

The Buddhist Way of Daily Life



Ven. Sayadaw U. Uttamasara

Published by

The Penang Buddhist Association

168, Anson Road,

10400 Penang, Malaysia.

Tel: 04-2280910 Fax: 04-2289987

(FOR FREE DISTRIBUTION)

檳城佛學院印行

(免費贈閱，歡迎索取)

NOVEMBER 2004

(Aung Thein Nyunt)

Director

Department for the Promotion and

Propagation of the Sasana

Ministry of Religious Affairs

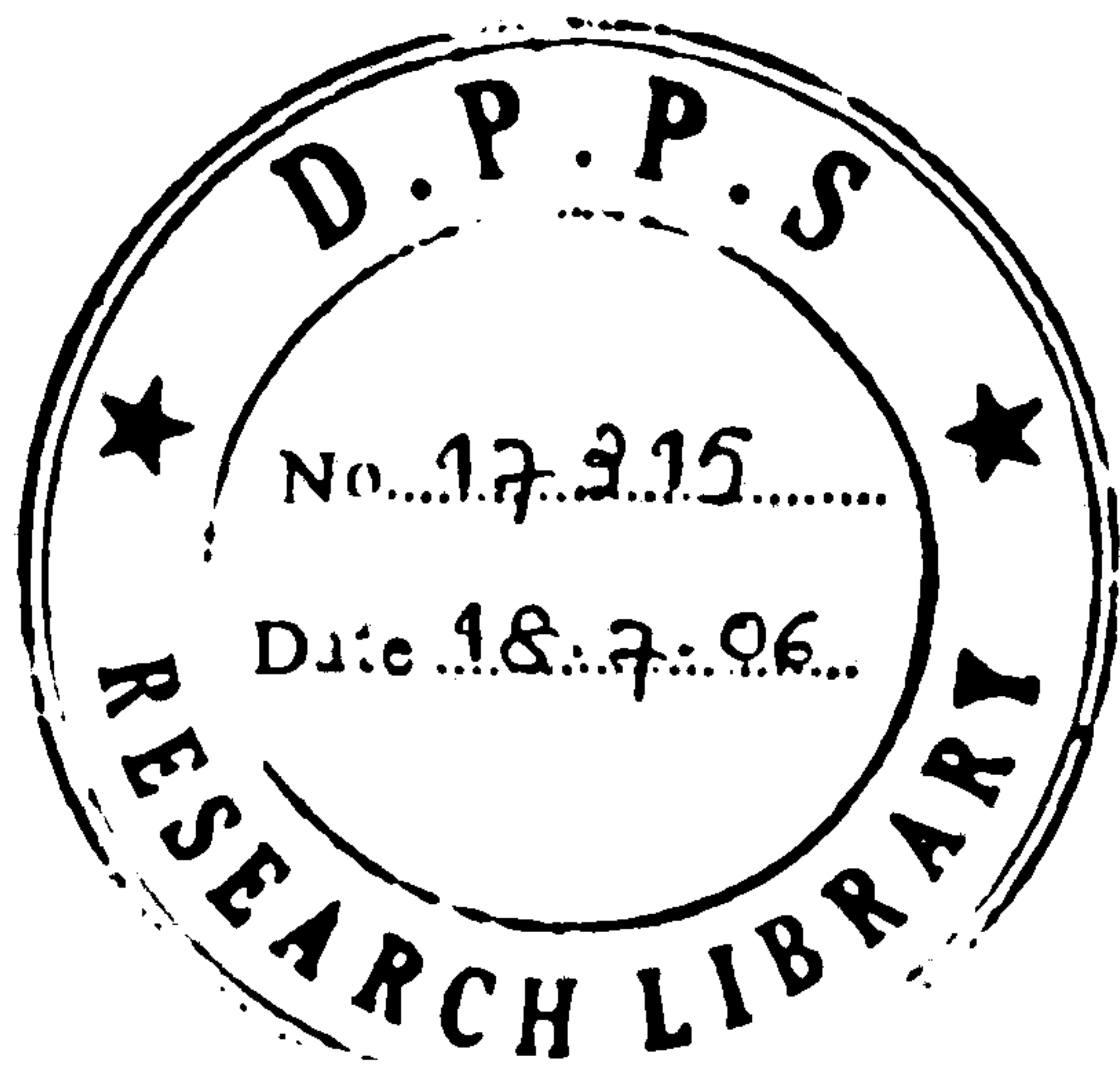
Yangon, Myanmar.

