument for the Buddhist "theology of negation," the doctrine of *anatman* and "entire emptiness." When he had made an end, I asked him what the Nirvana itself is : and after a long pause came at last the single answer, low and restrained : "Bliss—unspeakable." And the hushed restraint of the answer, the solemnity of his voice, demeanour and gesture made more clear what was meant than the words themselves.'²

These words of Dr Otto compel careful attention. He is perhaps the leading theologian of our time.

¹ *The Idea of the Holy*, p. 30. Elsewhere Dr Otto says : 'Mysticism is . . . a coming into predominance of the Irrational, which may take place in different ways, and with widely different content. . . . The content of the experience is utterly ineffable. It cannot be transmitted . . .' See vol. iii. No. 2 of *The Eastern Buddhist*.

² *Ibid.* p. 39.

The mystical element in Buddhism has been much neglected in the West, and I remember, as long ago as 1912, Dr Oldenberg correcting me when I said that I missed this element : ' No, no, Buddhism is essentially mystical.' He had studied it in relation to the Upanishads ; and it has become more and more clear to me since that it must be understood as an answer to the ancient prayer of India,

From the unreal lead me to the real,
From darkness to light,
From death to the undying.

Nirvana is, in fact, a mystical experience, an experience rare as all mystical experience is, but nevertheless authentic, an experience of a Beyond which is also within. The Pali texts describe it as reality, beside which all else is mirage, as an island in the sea of *samsara* (wandering), as being in the midst of becoming, as the permanent in the midst of the transient, as bliss in the midst of sorrow. No one who will study these synonyms for Nirvana, especially in such summaries as Section XV of the *Dhammapada*, will ever again repeat the parrot-cry of the West, that Buddhism is mere negation, or mere pessimism. And if we want to know what a spiritually-minded monk of Ceylon is like, here is the answer : He is one who is joyful in the midst of sorrow, calm in the midst of turmoil, gentle in the midst of hatred, poor, yet possessing all things because of his experience of Transcendent Truth. This is, of course, an ideal, but I think that it is realized at times and in some degree—though *Arhats*, those who have reached the goal, no longer exist.

So real is this mystical core of Buddhism that another eminent German theologian, Friedrich Heiler, has said, as quoted in the new *Pali-English Dictionary*,

‘Nirvana is, although it might sound a paradox, in spite of all conceptional negativity nothing but “eternal salvation,” after which the heart of the religious yearns on the whole earth.’ We can at any rate agree with two American Baptist missionaries in Burma, that we may preach Nirvana through Christ.¹ For Nirvana means an ethical as well as a mystical experience. It is the end of *tanha* (desire) as well as the unspeakable joy of transcendental experience. We might say, without going far wrong, that when the Fourth Gospel speaks of the ‘Son of Man which is in heaven’ it describes an experience of other-worldly peace in the midst of time which is akin to that of the Buddhist *Arhat*. The ‘Psalms of the Early Buddhists’ are full of this joy in mystical truth. While it is true that mysticism may be communion with a personal Lord, there is another type which is pantheistic—perhaps the more usual type. ‘Mysticism is reason applied to a sphere above rationalism,’ says Dean Inge: ‘its essence is this sense of ultimate Truth reached not by logic but by a “higher” process: Truth which is transcendent and ineffable.’

Was the Buddhism of these early devotees wholly devoid of the former and more personalist type? Is it not likely that as the Galilean so stirred men’s hearts by His sincerity and loving friendliness that they re-read the nature of God Himself in new terms, so the Sākyan by these same great qualities inevitably put a content into the Indian conception of the Unseen which led to a new religious experience? We can watch the process at work in the Pali texts as in the Gospels.

¹ *The End of the Law*, ch. xi. Gilmore and Smith, Association Press, Calcutta; a small but important work.

Whatever our Christologies or our Buddhologies may be, the great fact remains that behind all religions there is Religion and the religious consciousness of man. The mystics are the experts who experience the truth by which the rest of us live. According to their upbringing and environment, they give the ineffable a local habitation and a name. But the missionary must get behind names to realities ; and there is a growing recognition among such Buddhist scholars as D. T. Suzuki and such Christian scholars as Rudolf Otto that what the German mystic calls *Das Nichts* and the Upanishad seer, *Neti*, the Buddhist calls *Sunyata* : it is ' that from which words turn back.' ¹

The first step, then, towards an understanding of Buddhism and of Buddhists must be a quest of the historic founder, and a study of his religious experience.

II. THE QUEST OF THE HISTORIC SAKYAMUNI

After nearly a century of western scholarship, the quest of the historic Sakyamuni still goes on, and controversy is still vigorous. Of no historic figure are so many divergent views held and defended. Nor is eastern thought less at variance. Buddhists themselves hold many different views about their master. ' The diamond-throne of the original enlightenment,' says Okakura Kakuzo, ' is now hard indeed to discover, surrounded as it is by the labyrinths of gigantic pillars and elaborate porticoes

¹ See articles in *The Eastern Buddhist*, edited by D. T. Suzuki, esp. vol. iii. No. 2. The study of psychology is a pre-requisite to the study of religion : things psychologically akin are often theologically separate, as Dr Suzuki points out.

which successive architects have erected, as each added his portion to the edifice of faith.'¹ That is true as well as beautiful. And it is not only because of the elaboration of Buddhism by later sects that it is hard to find the founder; it is because those who claim to be nearest to him are themselves widely divided in their attitude towards him. Not only is there the wide gulf between the *Mahayana* and *Hinayana*; in the Pali Canon itself there are several stages of Buddhology which await critical evaluation, and until we have some clear evidence as to what was central in the founder's person and mission the whole question remains in confusion. Was the house of Buddhism a 'House of Faith'? To many a modern Buddhist it was a house of scientific thought; and the Buddha is revealed sitting upon a diamond-throne of dialectic. 'Surely a notable milestone in the history of human ideas,' says Mrs Rhys Davids (in commenting upon the Buddhist formula of causation: 'that being present this becomes; that being absent this does not become'), 'that a man reckoned for ages by thousands as the Light, not of Asia only but of the world, and the Saviour from sin and misery should call this little formula his Norm or Gospel, at least one aspect of that gospel.'² This view, which clearly is only one phase of Mrs Rhys David's interpretation, and which she would now put differently, has been lately attacked by Dr Berriedale Keith, who maintains that, 'given the psychological conditions of the time, it would have been a miracle had the Buddha been capable of the rationalism imputed to him. . . . It was the age of the growth of the great gods Śiva and Viśnu, in their various forms, and the Buddha's success was due to the

¹ *The Ideals of the East*, p. 60.

² *Buddhism*, p. 89.

fact that he either had claims to divinity or his followers attributed it to him, and won general acceptance for the view. It is conceivable that divinity was thrust upon him against his will, but every ground of probability supports the plain evidence of the texts that he himself had claims which necessarily conferred upon him a place as high as the rank of the greatest of gods.¹ These two positions may be said to express the extremes of western scholarship in its attempt to discover the historic Sakyamuni. For one he is Rationalist, for the other Deity. The one emphasizes faith as essential to his disciples, the other reason.

The confusion of thought in which western scholarship finds itself may be partially explained by the statement of Hermann Oldenberg, who said, nearly fifty years ago, 'The Indian mind was wanting in that simplicity which can believe without knowing, as well as in that bold clearness which seeks to know without believing, and therefore the Indian had to frame a doctrine, a religion and a philosophy combined, and therefore, perhaps, if it must be said neither the one nor the other, Buddhism.'²

Buddhism is, in fact, a Middle Path in this as in everything else. Not only is it a Middle Path between the way of the world and the way of the ascetic, it is also a Middle Path between the way of the rationalist and the way of the man of faith; and in placing the emphasis most truly we shall probably do well to follow the clue given us by S nart—a view held by Sankara and familiar to Indian thought—that Sakyamuni was essentially an early mystic, who, because he himself realized the ineffable experience

¹ *Buddhist Philosophy*, p. 29.

² *Buddha*, English Translation, p. 6.

of the conquest of *tanha*, spoke with authority to the conscience and heart of man; and because he was also a thinker, seeking to explain this great experience, appeared as an ethical teacher, when he explained it as the cessation of *tanha*, and as a religious and a philosophical teacher when he went on to the further interpretation that it means also escape from *samsara*. Himself more interested in the experience of Nirvana than in the explanation, he was yet an Indian teacher seeking to lead others to *moksha* (release). If they were to share his great experience he had necessarily to use the categories of Indian thought and to set forth Nirvana as freedom from *samsara*.

Many western writers have trembled on the verge of this interpretation. Most of them have fallen back upon the conclusion that here was an early Socrates, or an early Hume, or some more ethical Upanishadic thinker. There is truth in these positions; what makes them false is that inveterate tendency of the 'either, or.' With one recent Indian statement, that of Dr B. Barua, that the Buddha was essentially a philosopher, some may be found to agree, but Dr Barua himself goes on to quote that very vital passage in which the Teacher says: 'There are things profound, hard to realize, hard to understand, yet tranquillizing, sweet, not to be grasped by logical reason, subtle, intelligible only by the wise.'¹ It is for these things that the Buddha must be rightly praised. Here then is a key passage: it is not for his morality or moral teaching, not for

¹ Prolegomena to *A History of Buddhist Philosophy*, quoting *Dialogues of the Buddha*, ii, pp. 33-6. Cf. Professor Whitehead's statement that 'Buddhism was a metaphysic generating a religion' (*Religion in the Making*, p. 50).

his use of logical reason, not for his philosophical achievements that the founder is to be praised, it is for that apprehension of mystical truth which is the Buddhist equivalent of the *Neti* of the Upanishads, an expression 'from which words turn back'—and which idealists of the *Mahayana*—recognizing it as the essence of Buddhism—call *Sunyata*—the void, the ineffable.

It is, in other words, as one who grasps things by intuition that Sakyamuni claims originality; and yet if we are to accept the passage in *Majjhima Nikaya*, II. 19, he calls himself a *Vibhajjavadin*, that is, an Analyst, rather than an *Ekamsavadin* or Synthetist. This also may be true. For the mystic may also have in him something of the rationalist, and if he is to communicate his experience he must seek at any rate to make it intelligible to others. It was an age of mystical seers like those of the Upanishads, and of a vigorous dialectic like that of the sixty-two schools mentioned in Buddhist texts. Some, at any rate, of these were philosophers and some were rationalists. The view that Sakyamuni was an early *yogi*¹ has been well stated by S nart, who in 1889 said emphatically, 'Buddhism is not a philosophic sect; it is a system of *yoga*,'² and who in 1900³ worked out this view, and showed that we have in the four *Dhyanas* of Buddhism (a central doctrine and practice common to Northern and Southern Buddhism, and therefore very old) an even older Indian practice, which is of the essence of *yoga*. The famous Buddhist practice of *brahma-*

¹ *Yoga* may be defined as a technique of the mystical experience.

² *Revue des Deux Mondes*.

³ See 'Bouddhisme et Yoga,' *Revue d'Histoire des Religions*, 1900, vol. ii. p. 345.

vihara carries in its very name the proof of its origin, and Patanjali, in his *Yoga-Sutras*, uses the very words of the Pali texts—a proof that he looked upon these practices of *mettā* (benevolence), *karuna* (compassion), *mudita* (sympathy), and *upekha* (balance or detachment), as common property not distinctively Buddhist, but belonging to *yoga* as such.

The four stages, again, by which the Buddha analyses the disease of the world and lays down the essential treatment known as the 'Four Noble Truths' of Buddhism, are the old stages of medical diagnosis, which we find coming up again in the *Yoga-Sutras* and, as the technique of meditation leading to ecstasy is the same, so are the powers (*iddhi*) to which they lead.

More may be said on this subject, but here it may suffice to note that in the great works of art of the Andhra and Gupta periods exemplified in the solitary Buddha in the jungles of Anuradhapura and in the even more deserted Deer Park at Sarnath, the artists have left to us the clear proof that here is in fact a *yogi*, seated with eyes closed, regulating his breath, with head and trunk in one line, and with hands folded in meditation. Here in fact is *samadhi* (contemplation), which is the crown and goal of the Eightfold Noble Path. This Path, though it begins with right views, is in fact a path for the mystic, and ends in right ecstasy.

And as these old masterpieces of Buddhist art may be looked upon as strong rocks amidst the shifting sands of the Texts and the surging waves of the Schools, so when we look at the modern practice of the Buddhist monk—whether in Ceylon,

with its strange meditation upon skeletons, or in some *Zen* temple in Japan, or in the *Chan* Schools of China and Korea—we find that the living heart of Buddhism, amidst much that is dead and corrupt, is this practice. It is this, and this alone, which keeps alive the old faith, which, because it is essentially *yoga*, is able to attach to itself almost any outward observances. *Yoga* is in fact, as Poussin has said, a technique ‘in itself strange to all morals as to all religious and philosophic theory, but from this technique¹ there can be separated out, and to it there can be added, morals, theology and devotion.’¹

At the core, then, of early Buddhism was the Solitary, the great Seer, the Mystic—Sakyamuni, surrounded by a small group of others who had caught his spirit, and entered into some of these difficult practices. At the circumference were all sorts of lay people, to whom he could not communicate even an idea of such things. For them he had a different technique, and to them he offered a different goal. ‘Whatsoever householder desires to be re-born in a heaven, let him attach himself to me with faith and devotion,’ says the *Majjhima Nikaya*, ‘but whatsoever monk would realize Nirvana, let him tread the noble Eightfold Path’; for the way of the mystic is a difficult and elusive way, open only to those who have the original spiritual genius to tread it, and who are prepared to give their whole time and attention to its pursuit. The layman *may* attain Nirvana; it is very unlikely that he will ever attempt it. That his interpretation of this profound experience of Nirvana is what it is, is due to the fact that Sakyamuni was an Indian

¹ *Nirvana*, p. 12.

of the sixth century before Christ, and could only explain it in terms of current thought ; that he was a great original thinker is evidenced by the fact that he had the courage to interpret it ethically rather than metaphysically, and to urge upon men that what mattered was the moral emancipation rather than the monistic interpretation. And even to the laity like Sigalo, whom we find worshipping the gods of the four quarters, he insists that the true worship of the gods is righteous living : to honour mother and father, to treat one's household aright, this is to pay due respect to the gods. To the specialist to meditate upon the great virtues or graces of kindness, compassion and sympathy, this is the true mysticism ; and it will lead on to that *upekha*, or *yoga*, which is balance, harmony or poise. The world is out of joint because men are following false views, and obsessed with false pursuits. This is the meaning of *dukkha* (literally, misery), and over against it Sakyamuni holds out the alluring vision of that *santi* (peace) which he has himself experienced. This, and this alone, is *sukham* (joy). From the ordinary *yogi* this great one differs in that his experience was profound and ethical—and that he established the practice on a rational basis. From the texts of the Upanishads he differed in bringing into daily life some of the glamour of the Ineffable.

That educated India is to-day turning back and finding in Sakyamuni her greatest teacher is significant. A leading Hindu said recently, ' The only two figures of supreme moral power are the Buddha and the Christ.'

Both are mystics in a supreme sense, in their genius for contemplation and in sacrificial service

of men. True summaries of their teachings are the famous words :

‘One thing only do I teach—suffering and the end of suffering,’ i.e. Nirvana. ‘I am come to give life and life more abundant,’ i.e. eternal life.

Which Teacher can better meet the needs of man and better reveal God ?

Two other statements as to the historic founder of Buddhism may here be quoted. The first is from Dr M. Anesaki, Professor of the Science of Religion in the University of Tokyo. He wrote, in 1912, ‘He was a mystic visionary, but he lived nearly fifty years of his ministry in constant activities. . . . The two sides of training—self-culture and actions—found a perfect union in the person of the Buddha.’ And he sees, rightly I think, in this richness of the personality of the founder the germs of the later schools, that which followed the *Arhat*, and that which followed the *Bodhisattva* ideal. Yet, as Dr Anesaki says, this division between the more mystical and the more actively ethical exists among the followers of the latter ideal, the *Mahayana*, also.

The following statement from Dr J. N. Farquhar, Professor of Comparative Religion in the University of Manchester, is illuminating, and may serve as a useful summary before we leave this very important question. He writes to me under date of 8th June, 1927 :

‘I think I agree in the main with your conception of the Buddha, but I would put it in some such way as this :

‘We can decide most certainly as to what was fundamental for the Buddha by studying what the discipline and curriculum were which he imposed

on his monks and nuns. If I understand the discipline of the Buddhist monastery, it had two sides, *the first*, a continuous course of moral and intellectual self-discipline for every ascetic; *the second*, the practice of trances. Thus we may be perfectly certain that what was uppermost in his mind was his own long struggle with moral and intellectual problems, but that he had found his *yoga* life both refreshing and a source of truth, i.e. your mysticism.

‘Alongside of these two fundamental facts, however, I would place what Dr Keith lays stress on, namely that *he was worshipped as a divine being and felt there was good reason for the observance*. That comes out clearly, I believe, in the earliest literature, and led finally to the whole theory of the Buddha and the many Buddhas and the temples of the *Mahayana*. This side of the situation was, I believe, quite inevitable in ancient India. The contrast between that ancient polytheistic atmosphere, and the rarefied air in which Jesus was accepted as the Son of the Living God, is most instructive historically as well as practically.’

Such, then, is the result of the long quest of the historic Buddha. No one to-day is justified in being dogmatic, least of all in repeating the facile generalizations so often heard: ‘Buddhism is not a religion, but a philosophy; Buddhism is sheer pessimism; the Buddha was an ethical teacher and nothing else.’ We shall do well to drop the textbooks and go to the texts!

III. THE LIVING FORCES OF BUDDHISM AND CHRISTIANITY

Another good starting-point is with the people immediately about us—'living epistles.' We may work backwards to the founder from them, as we have here attempted to work forwards from him. What are the living forces of Buddhism to-day? What, again, are the living forces of the Christian Gospel which will enable it to meet human needs in Buddhist lands? Some evidence on these difficult questions will be found for South Asia in my *Buddhism and Buddhists in Southern Asia*, and in two little monographs, *Modern Buddhism in Ceylon* and *Modern Buddhism in Burma*, the latter edited with the Rev. W. C. B. Purser, and both based upon evidence obtained from missionaries and others.

Evidence from China will be found in Dr Reichelt's book, *Truth and Tradition in Chinese Buddhism*, and in Dr Hodous's *Buddhism and Buddhists in China*; and, for Japan, there is Dr Armstrong's new volume, *Buddhism and Buddhists in Japan*. I think all the authors (and they write with a missionary purpose) would agree that Buddhism is, at any rate, an attempt to meet human needs and to comfort human hearts, that it is alive because it has not wholly failed, and that Christianity will succeed if it can be mediated to Buddhists in a form which they can understand. Towards the expression of an Asiatic Christianity the western missionary can do but little. His task is to help prepare the way for some Asiatic genius who shall do for the faith in Asia what the author of the Fourth Gospel

did for the Greek world. What, then, are the forces which keep Buddhism alive? We may mention its ethics and its view of the world. But first let us read a popular, yet scholarly statement contributed by Mrs Rhys Davids, which vividly describes a devout young Sinhalese layman, at once loyal to Buddhism and wistful with a sense that there might be something better. In the second place we have a statement from Dr Hodous as to the revival of Buddhism in China, together with one from Dr Reichelt on the inner life of Chinese Buddhism. The remaining document, which goes to the very roots of the matter, is that of the Christian leader and social reformer, Toyohiko Kagawa, in Japan.

The reader is invited to note in the first (*a*) the young layman's attitude to the Buddhist monks, who are called in chiefly in times of trouble. His attitude is one of respect tempered by a sense that, while the laity are dependent upon the monks, they feel that there are great limitations in them: that they need help in the problems of to-day and the monks cannot give it. (*b*) It will be well to note in this statement from Ceylon the longing for a more positive spiritual helper. 'We are in the dark,' says this young man; and there is abundant evidence to show that it is the lay people of Ceylon who are speaking here.

In the China papers is a vivid proof that the ancient order of the Buddhist brethren has in it capacity for revival, and bears out the position of the missionary in China with which we started. The third document shows how ready Japanese Buddhists are to co-operate with Christians and to imitate them. It also indicates that the thoughtful Japanese mind is impressed by current trends in philosophic thought,

and that where personalism wins, Christianity has a stronger appeal than the more pantheistic Buddhism : but most important of all is the strong statement of Kagawa San that the Japanese are weary of philosophical and theological discussion, and hungry to see the spirit of Christ incarnate in sacrificial service.