願佛法長存於世

Buddha sāsanaṃ ciraṃ tiṭṭhatu

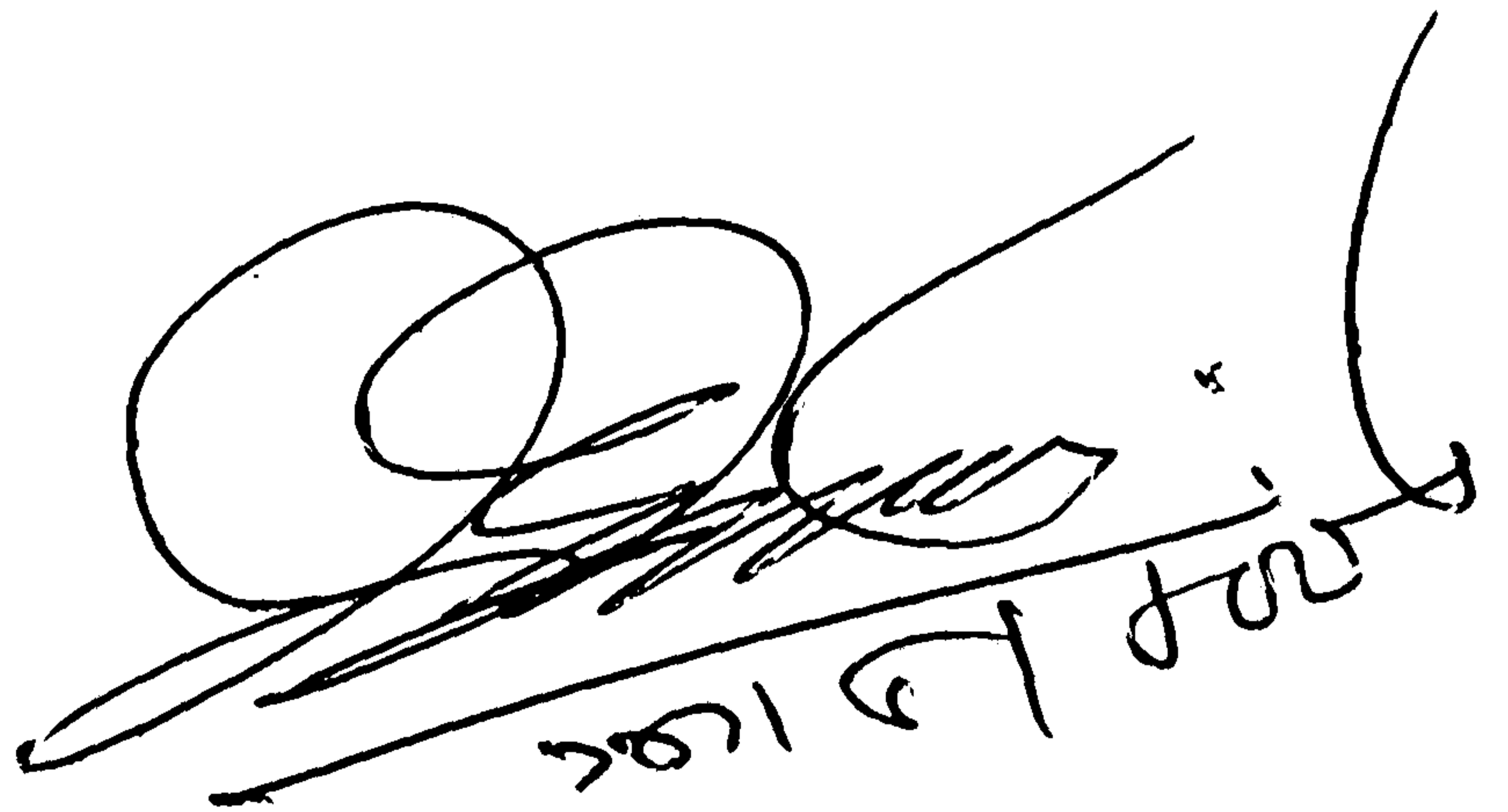
願一切眾生時時敬重於法

Dhamme hontu sagāravā. Sabbe pi sattā kālena



The Buddhist Way of Daily Life

by: Sayadaw U Uttamasara

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke at the bottom.