A DOCUMENT FROM CEYLON ¹

(From MRS RHYS DAVIDS)

It was in the train coming from Oxford that I met him—a young Sinhalese, whose parents had sent him over to England to be taught something of what western culture means, in economics and law, on a very slender basis of education gained at an English school in Ceylon. He was feeling perplexed and very home-sick. . . .

‘Yes,’ he said, ‘I am a Buddhist. I was brought up as one. My people are Buddhists, they have none of them joined the Christians, as many in our island have. My parents are pious people. They worship the three Refuges—Buddha, Teaching, *Sangha* ; and they keep the *silas* : Not to take life knowingly, not to steal, not to be adulterous, not to lie, slander, abuse, or chatter, not to go where strong drink is drunk. That’s what we profess, you know, when we say we are Buddhists. . . .

‘We respect and support the monks ; we give them alms when they pass our houses on their alms-rounds ; we give in other ways ; we go to hear them recite from the scriptures on *uposatha* . . . and full-moon days. When the reciting is in Sinhalese, and we understand, we can get good from it ; we can

¹ This paper originally appeared in *The Daily Express*, London.

get good fun sometimes, when it is birth-stories that are being told.

‘We have faith in our monks; we believe that they will instruct us not in what is wrong, but in what it is good for us to follow. They don’t instruct us fully about life; their teaching about women and about children seems to leave out much; they have nothing to teach us about the bigger things we’re up against now—the other races, the Empire, world duties—world duties where there are no monks. No, we should not look to them for teaching on these; we do feel a need of them when we are in trouble, or are ill or dying.

‘What will they tell you then? you ask. If you wish it, they may come and recite a *paritta* (warding rune) for you. There are several of these; I believe, though I am not sure, that they are all from our scriptures. The one we have oftenest is about the wise and good life which brings a man the highest luck; others are professions of goodwill towards all creatures as a way of warding off harm from any form of them. They are very old, these *parittas*; I am told that, whereas before our *Dhamma* was taught *rishis* or seers warded by blasting with curses, our *Dhamma* taught men to make friends of all that might hurt them by sending out a feeling of goodwill to all.

‘Then, again, the monks tell us in our last hours not to be afraid of the hereafter if we have tried to be good and heap up merit; we must keep before the mind our good works. It will then not be ill with us, and we shall be reborn in a happy world and for a long time, before we die there, to be again reborn somewhere else. That world will be something like this one, and we shall know it with a new body and

mind. Or, rather, "we" shall not know it: the new body and mind will.

'How we are to get these the monk never tells. I rather think he does not know. Do your clergymen know? He just tells us we shall be born again and again. Sometimes not knowing more worries me. Can there be light about it in the scriptures?

'You see, we don't know what is in our scriptures. Of course, we can all read, but very few can read their old language, the Pali. . . . Some little poems from them are in Sinhalese, like the *Dhammapada*; but those are verses on what we should do, but not teaching about what we are or shall be. There are many words of Pali in our language, but not enough for us to be able to follow the scriptures. Was it ever like that with your Bible, which you have now in English, and all seem to know a good deal?

'When the monks tell us things out of our scriptures they always tell of the better way of the men who are monks, the better fate for the man who is a monk. We value the monks and their way of life, not because we want to be monks ourselves, but because we believe that to take care of monks is the surest way to avoid a dreadful fate after death. Care of them will be all to our credit then. But I do not clearly know who decides in the matter, although I have heard the name Yama mentioned. Do your clergymen know?

'And I suppose that if we thought more about these things, if we believed in them more earnestly, we should really all of us become monks, so as to be safe both here and hereafter. According to the Ceylon chronicles, this did very largely happen when Buddhism was brought to Ceylon. But you see the fact is that once a man becomes a monk, he is not

really "we." We do not see very much of the monks' world; we do not really love their life; we feel they teach and preach mainly for and about themselves.

'What, then, of the man who began that world in Buddhism? We believe that he was not just a man; he was extraordinary, he was a wonder-being. And we believe we others cannot well enter into what he thought. . . . We believe he is no more in any world, either earth or any other, as reborn. It is impossible even to imagine him. We can and do pray to him, we can and do try to meditate on him, on what we are told about him. But we never look for any answer. We believe we shall be somehow better if we meditate and pray—that is all. But that is so with you, isn't it?

'They tell me that now in all countries men are revering the Buddha, yet what can he be to them? He is our Buddha; we have his *Dhamma*; we have his *Sangha*; he mandated it from the beginning—so we believe; he made it. They tell us he did not think so much of the laity as the monk-*sangha*. Sometimes I wonder whether this can be true. Did he not really care so much for us, whose work supports the monk, as well as the old parents and the little children? He was filled, they recite, with great pity for all men; he was the very compassionate as well as the very wise.

'They recite sometimes how he taught a man, Sigala, what a good man should do as a man of the world, not as a monk. Perhaps he did this very often? Men are now, I hear, speaking of him as not above all the *devas* and great *devas* or gods, but as a man who may still be "alive." Will the earth ever see another like him? We believe it will;

another Buddha, Metteyya, but again of India. Do you think there will be another Jesus? I wish there were a Metteyya here now! I get very weary of being told there is no way of getting word from him, to tell us much we want to know.

‘ Sometimes I think, when, as here, I see man believing this here and that there, that we want a messenger and a *dhamma*, or message, for the world, and not for any one country. Sometimes, too, I think we want a helper who when he leaves the earth will not let go of us. Perhaps—it is not orthodox, do you call it, to say so I whisper it—perhaps our Buddha did not want men to let him go into such utter blankness when he left the earth.

‘ Some of his disciples were able to speak with men of other worlds, just as he did, so they say. Is it perhaps because they did not try to speak to him, to listen lest he might answer, using that sort of rapt musing we learn was called *jnana*, in which they tell us he died? Christians tell me they can get near Jesus in the sacrament. But to us that seems just a matter of the body. They tell me also of a “holy spirit” who wills or guides in what should be done, and that is a lovely idea. But I seem to want a helper who will give me some light just where the monks at home, as I was saying, do not.

‘ Our Buddha spoke of the good life as a way, and the monks teach it as an earth-way—that is, how rightly to walk in this life. But then life, they also say, is very, very long; and beyond this little bit of it we seem to have no good way. We are in the dark. Don’t you think the perfect teacher, the helper greater than the gods, would be always helping men—at least till they could themselves see with him the end of the long way approaching?’

THE BUDDHIST OUTLOOK IN CHINA

Dr Hodous says, 'The modern revival of Buddhism may be viewed under four aspects. In recent years there has been great activity in rebuilding ruined monasteries and repairing old ones.

'The second form which the revival has taken is the publication of magazines and books. In 1913 an edition of the Buddhist Canon known as the "Har-doon Reprint" was published. The supplementary Canon was published later. In 1919 a large dictionary of Buddhist terms was issued. Besides these important works a large number of devotional books have been placed at the disposal of the pious layman. There are a number of presses which are devoted entirely to the production of Buddhist literature. Most of the large cities have one or more Buddhist book-stores.

'In recent years there has been a great revival of preaching. This old custom had fallen into desuetude. Recently it has been revived not only in the monasteries, but also in the large cities. Such lectures are well attended by men and women. They are not of a popular character, but consist in the exposition of one of the Sutras. This is done by careful exegesis of the words and clauses with application to modern conditions. Frequently comparison is made with Christianity and other religions.

'In addition to the addresses special institutes have been held for teachers and students in government schools. These are often led by laymen trained in Japan.

'The fourth expression of the new life in Buddhism consists in the social service and religious work for

the poor and the unfortunate. This has taken many forms. It has not developed so far as it has in Japan where several of the Buddhist sects are doing a varied social service. In China the Buddhists have organized the Yellow Swastika Society which corresponds to the Red Cross. They have collected money for famine sufferers and distributed it. They have some orphanages for boys and girls and also schools. These attempts to serve the modern world are not mere imitations of the Christians. They come from the deep aspirations of Buddhists to express their love of all beings in some way adapted to modern conditions.

‘ Thus far we have summarized the activities of Buddhism in the last three decades. The question is : What is the outlook of Buddhism ? There are three distinct tendencies in the Buddhism of China and Japan. The first is the philosophical tendency. The impact of western thought has aroused a number of scholars who are studying Buddhism for the purpose of purging it of its inconsistencies and adapting it to modern thought. This work has proceeded much farther in Japan than in China where it has scarcely begun. These scholars are slowly applying to Buddhism the same canons of criticism that have been applied to the Bible. This work has been hindered in China by the decadence of the monasteries and the general social and political unrest. The universities, however, are turning their attention to the study of religion.

‘ The second modern tendency is that of the Tantric and Pureland sects, which rely upon magic, exorcism and faith in Amitabha, as a means to escape the ills of this life and to enter the Western Paradise. This tendency is very widespread and,

while it satisfies a large number of people, it acts as a dead weight against progress in religious life and thinking.

‘The third tendency is the religious one. This is promoted by T'ai Hsü and his supporters. Their purpose is to adapt Buddhism to modern thought and make it a power in the modern world. They hope by Buddhism to conserve the values of the East and resist the materialism of our industrial society. While the ideas of these reformers are high they have arrayed against them the forces which are making the modern world. Science, industry and democracy are at work on the one hand breaking down the religious conceptions in all countries, and bringing people together. The result is that moral sanctions are melting away and religious systems are everywhere disintegrating.

‘While the situation is serious it does not seem to be hopeless. The Buddhists in Japan and China are not only longing for a new brotherhood of all men, but are working for it. They are reaching out for a new internationalism. They are trying to meet the demands of the new age by social service. Still in the midst of it all they are conserving those distinctly religious values which are so dear to the East.

‘A number of programmes have been issued. These reveal a new force at work in Buddhism. The Peking Buddhist Association places itself against political oppression, spread of Christianity, anti-religious agitation of the New Thought Movement. These are regarded as outward evils. It also opposes inner evils under which it lists pessimism, the theory of individual salvation and superstition.

‘ The aims of Buddhists are stated by the Present-day Buddhist Society as (1) uncompromising war against all supernatural religions, such as Christianity, Islam, Brahmanism, Taoism, Confucianism and all other sects ; (2) a critical study of science and philosophy ; (3) the purging of all impurities from doctrine and practice.