(Aung Thein Nyunt)

Director

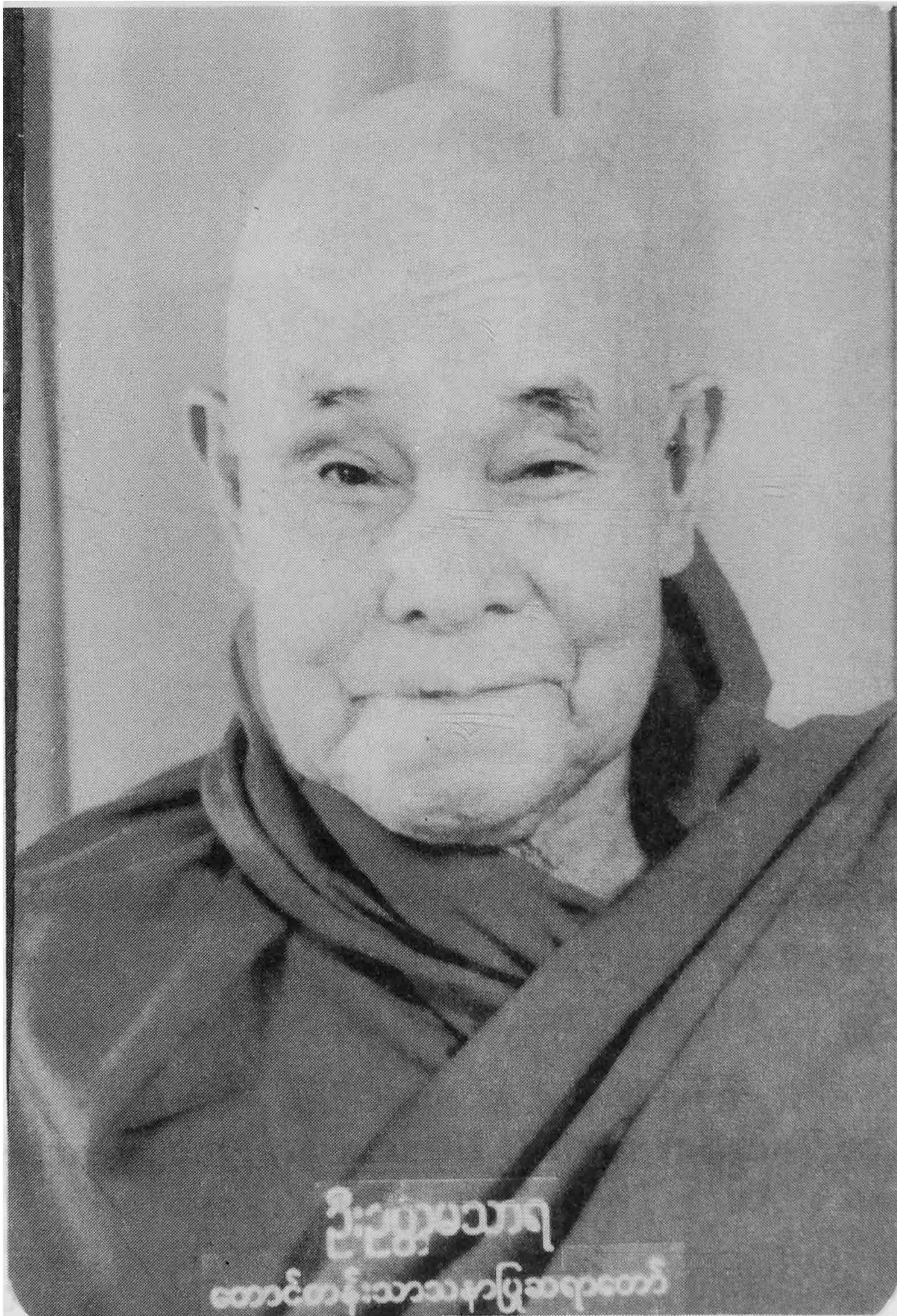
**Department for the Promotion and
Propagation of the Sasana
Ministry of Religious Affairs
Yangon, Myanmar.**

Sayadaw U Uttamasāra

CONTENTS

Serial		Page
1.	PREAMBLE.....	1
2.	Autobiography and Introduction to Missionary Tour.....	8
3.	Introductory Message by Dhammācariya U Htay Hlaing.....	15
4.	PART ONE: The Discourse on Natural Law of Kamma (Kammaniyāma).....	34
5.	PART TWO: The discourse on the Benefit of Mettā, Loving-Kindness.....	75
6.	PART THREE: Learning How to Die.....	139
7.	PART FOUR: Samatha and Vipassanā Concentration and Enlightenment.....	189

The Buddhist Way of Daily Life



The Ven. Sayadaw U Uttamasara

Sayadaw U Uttamasāra



**The Ven. Sayadaw U Uttamasara, the Preacher
and U Aung Thein Nyunt, the Translator**

The Buddhist Way of Daily Life

PREAMBLE

1. THE DISCOURSE ON THE KAMMA NIYĀMA.

THE NATURAL LAW OF KAMMA

"In this human world everyone can create his own Kamma; he creates his Kamma just as he pleases."