‘ The Far Eastern Buddhist Convention which met in Japan in 1925 proposed active propagation of Buddhism in Europe and America to be under a board of missions, and the establishment of a missionary training school at Shanghai.

‘ In order to realize these ends the Buddhists are improving the training of the monks. There is a school at Nanking and one at Wuchang under T'ai Hsü. Both are registered with the ministry of education and their curriculum includes the study of the history of Buddhism, comparative religion, philosophy, psychology and sociology.

‘ A somewhat new movement is the attempt on the part of a few Chinese to interpret Christianity through Buddhism and to acclimatize Christianity by clothing it in Buddhist forms. The leader of this movement is Chang Ch'un-i who holds that Christianity cannot be understood without Buddhism. He believes that Christianity is the simplest and highest religion, but that it has not been understood by the West and hence has not been truly interpreted by the missionaries. It needs to be clothed in the cultural forms of China and especially those of Buddhism.’

Dr A. K. Reichelt faces the question, ‘ What are the things by which the Buddhists in China live in the spirit ? ’ and writes as follows :

‘ The first thing to be said is that the answer will

differ somewhat as we deal with the different schools or sects in Buddhism in China.

‘ A very large portion of the Pureland sect (Tsing-tu) here have unconsciously advanced along almost theistic lines, centring around the All-Father, the compassionate Amitabha, almost as the Christians centre around God, the Heavenly Father. And this *at-one-ment* with him has been made possible through his God-sent *Bodhisattvas*, especially Kwan-Yin and Tai shih-chih.

‘ At the same time many of the deepest thinkers and very devoted souls among the Tsing-tu people also realize that the Pureland School is only one of the many ways (the easiest and most practical, although at the same time a difficult way) leading up to salvation. Ultimately this salvation is by these people thought of just as by the thinking and devoted Buddhists in the other schools: It means a coming back to the original source, which means the most exalted bliss and harmony with all obstacles removed as to time and place. It means to have passed through all the spheres of limitations, also that of pleasant, but transient paradises or heavens, to attain to the state of absolute, all-embracing knowledge and wisdom (“boundless light and life”).

‘ The *misery* of all living things is that they have departed from that source (*cheng-su*—the true model or *fah-seng*: the *dharmakaya*), and live their lives in selfish desire and selfish assertion.

‘ Therefore, all the things which can help a man to come to the right understanding are precious: study, devotion, worship, repentance, communion with the saints, seclusion, pilgrimages, etc. They are all means of cultivating “the good root,” they will greatly influence the course of Karma, shorten the

numbers of reincarnations, and, in cases where the work of cultivation is conducted in a perfect whole-hearted way—in a moment set a man free from all bondages and land him securely in the realms of Nirvana. (The idea that Nirvana means extinction of the individuality is entirely absent from their thought. It means extinction of all selfishness and all separate assertion.)

‘ A great many of the less developed Buddhists will also lay much stress upon *the storing up of merits*, often in a very external way.

‘ Still I think we may say that most of them really feed upon such things as they really feel help them “to return to the source.”

‘ . . . A similar idea is expressed in the Pureland with these beautiful words: *Wang Seng*, “to go forward to the life.” By calling upon the merciful *Bodhisattvas*, or directly calling upon the holy name of Amitabha, by stating in the most solemn and powerful language the great vows, which Amitabha and his helping *Bodhisattvas* have made, the assurance gradually will fill their souls that they themselves are lifted up to the realm of the boundless life and light for which this name stands. The solemn vows are the objective foundation of the faith of the believers—the objective foundation of the atonement.’¹

THE SITUATION IN JAPAN

The mingling currents of Buddhist and Christian life in Japan are thus ably summarized by Toyohiko

¹ For further details of Buddhist activity in China see *The Eastern Buddhist*, vol. iii. No. 3, pp. 275 ff. This magazine and *Buddhist India* (Calcutta) are scholarly and important publications, which might well be made available to missionaries.

Kagawa, the great social reformer and Christian leader :

'Zen was the first Buddhist sect to come close to Christianity in Japan. I have been told that Takatsu Hakuju, the high priest of *Sodo*, one of the subdivisions of *Zen*, even went so far as to help in the translation of the Bible into the Japanese language. And among the *Zen* temples there is one on the foothills of Mt Fuji which has no idol at all, nor even any picture of Divinity. Dr Ikutaro Nishida, professor of philosophy in Kyoto Imperial University, is a philosopher indeed, and one who has studied the mysticism of the Middle Ages (in Europe), and who has had a very great influence upon the common people of Japan. His wife, I have heard, is a Christian. Nishida believes in a personal God, and his philosophical tendency is similar to that of Spinoza. On this account, some of his ideas are like those of the Daijo sect of Buddhism. His book—*Zen no Kenkyu*, "A Study of Righteousness"—has had the power to plant the faith in a personal God in the hearts of a great number of Japanese young people. But Nishida identifies God with the Universe, and never speaks of God as the Creator. He says the true life should be revealed in Christ. But he never goes to a Christian church, nor has he received baptism.

'The work of the *Ittoen* has been greatly influenced by Dr Nishida. And Mr Mozoo Kurata, who brought about the modern revival of *Shinshu*, cannot deny that he was greatly influenced by the philosophy of Dr Nishida. *Shinshu* philosophy to-day is atheistic in its essence, but is being interpreted to the common people as personalistic pantheism. There is in this fact a great inconsistency. The *Shinshu* priests dis-

tinguish between the essence, or substance, and the phenomenal form, and so think the contradiction can be settled. For this reason *Shinshu* is like Christianity, and (of all the Buddhist sects) has made the most of an imitation of Christianity.

‘The most tolerant of the Buddhist sects are *Zen* and *Shinshu*. *Nichiren* is the most opposed to Christianity. *Nichiren* has more than ten sub-sects. A revival of *Nichiren* has come about through the essays of Mr Chogyu Takayama. Starting from Nietzscheanism, Mr Takayama proceeded to a study of *Nichiren*, and died as a *Nichiren* believer. Modern *Nichiren* has combined with nationalism and militarism, and so is always in opposition to Christianity, which has the colouring of internationalism. We must not laugh at *Nichiren* for being militaristic, for did not Hegel, who was absolutely pantheistic, think Frederick the Great the representative of the Absolute ?

‘It will be easily gathered from the foregoing that Japanese Buddhism—aside from the one militaristic sect—is as tolerant as it is pantheistic. Nowadays we often hear of Buddhist temples being lent for Christian meetings. There is never any such persecution of Christianity in Japan, even by the most zealous of the Buddhists, as there is on the part of Mohammedanism. The *Shingon* sect goes so far as to exchange professors every year with the Theological Department of Kwansei Gakuin. The Buddhists now gladly co-operate with Christians in work for temperance and for the abolition of the social evil. Christian teachers study the religious experience of Buddhism, and admire the religious experience of Eckhardt and Jacob Boehme. They think of the priests of *Zen*, with their pantheistic mysticism, as

prophetic forerunners of Christ, and believe that these priests have paved the way for His coming. Mr Hakuma Kaneko, the pastor of the Nagoya Congregational Church, is the most characteristic writer among these Christian scholars.¹ Another who is expressing the same tendency is Mr Soetsu Yanagi. The latter says that the Buddhist doctrine of *Mu* is the way to God. (This *Mu* is the nothingness of relativity, the denial of phenomena. When we want to worship God, we must deny everything phenomenal.) With the logic of the *Zen* sect, he considers this is the way to God for the Orientals. He adopts *Zen* and *Shinshu* principles, and through those sects approaches the prayer of Jesus and of Christianity. So though he does not go to church, he understands Christianity from the Oriental point of view, through his personal experience. His famous book on God is very similar to the mysticism of Mme Guyon. It is very remarkable that he has tried to harmonize the Christianity of the Middle Ages with Buddhism.

'A tendency of this kind has appeared in Dr Anesaki. About twenty-five years ago Dr Anesaki was influenced by Hartmann and Schopenhauer, and insisted upon a philosophical religion. Later, being influenced by his friend Mr Takayama, he studied the Hokekkyo, and has since been trying to harmonize the essence of Christianity with Buddhist principles. The Kiitsu Kyokwai was an effort at syncretism organized by Dr Anesaki and his friends, who wanted to bring Christianity, Buddhism and Shintoism together into one. In Dr Anesaki, the Buddhist influence was greater than that of Christianity, but in Yanagi the Christian element is greater than the

¹ See Appendix A.

Buddhist element, though he studied Oriental mysticism.

‘ Probably we may consider that the young idealists of Japan, though they do not come to church, have an inclination similar to that of Mr Yanagi. I received the impression when I visited the seminaries of the Buddhist priests that there is almost no difference between the Christian and Buddhist theological seminaries. The Nishi Honganji Seminary has about five hundred young priests studying their doctrines, and they are so liberal that they are considering Buddhism in the light of European pantheism. Therefore we may consider the Buddhism of Japan to-day as rather inclined to the European pantheism of Hegel and Schopenhauer than to that of the old Indian philosophers. They are reconsidering, or re-studying, the Buddhist with the Indian canons, with a new standpoint of European pantheism. Therefore their ideas are very near to Christianity. If you use the term God instead of their accustomed word Buddha, many of their ideas will have no distinction from those of Christianity.

‘ This remarkable tendency is shown in the religious worship at the *Ittoen*. The *Ittoen* has harmonized the Buddhist monasticism with that of the Franciscans. In the *Ittoen* Order there are many Christians and many Buddhists, the central figure of the Order being Dr Nishida, a Buddhist. But the one who introduced Dr Nishida to the public was a Christian, a Mr Yasuzaimon Miyazaki, a Franciscan in his spirit and his life. The *Ittoen* rituals are mostly taken from the *Shin* sect, but they read the Sermon on the Mount before the image of the Buddha, and beat the wooden prayer drum (*mokugyo*) as they worship. I have been told that Dr Nishida, when asked to write some-

thing by any one, usually writes centrally of the Cross, and, beside it, of reverence to the Buddha. When there happens to be a majority of Christians in the *Ittoen*, people have told me that they read the Bible; when the majority is Buddhist, they read the *Yumakyo* at the morning services. The *Ittoen* people are very generous. In their social service they do not make any distinction between Christians and Buddhists. In both the Buddhist and the Christian members of the Order, charity is their main emphasis. They lay more emphasis upon it than upon doctrines. They go to help wherever asked to do so, without making any distinction between Buddhists and Christians. They freely attend both Buddhist temples and Christian churches. They assume a position of indifference toward the doctrinal side expressed in words. For instance, Dr Nishida's right-hand man, Mr Kitsuye Matsushita, deserted his inheritance of several tens of thousands of yen and went out in lowly service (at the *Ittoen*). He keeps the rituals of the *Shin* sect, and has written a history of Christian Socialism, in which he expressed his ideas. The recent approach of Buddhism to Christianity on the part of these people is rather in action than in doctrines. The Buddhist approach of the earlier Meiji period was from the doctrinal side. Their attitude has greatly shocked and stimulated the intellectuals of Japan, so that the distance between Christianity and Buddhism in Japan has been greatly diminished. For them the disputes on words and doctrines have lost their interest. They want to reveal to the public that to the religion of the Good Samaritan belongs the final victory. But unfortunately the Communist movement in Japan has just now attracted more of the attention of the public

than the *Ittoen*, so that the latter flame is burning low at present.