"It is very important to believe Kamma; Whether he believes it or not, the nature of Kamma will definitely effect the person when it ripens.

What one does is one's own

Some say, "This person is lucky; that person is unlucky." Being lucky and unlucky is not created by anyone else; it is only created by oneself. Indeed, Kamma is **cetanā**- intention which arises in your inner-heart. "If your intention is good, the Kamma will be good; if your intention is straight, the Kamma will be straight; if your intention is crooked, the Kamma will

be crooked.

To show a perfect proof, place a big mirror in front of you and look at it, please. If you look at it smiling, you will see your smiling face in it; if you look at it contorting, you will see your wry face in it. The appearance is created by no other goods, nor outside creator. That is what the Buddha meant by Kamma. So, there is a very popular proverb among the Myanmar;-

"What one does is one's own =*Janeti Sadisaṃ
Pakaṃ*"

2. THE DISCOURSE ON THE BENEFIT OF METTĀ , LOVING-KINDNESS

"Make your mind purified. I mean you should live with Mettā, Loving-kindness. In this world there is nothing as good as such a kind of Loving-kindness. Indeed Mettā is a good charm.

"You need not be afraid of wandering the circle of Saṃsāra if you are able to live with Mettā. So. live with Mettā and realize that you will not be tired of wandering the saṃsāric journey."

Searching for the method of happiness

"In search of how to live in happiness in the world, people are searching for material pleasures and trying to create new things. When they have them, they are satisfied, but in the wake of satisfaction after some time, they came to find that these things loose their flavour."

"Though someone is eating relishes sitting at a jade-

table with a ivory-chair in a splendid mansion , if his mind is not happy and peaceful, he cannot be said to be rich."

Marriage and Mettā

"A marriage founded on an equal combination of "Pure" love or Loving-kindness and love based on desire (craving or lust) will exist for long. In the measuring scales of a married life, always pay attention to see which pan is overweight and which pan is underweight and make an attempt to equalize them. There won't be just one existence in this Saṃsāric journey; there will also be further existences to live as part of a couple. If the balance cannot be equalized, there will be endless disputes between you and your life-partner all through the circle of births and rebirths. Amend your way of living while you are endowed with understanding."

You will Wonderously experience the benefit of Mettā

"Those who practise the giving of Mettā will gain wonderful benefit and fulfill their wishes according to their accumulated past Kammās. They will definitely experience a gradual fulfillment."

"Direct your attention towards those whom you have to see in every place, disseminate your Mettā and you will practically know how your wishes are fulfilled and how wonderful it is to gain good results. In fact., the benefits of Mettā are unlimited."

"The possessor of *Mettā* cannot be overwhelmed, not defeated by anyone else; though aggressors may overwhelm the possessors of *Mettās*, finally they have to admit defeat; he may be defeated at times but he can achieve benefit out of loss; he will always gain success out of failure.

3. LEARNING HOW TO DIE

Life is endless; it does not mean just living; it is also associated with death- the temporary termination of life. Everybody has to face death one day; death is not a dreadful thing; it cannot be overcome by fear. We all have to know how to live and how to die."

My two disciples, an animal and a deva

"I have already spoken of the Chin National Kappiya Twan-hmon who repeatedly transferred from a kind of animal life to another within few months and years; it is U Hla Shwe, a corporal, who died with the three Noble Gems- *Tisarāṇas* and went up to the realm of Deva; indeed he was no other than my Kappiya."

"Even though non-Buddhist went up to the realm of Deva due to the immediate observance of the five precepts when dying."

My mother, a Peta—Demon - ghost

"You all have to draw up the exact plan of how to die and how to take good objects of mind before death and think over it repeatedly. And the pleasant

clear object should be repeatedly practised and developed in your mind."

"And my mother had performed charitable deeds, observed precepts and developed insight-meditation with the support of her teachers and my personal efforts. However, her thought-process at the moment of death was unstable and she was reborn in the Peta-realm."

4. SAMATHA AND VIPASSANĀ

"For those who would like to live in luxury and pleasure in the Saṃsāric circle, and for those who are very eager to release from the Saṃsāric suffering, whoever may be, here I will show you the best way in brief."

The value of breath -in and breath -out

"As I said earlier, please contemplate on the breath-in and breath-out *Ānāpānakammaṭṭhāna*. Be mindful of movement of breath-in and breath-out: Note "Knowing at the very moment when the air of breath-in touches the tip of the nose," and note, "Knowing at the very moment when the air of breath-out touches the tip of the nose." If you note, knowing at every touch of breath-in and breath-out and your noting is stable and fixing your concentration on that you are now meditating, know that you succeed in your task. Go on noting without any pause, not letting other objects of mind come into your realm of concentration. If you can do it all day and night completely, realize that you

are nearer to release from Saṃsāric suffering."