‘ But we cannot deny that there are many young men who are thinking like the people in the *Ittoen*. It is very difficult to get a victory for Christianity over Buddhism from the philosophical side, because the philosophical trend in Japan is identical with that of western philosophy, and if the latter inclines to pantheism, Buddhism will rise in Japan ; while if western thought becomes personalistic, Christianity will prosper.

‘ But the present religious inclination of the young men of Japan is rather departing from philosophy, and they are attracted more and more to the personal experience of religion through the service of love. Therefore if Christianity wants to conquer Buddhism we must stop arguing about doctrines and love the Buddhists ! And unless Christians arise who serve more devotedly than the members of the *Ittoen* Order, probably we cannot demonstrate the truth of the Cross to the Buddhist people.

‘ As Buddhism is a very generous religion, probably they will not hesitate to add Christ some day to the pantheon of the *Shingon* sect as one of their Buddhas. And if Christianity grows a little more in Japan, the Buddhists will probably hang the picture of Christ in their temples and worship it. In the Mikawa Agricultural School central hall Christ, Buddha and Confucius are worshipped together, in the shrine called *Sanseido*, the shrine of the three saints. In government hospitals they allow us to use the Buddhist temple as a Christian meeting-place. Very frequently we put a curtain up in front of the image of Buddha and begin to sing hymns. This tendency is very general among primary school teachers of

Japan to-day. As Shintoism was sucked into Buddhism, there is danger that the monotheism of Christianity may be sucked into the pantheism of Buddhism.

‘ If we approach from the doctrinal side, probably the common school teachers of Japan will not have the courage to adopt Christianity as the sole truth rather than all other religions. Therefore the future victory of Christianity depends upon the Christian love shown in practical life, so that the love of Christ being shown in His death on the Cross is greater than the death of Buddha. Through love we must try to show that God’s love through the Cross is greater than the death of Buddha. The Japanese are tired of arguments, and doctrinal sermons make lumps rise in their ears like the lumps on the camel’s back ! Here lies the message of Christianity in Japan : Unless the love of Christianity is greater than that of Buddhism, it is very difficult to lead the Buddhist to Christ.’

IV. CONCLUSION

Here is a ringing challenge which comes out of a very rich practical experience—to show God’s glory in the Cross, to draw the peoples of Japan to Him not by argument but by love. When this young and ardent leader speaks, thousands of Japanese are ready to follow him and his Master.

If the founder of Buddhism is essentially a mystic teaching a way of conduct, the Founder of Christianity is essentially a great Shepherd of souls revealing a God of Love. And though Jesus was also

a mystic—the great Mystic—and Sakyamuni also a great elder brother, yet the contrast is clear and can be clearly seen if we set side by side testimonies of their first disciples.

An early follower thus describes Sakyamuni :

Buddha, Awakened, Brother of mankind,
 Controlled and rapt from things without
 To inner vision, glad of heart and calm . . .
 Rejoicing to renounce the lures of sense is he,
 As gold well purified from earthy dross.
 Lo ! as some mighty elephant, superb
 Amidst Himalayan forest ways he goes
 So rapt in meditation, breathing deep
 Composed is he in body and in mind.
 Freely he passes wheresoe'er he will.
 As some pure lotus bloweth undefiled
 So liveth he, the Uncontaminate.¹

It is a fine picture of an Indian seer. But Sakyamuni is also teacher, physician of sick souls, prophet of a new *Dharma* for the individual and for society. He preaches a universe of justice, and teaches man how to work with it and to find joy in doing so.

Jesus is the Prophet of a Father God—intensely aware of human need and sin, calling men to a true knowledge of God, and seeking to establish the kingdom of the Spirit. Himself radiant with the certainty of God and of His ultimate victory, He bids men be of good cheer, and gives them new and often paradoxical standards of human conduct. Finding themselves in a new relation to the Father, they are to set up a new human society—whatever the cost. He is Himself Friend of Sinners and Suffering Servant of God—His Father and theirs.

‘Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit’

¹ Theragatha, ccxlvii.

were His dying words ; and one who knew Him most intimately says of Him :

For when he suffered for you he left you an example,
 And it is for you to follow in his footsteps :
 Who committed no sin, nor was guile found on his lips :
 Who was reviled and made no retort,
 Who suffered and uttered no threat,
 But left all to Him who judges justly.
 He bore our sins in his own flesh upon the Cross,
 That we might break with sin and live uprightly :
 By whose wounds we have been healed.
 You were astray as sheep but are returned
 Now to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.¹

Thus while the companions of Sakyamuni represent him as the serene, strong, calm example of what his followers are to be—a *yogi* of a well-known Indian type—the companions of Jesus represent Him as not only an Example of patient suffering and sinless love but as the Shepherd and Guardian—a Suffering Messiah of a type familiar to the more spiritually minded of the Jews.

Each group uses categories well known in its old traditions of spiritual life. But neither group can rest satisfied with these. Jesus is for the early Church more than the fulfilment of old Hebrew ideals ; Sakyamuni is for the early Buddhists more than a great seer. In what does the uniqueness of each consist ?

In answering this question we are faced at once with the difficult problems of textual criticism : the Sakyamuni of history largely eludes us, and we have to choose between several interpretations offered us by his own followers. Is he the 'Elder Brother of Men,' or 'a God over the Gods' ; is he human or divine ? Buddhists are far from agreeing about him.

¹ 1 Pet. ii. 21-25.

The Jesus of history we may claim, with Weinel, 'to know full well'; yet there are the Synoptic, the Pauline and the Johannine interpretations to be weighed. Personally, I find it helpful to believe that both great Teachers were consistent and creative thinkers: that a view of each, therefore, must be found which is coherent and free of contradictions. Thus the Johannine Christ is in some ways a truer picture than the Synoptic Jesus. To Him God is Father, and the apocalyptic element in His teachings is sublimated and consistent with this love of the Father, as it is not always in the other Gospels. Yet much in them is obviously better fact, if it is less adequate interpretation of fact.

In the same way Sakyamuni is not the rationalist of the Neo-Buddhism of to-day so much as the good physician of the Neo-Buddhism of the first century A.D., and whilst he is the Elder Monk and Brother of men depicted by the monks of the *Theravada* tradition of Ceylon and Burma he is also no less the Wise Teacher of the *Mahayana*, adapting his teaching with 'loving strategy' to all classes of men. Sakyamuni is in a word the personification of the *Dharma*, or Teaching; Jesus is the Incarnate Logos. The Buddhist is invited to see in the Sakyamuni of the *Lotus* Eternal Truth; the Christian to see in the Jesus of the Fourth Gospel the True God. These at any rate are clean-cut and practical appeals, and they are accepted by the great mass of Buddhists and Christians respectively. The *Lotus* is on every Buddhist altar in Japan; the Fourth Gospel is for millions of Christians as for Luther 'far to be preferred above the others.'

For each gives men a Lord worthy of worship, and cheers them with comfortable words and assur-

ances of divine help. If each is a series of dramatic monologues rather than a biography, it is just as full of power for the believer who accepts its historic basis.

Yet both are continually assailed. In the West we find Dr Kirsopp Lake, while accepting the Logos Christology as 'the central doctrine of Catholic theology,' rejecting it as 'unknown to Jesus and to those who first recorded His life'; and as belonging to 'a general form of thought which is alien to the world to-day.'¹ Fortunately, we have also the Dean of St Paul's commending it to us as 'our hope for the future.'²

The *Lotus* scripture, accepted by Japanese and Chinese Buddhists as the 'very cream of orthodoxy,' 'the crown-jewel of the Sutras,' and as a point of contact with the Christian Church, is roundly condemned by the Buddhists of the South as hopelessly heterodox and unhistorical. No critic would press the strict historical accuracy of either great book; but each satisfies large masses of devout people and of scholars not a few. For each offers what seems a gospel; each rejects any docetic interpretation of the Founder; each is a classical expression of the religion of the spirit 'based on a firm belief in absolute and eternal values as the most real things in the universe.'

How then do they differ? What is the unique thing in Christianity? Why should we offer the Fourth Gospel to Asia, which, having the *Lotus* and the *Bhagavad Gita*, seems well content? It needs a book to answer this question!³ Here I offer a few thoughts and invite discussion.

¹ *Hibbert Journal*, October, 1925.

² *Hulsean Lectures*, I, 1925.

³ See Saunders, Kenneth, *The Gospel for Asia*, recently published by Macmillan.

1. The Personality of Jesus—whether we interpret Him as Logos or not—is a Personality of which the eastern world has need. It has no clear doctrine of Personality in God and man: for while its heart proclaims such doctrine in its *bhakti*-cults, and millions actually worship Sakyamuni[†] and Krishna, its head keeps murmuring *maya*, illusion, *lila*, sport, *upaya*, device of the Teacher—the *hoben* of Japan. Of the Man Jesus we can know more, and there is more to know than of the historic Krishna, or even of Sakyamuni. Secondly, this historic Person has been more clearly thought out.

2. The Fourth Gospel is the crowning achievement of the ethical monotheism of the Hebrews, and we offer it to Asia, saying, 'That which satisfied the Greek world with its long philosophical history you need not be ashamed to accept.' 'God manifest in the flesh,' says J. Pringle-Pattison, 'is a more profound philosophic truth than the loftiest flight of speculation, that outsoars all predicates, and for the greater glory of God declares Him unknowable.'¹ The Johannine Christ is more real and more historical than the Sakyamuni of the *Lotus*, who is himself the proof that no one but the stoical monk was satisfied with the Sakyamuni of the Pali texts. Man demands not a Teacher so much as a Saviour.

3. A third differentia of the Christian religion is the social ethic of Jesus, of the kingdom of God as the Synoptists record it, of love and the life eternal as it appears in the Fourth Gospel. Asia has need of a social ethic freed from the incubus of Karma, and inspired by the free spirit of love. She will find also in the ideal of eternal life, begun in time, a ful-

¹ *The Idea of God*, p. 157.

filling of her continual search for *moksha*, freedom, and Nirvana, extinction of passion.

4. In the fourth place Christianity offers the Cross as at once the best revelation of God's glory and of man's noble constancy to truth. The Johannine interpretation appeals to the Buddhist whose own religious needs have called into being the stories of the *Bodhisattvas*, suffering for others. Over some of these—as told in the *Jataka* book—we might write: 'Greater love hath no man than this—that a man lay down his life for his friends.' We cannot write that other great Johannine summary: 'I if I be lifted up will draw all men unto me.'

That Asia needs the 'offence of the Cross' seems clear. She has groped after it in her doctrine of Shiva, whose sacrifice is hymned by the medieval Tamil Manikkar Vachakar:

Thou mad'st me Thine: did'st fiery poison eat,
That I might eat with Thee the food of heaven,
I, meanest one, O Thou Compassionate.

And Buddhism holds out its arms to the Cross in its long history of mythical heroes whom it loves, but knows to be ideals, not persons. Japan has strangely ignored the *Jataka* tales, which tell of suffering, but she is beginning to realize the Johannine view of the Suffering God—most glorious when so revealed.

Dr Reichelt says:

'After a period of work among the Buddhists stretching over the space of about twenty-four years, it is my inmost and sincere conviction that only by presenting Jesus Christ as the very special and unique revealer of the eternal Logos (*Tao*), as is done in the Fourth Gospel, can the deeper religious souls

among the Buddhists be reached by the Christian message.

‘At the same time the greatest stress must be placed upon the *secure and true historicity of Jesus Christ*.

‘Many, many of them feel that the weakest point in the Buddhist religion is the vague and uncertain tradition in regard to the Amitabha idea, the Kwan-yin idea, etc.

‘By following the Johannine way of describing Christ, securely rooted in history and at the same time super-historical, all-embracing and divine, the image of Christ will become indigenous to them.

‘Having caught that vision of Christ it will be possible for them to enter into the real sanctuary of the Christian faith, the supreme experience of meeting God along personal lines as a *Father*.

‘That there really is a longing for such an experience by many of the most devoted Buddhists is a fact to which I can testify.

‘Progress along this line means also a deepening of the sense of personal sin and unworthiness—and the deeper understanding of the secret of the Cross will correspondingly grow forth.

‘I could tell of many remarkably sacred hours with the really religious Buddhists when we together pondered upon the wonderful story of Calvary. “Certainly here the *Bodhisattva* doctrine has reached its climax!” So often I heard something like this.

‘Among the devotees belonging to the *Chang-tsung* (School of Meditation) I have found an outspoken interest in the writings of St Paul, especially in his sayings about the struggle in the soul, when “the commandment came and sin revived.” Expressions such as these: “But I see in my members

another law, warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity," give a classical picture of the awful drama which so often is played in the quiet hours in the cells and meditation halls.

'The wonderful parallel to the Buddhist doctrine about the two wheels (the wheel of Karma and the wheel of Salvation), found in the first two verses of Romans viii., has not escaped their mind: "For the law of the Spirit of life . . . hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

'In the Pureland school the wonderful sayings about "justification through faith" and the triumph song of victory given in the eighth chapter of Romans, are very much appreciated.

'I feel the religious souls here must be led forward along these Johannine and Pauline lines and abundant "points of contact" can here be utilized.'

If, then, these are the gifts of Christ to Asia it is clear that the mission of the Church is not fulfilled till she has given them in an acceptable form. The Fourth Gospel may well be that form: but it awaits an eastern interpreter. Certainly he will remind us of the Travailing God who works continually in His universe, and will emphasize, as we have not done, a Johannine *advaita* (non-duality) which is implied in the Discourse of the Vine, and in the Prologue to the Gospel.

But our western interpretations of Jesus, even the Johannine, are not final. The richly dowered nations of Asia will not permanently refuse what Jew and Greek and Roman accepted, but they will make it their own as these did. In doing this they will surely reveal yet more clearly the universality of the Son of Man.

The task of the missionary is to hand on the rich

experience of the Church, and to enter into partnership with the people of Asia in a great spiritual quest. It will become increasingly clear, as the mystically-minded followers of Christ meet with men of like temperament in Buddhism, that they have already much in common: and already some of the best of these Buddhist leaders are saying, 'We see your Christ because we have seen our Buddha.' Others are saying that, at any rate for the masses, Christianity makes possible the ideals which Buddhism holds out.

'To do good, to shun evil, to cleanse the innermost heart'—this is the old ideal of Buddhist ethics, and it is, like the Sermon on the Mount, quite unattainable except in the strength of a divine helper.

The Christian, called to be 'perfect' (or loving) as the Father in Heaven, will agree with the Buddhist in crying, 'Who is sufficient for these things?'

APPENDIX A

A STATEMENT BY H. KANEKO SAN, JAPAN, CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, NAGOYA

1. **J**APAN has a history of 2500 years; and for half of it, or 1300 years, the Japanese people have been influenced by Buddhism. So that religion has exerted on the spiritual life of the Japanese a deep influence. Japanese life owes to Buddhism as much as European life owes to Christianity. It is rooted deeply in the daily life, thought, philosophy of life and cosmology of the Japanese people.

The real life of Buddhism, at present, may be not so strong as in the past; yet it still gives something

to the heart of the common people—especially to the heart of the aged, of women, of people of the lower classes and even of cultured young men.

Buddhism had (and has) a great influence upon the arts—painting, sculpture, tea-ceremony, way of writing, poetry, novels, songs and drama; and the influence is so great that it cannot be compared to the small influence of the Japanese Christianity of to-day.

We have great quantities of Buddhist literature, namely, the commentaries of its dogmas, according to each sect, historical records, lives of great priests and stories of good believers; and all of them are very beautiful records. I believe that some of them are deeper and greater in their significance and value than those of Christian literature in Europe.

We cannot afford to forget, of course, that some are receiving a bad influence from the negative (or static) thought of Buddhism; yet I dare say the spiritual power of Buddhism is something greater and better than western peoples realize.

2. To what extent there will be harmony between Buddhism and Christianity is one of the great questions of to-day. The answer not only determines the future of Japan, but it determines the future of the world.

I state my opinion frankly: Japanese Christianity seems much better on its formal and social sides than Buddhism, but I question how much greater Christianity, as it is in Japan to-day, is in its inner depth and spiritual experience. I maintain that men must appreciate the greatness of Buddhism in its inner, spiritual and experimental life.

3. The living sects of Buddhism in the present spiritual world of Japan are (a) the *Zen*-sect; (b) the

Shin-sect ; and (c) the *Nichiren*-sect, and no more than those three.

Zen is the greatest in its depth of thought, experience and mystical intuition. The Truth preached by Dogen and Hakuen became the centre of the spiritual life of the nation. The *Shin*-sect was established by Shinran, and this sect lives through its devotional nature, and it is a popular religion, true and easy to believe. The *Nichiren*-sect is the religion of fiery earnestness, with its founder, Nichiren ; and it is very earnest in evangelism even to-day.

But these qualities of the three sects are all to be absorbed into the contents of Christianity, or to be harmonized with Christianity, I think. *Zen*, in its mystical intuition ; *Shin*, in its devotional spirit, or in its pure sentiment of faith ; and *Nichiren*, in its constantly strong will—these will be harmonized with Christianity.

These three sects represent our Japanese Buddhism of to-day (a) in its intellectual insight, (b) in its devotional faith, and (c) in its voluntary activity. These three seem to have some possibility of going hand in hand with Christianity, as brothers ; and of getting on progressively, each in its own way of realization.

Among the three the *Nichiren*-sect is somewhat exclusive ; and it may be difficult for this sect to go hand in hand with others. But the *Zen* and *Shin* will work together in the future.

If, in the near future of Japan, religions go on in the new way, breaking up their old forms—the *Zen* and *Shin* uniting first with each other—then this new sect will join hands with Christianity. This thought of mine may be laughed at by some missionaries as a dream.

4. There are many Buddhists who were converted to Christianity from their earnest faith in Buddhism.

Buddhism is apt to go to its extremes in its intellectual research (or, some go to unscientific superstition : this is not the fault of Buddhism itself, but the fault of priests); and it is apt to forget the supreme value of personality. But Christianity respects personality, and its ethical colour is very rich. And this is the reason why many Buddhists are converted to Christianity.

Mr Ryoun Kamegae, who was converted from Buddhist priest to Christian pastor, is very happy since he became a Christian. He seems very proud of his experience, the spiritual and ethical experience of having intercourse with a living Christ.

APPENDIX B

WHAT I BELIEVE

BY ISHIZUKA SAN, JAPAN, JOINT AUTHOR OF
HONEN AND PRIEST OF THE *JODO* SECT

I

WE know by experience that the law of impermanency and of interdependence rules in all things in the universe. From the dynamic point of view all things are subject to change, being produced by causes and conditions. Nature is changing without a moment's stay. Though invisible to our naked eye, the position of the stars and the intensity of their light are constantly changing. Even the heat of the sun is gradually cooling. Grasses

and trees, birds and beasts have been transformed through all ages. The human world is not an exception to the rule. Again observe the phenomena from the statical point of view and you will find that they are all well arranged in good order and in harmonious relation with one another. From heavenly bodies to human society nothing can be seen isolated (with no exception of such supposed things as electrons), planets keeping their places in attraction with one another, animals unable to preserve their lives without the help of plants. Further, everything in the universe is so closely connected with everything else that one cannot have its being without the help of all others, and that one is equal to many in its importance or value.

II

We find the *Dharma* or Law in all things when we see them as they really are. The *Dharma* is 'boundless outward in the whole, and boundless inward in the atom.' It is the first and last principle by which all things in the universe are controlled and placed in their proper places. It shows itself in the law of causality and of retribution from the very beginning of the universe. We have no external creator or upholder of it. God, if any, in Buddhism is the *Dharma*. He exists in the sense of life or the power of the universe in itself. We experience Him in the harmonious order of things, in the intelligible and merciful activity of nature, or in the conscientious motive of human beings. The Buddha *Dharmakaya* is the name of the *Dharma* when it is personified. It is beyond the power of thinking in its essence except for Buddha, the enlightened one. It is

conceived as the life which is perfectly free from all impurities and at the same time full of innumerable virtues.

III

We know that we, as individuals, are self-conscious beings by experience. We are each in fact an ego, no more and no less. Being the master of *karma*, each one is a future Buddha striving after the life of truth, or of the *Dharma*. We deny the unique, self-existent entity of ego. We need no such hypothesis as that the soul is immortal, for a continuation of life is possible to be conceived as an ever-changing composite unit. Our body is not the so-called ego, nor the mind. Dismember the limbs and you have injured nothing in your selves; cease using some of the five senses and also we remain the same within. Even when we have no perception, ideas, feeling or thoughts, we are the same in our being, if we have the body. But there is no mind where there is no body, and vice versa. Thus we see that a self consists in the combination of the mind and body (Skr. *panca skandhah*, five elements). Though ever-changing like a torrent and not pausing for a moment, the so-called composite self is existent for ever (see *Honen*, ch. xviii, p. 357). This is what we call the doctrine of 'non-ego' (Skr. *anatman*).

IV

We admit that the composite self has ignorance (Skr. *avidya*), which has arisen since time began. It prevents us from knowing things as they are, and we have perverted views, troubles and vices. Ignorance is the fountain-head of all forms of human

vices—covetousness and anger, pride and doubt. From the former two comes injustice, such as greed, hatred and cruelty; from the latter two we have bigotry or superstition which denies scientific knowledge and religious truth in others, and excites passion for class and racial struggles. When ignorance is dispelled all evils, personal as well as social, will disappear, there coming into being the pure and genuine life of truth, for which our human nature (Skr. *buddhatva*) has been seeking from the beginning. Hence religion.

V

We believe that there were and will be a great many persons who seek after the genuine life of truth, or of enlightenment. Those who have attained the goal we call the Buddhas of reward or accomplishment (Skr. *Sambhoga-kaya*). Some of the Buddhas exercise great influence upon us, while others do not. For the former we have deep affection, because we understand them. We call them the Buddhas of adaptation (Skr. *Nirmanakaya*), because they are pleased to teach us what they have realized according to our faculties and conditions. In former times we had a large number of great men, Confucius, Sakyamuni, Socrates, Jesus and Mohammed, whom we regard with great reverence. These great men must have attained perfection in their character in realizing in themselves the life of truth. They practised every form of moral discipline with the utmost effort, which resulted in the highest degree of human attainment. Viewed in this light they might be called men of highest character wrought out or rewarded by their effort. They would, therefore, have been equally qualified to be

looked up to as men of light and leadership. But it is not always true that they won the heart of every man. Some were accepted by the educated classes, others by the lower classes and still others by the unlettered. In the eyes of those who took refuge in them, the great men were the persons of adaptation or saviours to them. To Christians Jesus of Nazareth is Christ, the Saviour, or the Buddha of adaptation in Buddhist terminology, while to a Buddhist he is not a saviour or Buddha of adaptation, but a perfect man or a person of reward. Sakyamuni, who was born in India in the fifth century B.C., has a special affinity for us Buddhists because of his personality, which is suitable to us as a spiritual teacher, and we look up to him as the Buddha of adaptation. This is why we are Buddhists.

VI

As Sakyamuni is our personal Buddha of adaptation, we adore him as the model of our conduct ; his teachings we follow ; his principles we wish to propagate among all people of the world.

If we enquire into the life of Sakyamuni, we find that he lived a life of purity and enlightenment, sinking his own interests for the sake of others. He showed us the true state of things originating from illusion or ignorance, and taught the way of deliverance from it, and at the same time he advised us to have faith in the Buddhas of the past. The teachings of the so-called noble fourfold truth (Skr. *catvari aryani satyani*), and the four ways in conduct in life (Skr. *catvari sangraha vastuni*), etc., belong to the former, and the latter is the faith in the Buddha's power, which, having disappeared for several hundred

years after Sakya's Nirvana, came again to the world about 100 B.C. in a new form of faith in the Buddha of boundless life and light (Skr. *Amitayus Buddha*).

VII

We believe in the existence of the Buddha Amitāyus, whose light of salvation is always shining upon all sentient beings. Jesus was crucified on the Cross about 1900 years ago, but is alive even now in the hearts of Christians as Christ the Saviour. The followers of *Nichiren* believe in the eternal existence of the true person of Sakyamuni, or *Sambhoga-kaya*, who perfectly realized in himself the truth of the highest Law (Skr. *Saddharma*) innumerable *kalpas* ago. In the same way we followers of *Honen* believe in the Buddha Amita as *Sambhoga-kaya* who attained the highest perfect knowledge ten *kalpas* ago. He not only redeemed us from the bondage of sin, but also piled up merits to deserve one's birth into that Buddha Land of perfect Bliss. The very indefectible virtues of these accumulated merits he concentrated in his own name, wishing all sentient beings to appropriate the same by calling upon his name, and promising that whenever any would from their hearts so call on him, he would grant them birth into his Pure Land of Nirvana. This birth is the so-called 'new birth' or regeneration of *Jodo* Buddhism, under the operation of Amita's great compassion, in which our sinful or egotistical tendencies of life become reversed, and has paved the way for us to lead a life of wisdom and build up a new world of purity and righteousness.

Thus when our call comes, we are to be received into Amita's Pure Land, where we all naturally reach

the perfection of our character or the Buddhahood and then come back again to earth in order to devote ourselves to the work of salvation for ever. This never-ceasing free activity of the enlightened is called in Sanskrit *Apratisthita nirvana*, i.e. Nirvana never stopping anywhere (see *Honen*, ch. xviii, p. 358). For Nirvana does not mean a cessation or annihilation, but a full emancipation or life full of activity in the *Mahayana* Buddhism.

A comparison of Buddhism and Christianity brings out the following points :

1. Buddhism, denying the Creator of the universe, admits that there is an eternal, all-comprehensive spiritual being called *Dharma*, which is compared to the Christian God. It asserts that the highest human attainment is a divine perfection, that is, the Buddha of accomplishment or reward, which is quite akin to the idea of omnipotence and omniscience of God. Christ as the manifestation of God's love seems to me to be like the Buddha of adaptation. With regard to the pre-existence of Christ (as stated in John's Gospel), we Buddhists have a corresponding idea in the *Saddharma pundalika* (see *Honen*, p. 98). The Holy Spirit seems to have the same power as that of the *Sila* Spirit (Jap. *Kai-tai*) or Buddha-nature (*Buddhatva*) in Buddhism (*Honen*, ch. iv, n. 1, p. 149). A Buddhist who has taken a vow of obedience to the Buddha's precepts is conscious of being aided by the abiding influence of the *Sila* Spirit which has been aroused in his heart at the time of his making the vow. Here we have a Buddhist Trinity, namely, unity of the three persons—Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya and Nirmanakaya, and the *Sila* Spirit.

2. Though the *anatman* doctrine of Buddhism rejects every thought of ego or soul-entity, still it

admits of an eternal continuation of individual life of Karma or truth in the sense of being perfectly free from the idea of ego, even after one's attainment of Nirvana. The idea of ego is the fundamental impediment to the life of truth. So long as we are not thoroughly convinced of the truth of 'non-ego,' we are not able to love our neighbours as ourselves; much less our enemy; still less free from the feeling of distinction of friend and enemy (Jap. *onshin byodo*). Compare Matthew v. 45, 46. Moreover, if we have any idea of ego at all, we are at the same time possessed by the desire of something to have for our own use, which is the origin of all social evils, there coming into existence the conception of ownership, and then the system of private property, which results in unjust accumulation or misuse of wealth. Hence non-possession in Buddhism.

3. There is no idea of remission of sin in Buddhism, as there is no God in the sense of the Ruler of all things in the universe. We Buddhists, however, hold the law of retribution, and consequently have an idea of redemption. The Buddha Amitayus, when in the state of unenlightenment, went on with the practice of all austerities through innumerable *kalpas* of time and that only for the sake of sinners or common mortals as the ground of redemption. This is very similar to the idea of Christian redemption, or of vicarious salvation, and you may easily see 'salvation by faith' in *Honen's* Buddhology as in Pauline theology; not to mention repentance as the only initiative to the life of faith common in both religions. It is perhaps due to these similarities that we have often in Japan fervent Christian converts out of *Jodo* Shinsuist families, who afterwards confess that they had no reason but mood for their conversion.

4. Another point I must call to your attention is that there seems to be a great difference between the two religions in regard to the state of existence after death. Christianity has an idea of eternal life, in acceptance of which a Christian enjoys a life of peace with God in heaven, whereas a Buddhist, especially a Jodoist, believes that, when he is admitted into the Pure Land of the Buddha Amitayus, he hastens to attain to perfect enlightenment there. On attaining to it he at once comes back again to earth in order to devote himself to the work of salvation according to his own original vow. For Buddhahood is not to be sought for one's own sake, but for all sentient beings. This endless free activity of enlightenment is the very state of Nirvana conceived of by Japanese *Mahayana* Buddhists.

In conclusion I should like to say that it is the Buddhist idea of 'non-ego' and of Nirvana that trained the Japanese mind to a liberal and tolerant mood toward different tenets of various religions, which shows itself in our national aspiration after an ever-renewing life of peace.

APPENDIX C

MODERN TENDENCIES OF BURMESE BUDDHISM

BY U MAUNG KIN, BURMA, MEMBER OF THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

THE word 'modern' is difficult to define, but the year 1917 may well be regarded for the purposes of this paper as the beginning of a period to which the term modern can be applied. Barely a

decade ago—but what changes have taken place! The Great World War was being waged in the West, bringing ruin and devastation all around; the cause of smaller states and weaker nations was being championed as had never been done hitherto; the world's outlook on life and on things in general was changing with an intensity and a rapidity that the years of peace could not have dreamed of. And it was in the year 1917 that the British Parliament made the famous announcement regarding the grant of responsible government for India. This has for the Burman a meaning and an import deeper far, perhaps, than that ever imagined by its progenitors. The wave of western influence which came with the conquerors and which swept over Burma was just then making itself felt; old problems were being examined in the light of new ideas; attempts were made to adjust the old with the new; a spirit of restlessness prevailed everywhere. The times were changed and changing. A vague feeling there was, too, that something was wanting, something was needed, something had yet to be added on. What it was, nobody dared define, but still there was a striving to satisfy that desire. But with the Parliamentary announcement of 1917, alongside of which appeared new thoughts, new visions, new ideas, and it may be added a new language, a new impetus was given to that absorbing search, and modern tendencies of Burmese Buddhism, as of Burmese literature or of Burmese political thought, might well date from that year.

With the overthrow of the last Burmese dynasty in 1885, the Burmese lost their 'Defender of the Faith' and, as the Burman cannot conceive of a religion without a defender of the faith, the downfall

of the Burmese monarchy, according to the people's notions, left the nation without a religion. Despite the Queen's proclamation of 1853 regarding non-interference in religious matters, despite the reinstallation by the British Government of the *Thath-anadaing*—the head of the Buddhist hierarchy—despite the revival of the *Patamabyan* (Pali Scripture) examinations, the Burman had viewed the advent of a Christian government, the introduction of what he considered un-Buddhistic teachings in the schools, with something of a suspicious eye. Buddhism as professed by the Burman is neither militant nor aggressive, but is strongly suspicious of new faiths and new creeds. And a new régime might mean the disruption of and disintegration of the doctrines which they hold dear. That idea had been current all along. It might be openly professed or else subtly suppressed, but it was there all the same, and so the vision of Home Rule . . . signified for the Burman what, for want of a better term, might be called the millennium. The Burman cannot and will not differentiate nationalism from religion and to him to be a Burman is to be a Buddhist. . . . I may say at the very outset that the tenets of Buddhism cannot suffer any change, though the attitude of a Buddhist towards his religion is capable of changing and has to a considerable extent changed. Burma is no longer the isolated region that she was in the past. She is becoming a part of the westernized world. Western thoughts, western ideas, western notions drift towards Burma through the medium of what might be called the new learning. Newspapers and magazines, periodicals and pamphlets issued by Burmans, most of which are bilingual, have a marked effect on their countrymen's minds. With the

advent of the precursor to the Constitutional Reforms, the political reawakening of the masses, a tide of new thought seemed to have crept on the Burman. The politician's cry had been and still is, 'Burman nationality, language and religion,' and the political propagandist appeals invariably for the preservation of these three things, for as I have said before the Burman cannot conceive of these being separated. Political influences therefore intensify rather than diminish the faith in Buddhism. In the early days of the political movement the *pongyis* (priests) sedulously kept aloof, and the number of those participating in politics as such could be counted on one's fingers. This state of affairs was for a time inconsistent with the statement in the *Upper Burma Gazette*, in the chapter on 'Religion and Its Semblances,' wherein it was made out that there are few phenomena more striking than the prominent part taken by the *pongyis* of Upper Burma in the political life of the country. But that was not long to be. The political movement of the day was suffering from the want of propagandists, and the leaders sought the sympathy, secured the support, enlisted the aid of the *pongyis*. Their active participation in politics may not be in keeping with the cold, stern precepts of the Great Master, but justification for the action was found in the fact that where the lay supporters suffer, the *pongyis* cannot look on askance. The claim for new rights and new privileges, the demands for political emancipation, were regarded as much a part of the *pongyis'* work as is the religious duty which they had hitherto performed. The whole countryside was filled with *pongyis* in the guise of political emissaries, speaking the political jargon of the day, preaching political precepts sometimes

without any religious covering. The sitting posture adopted when discoursing on religious topics gave place to the standing attitude which politicians are wont to strike for the better and more effective haranguing of the multitude. The general theme of the discourse was 'down with diarchy,' and few if any subjects lend themselves more to attacks of various kinds on those who could accept diarchy, on those who would confer diarchy. The language employed sometimes savoured more of the *zat-pwe* than of the *pongyi-kyauung*, and for a considerable period *pongyi* political propagandists were all the rage. But there came a time when the Burmese political camp split up, and while the more moderate section accepted the order of things as they are, the extreme section remained discontented, and with the latter element the *pongyis* made common cause. Later on the extremists, called in the newspaper jargon of the day 'Council Boycotters,' again divided into two camps, one of which down to this day remains distinctly and directly under the patronage of the *pongyis*.

Such, in brief, is the part the *pongyis* took in the present political life of the Province. For a considerable time past Burma's contact with the West had been lessening the hold of the clergy on the laity. No longer did the Burman with a modern education turn to the *pongyi* to solve problems that beset him—problems domestic or otherwise. No longer did the *pongyi* receive the recognition that was his, as the fountain head of all wisdom and knowledge. He had become an anachronism in the new social order. In villages and hamlets where the old-world reverence and the respect for the *pongyi* prevailed, the newspaper and the journal, the political pamphlet and the peripatetic politician, all combine

to make the villager feel that there are more things happening in the world than our *pongyi* can discourse upon. The *pongyi* certainly must have noticed this gradual waning of his influence and thus, perhaps, turned to politics to regain the priestly prestige, which was in imminent danger of slipping away from his hands.

But the *pongyi* as a politician cannot survive long. Strange as it may appear, the result of the *pongyi*'s participation in politics was the reverse of what was anticipated. The laity, divided among themselves in regard to political views, came to discriminate as to the *pongyi* whom they should support in the way of food and raiment, while some, and they are not a few, broke off all connexions with *pongyis* having anything to do with politics. To confine the *pongyi* within the cloister and to chain him down to what is rightly his duty—the practice of religion—is the move of the present day. Thus, politics of the day influences Buddhism to the extent of creating a desire on the part of its adherents to keep it intact from outside influences. A time there was when the faults of *pongyis*, if there be any, were conveyed with bated breath and in hushed whispers. It is no longer so now. Their faults are condemned and noted and proclaimed in the public press. The unseemly sight of *pongyis* frequenting public places of amusement, the un-*pongyi*-like action of some *pongyis*, often form the subject of bitter attack in the vernacular papers. The cry is now for the purification of the priesthood, to rid the *sangha* of undesirables parading under the pseudonym of *pongyis*, and using the convenient yellow robe wherein to beguile the unwary public. The feeling is, if I may so put it, 'All are not *pongyis*, clad though they

be in yellow.' In passing, mention might be made of the controversy in the vernacular press regarding the study of English by *pongyis*. While one section upholds the need of modernizing the *pongyi*, another maintains that the study of English might make the *pongyi* the less a *pongyi*. The controversy has not concluded, but it is apparent that there is a feeling of the need of bringing the religion abreast of modern conditions.

The modern educated young Burman has degenerated in the opinion of some into an irreligious breed. The exigencies of the modern educational system converted the customary novitiate in a *kyaung* into an empty formal ritual. It is not long enough either to equip him or give him the necessary training which the Burman Buddhist venturing out on life's voyage should have. In the Government schools religious instruction forms no part of the curriculum; in the mission schools the doctrines of an alien faith are instilled in the minds of the pupils. And so schools which seek to teach the national faith are countenanced and the demand everywhere for religious instruction has become insistent. True it is that the educated Burman's belief in his religion is not the same simple faith as professed by his co-religionists in the villages, but the same principles guide their worship.

The question has been asked as to the tendencies of Burmese Buddhism due to western science and rationalism. Modern science, so the Burman Buddhist thinks, tends to support the religion he professes, for there is nothing in it that runs counter to his belief. Buddhism is for all times and for all climes—it suited the days when kings made royal progresses on elephants; it is in keeping with the times when aeroplanes fly in the air and television is coming.

Christianity, according to the Buddhist, is crumbling with the advance of modern science and the creation dogma, amongst others as propounded in the Bible, can no longer stand the test of science. As regards rationalism, it is not easy to speak. The works of the Rationalist Press Association find ready readers amongst Burman Buddhists. Such books as Grant Allen's *The Evolution of the Idea of God*, Ingersoll's *Lectures and Essays*, Thomas Paine's *The Age of Reason*, may be quoted as forming the bulk of the works that Burmans browse over. How far rationalism has influenced Buddhism it is impossible to determine, but yet there can be no gainsaying the fact that the modern Buddhist is backed up in his belief by a touch of rationalism. Then again the works of such men as William T. Stead, Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir A. Conan Doyle on matters psychic do influence the English educated Burman Buddhist of to-day. In these he finds something to strengthen his belief in a state spiritual, and the Animist within the Burman is delighted.

The impact of Christianity upon the Burmese Buddhist world must of necessity leave some traces on the latter. Organized charity, such as that of the Home for the Aged at Mingun, the desire expressed more than once, but as yet unfulfilled, of sending out Buddhist missionaries to the slaves recently freed in the Triangle, the publication of works on Buddhism written in the popular style, the translation of the *Tripatakas* into Burmese—all these and many other things besides can be said to have their parallel in the days of King Asoka. But here the impact with Christianity is clearly visible, though the Burman Buddhist would rather be inclined to hold that it is western influence. People are less intolerant of the

Christian nowadays, and a Karen Christian member of the Legislative Council was reported to have remarked of a certain party in the Legislative Council composed solely of Buddhists, that it had done nothing to hurt the feelings or injure the interests of the Christians. The two religions are not antagonistic in the main and when a religion can rise above narrow sectarianism, it is possible to meet others without coming into conflict.

The decade which I have taken for the purpose of this paper is about to die out, and summing up the tendency of Burmese Buddhism during that period one word alone will, I think, suffice—transition. Everything is in a period of flux. The political movement is so inextricably bound up with the religious movement, new thoughts and fresh ideas and the outcome of the post-war world are so unsettling men's minds, that it is impossible to say whither Burmese Buddhism is tending. The awakening of national consciousness, and along with it the intensive desire to preserve national literature, national traits, national customs, arrested for the time being what might have been the disintegration of national religion due to influences beyond the Burman's control. With the priests and laymen apart, with cultures remote and distant, with outlooks different, with ideas irreconcilable, there had been signs of the rise of a newer Buddhism, untrammelled by time-worn prejudices, unhampered by archaic theories, finding support from the latest thoughts, the latest discoveries the world has to offer. The conservative movement, however, prevented that rise, and with the wider diffusion of modern knowledge among the people Buddhism will still remain the predominant religion of the Burman