Nibbāna within your reach

When your concentrated mind becomes more stable and powerful in due course, please, be watchful of the rising and passing away of mentality and materiality. You will penetrate and realize the real nature of material and mental phenomena. The realization of the arising and passing away of mentality and materiality is called *Adhipañña*. You will automatically step by step, realize the true nature of mental and material phenomena in future. This realization is called "The process of Enlightenment". It cannot be compared with worldly knowledge; it is very sacred; it is very great. Now, note that Nibbānic Peace is within your reach."

The Way of Jhānic Trance and Miraculous Power and Wonderful Light.

"The person who has practised *Ānāpāna Bhāvanā* can produce Jhānic-Trance and Miraculous Power, and even reach the stage of Arahātship."

"Bhikkhu-friends asked me often, "How can we reach Jhana?", and I answered them as completely as I could, "Depending on the Uggahanimitta, the Jhānic-trance can be attained. While you are contemplating the process of breath-in and breath-out with stable one-focussed concentration, you become mindful of it like a small strand of smoke through your nose. Moreover, when you can master your object of meditation, there may arise light around your body. It

is white-coloured and it may be as great as the power of your concentration.

Sometimes, the light may fill room or the light may pass through the roof of the monastery into the sky."

5. THE BUDDHIST WAY OF DAILY LIFE

"From this kind of stage, it may also lead to the attainment of miraculous power - *Abhiññāna*. Here, you can see and hear everything far or near- Divine Eye or Divine Ear; you can pass through the earth and fly through the space; you can know whatever others think about; you can create yourself in different forms and appearances, etc."

Arahantas of Today

"Through the ages, there have been arahantas in Myanmar. In the golden ages of Tagaung and Hanlin, there were many arahantas. We have seen the arahantas' relics of those ages, with our own eyes; they are, indeed, believable witnesses and they have to be measured even in basket."

"At the present day, there are Arahantas in Myanmar. Where are the arahantas living? In fact, the Arahantas do not want to be known and they do not say to themselves, "I am Arahanta". If I were myself an Arahanta....."

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND INTRODUCTION TO
MISSIONARY TOUR**

At the request of devotees to convey a brief account of my life and the missionary tour to the European countries, I present it here.

In 1349, Myanmar Era (1988. C.E). I am 78 years old. I live in Khamtin-Tawya monastery, eight miles away to the south of Falam, which is located on the Assam Boder of the Northern Chin Hills.

My monastery on the side of the Khamtin mountain range over 7000 ft. above sea-level, is built up of rocks and the Falam-Hakha motor road exists below my residence. Here I perform missionary duty and live in peace of Dhamma.

My native place is Ngwe-twin-gone village, south of Depayin Township, Shwebo District. Upper Myanmar and I was born in the month of Pya-tho, 1272 M.E. (Myanma Era). My parents were U Pho Nyo and Daw

Thay Tar. I am the youngest son of six children.

Literary-mindedness in youth

At the age of six, I studied basic canonical texts under my first Sayadaw U Viḷāsa in my native village and at twelve I was novitiated with the support of my parents. Then I was fully ordained at nineteenth and now I have been a monk for 59 years, at this age of 78.

Though I am old, my eyes and ears are in good health; though I am in the habit of reading and writing I do not use spectacles.

Since the age of 22, while living in Mandalay as a bhikkhu-student, I have been writing articles in journals and magazines.

To Hilly Regions and India

I started my missionary tour to Hilly Regions from Mandalay in the winter of 1297 M.E. First, in order to test my ability and resistance I passed through the Rakhine mountain ranges on foot together with Chin Nationals, and I found that I was able to do the noble missionary task.

During this tour, I passed many regional areas in Rakhine state such as, Ramaree, Kyaukphyu, Zinkyun, Myaypon, Pauktaw, Sittwe, Myohaung, Kyauktaw, Alei-sankyaw, Maungdaw, and reached up to the Chittagong mountainous regions such as Bominthaung, Thethaung, etc.

I also went forth to the historically recorded places

of India where the Buddha in His life-time resided—Buddha-gaya, Rājagaha, the Old Nalanda University, Bārānasi, Migadāvana, Kusinar, Sāvatti, the old site of Jetavana monastery, Lubhini garden, and other historically popular places.

Learning

From the age of twelve, I studied basic canonical texts under the guidance of my teacher Sayadaw in my native place; and then I went to Monywa and studied Pāli Texts in Shwe-thein-daw-gyi Kyaung Taik for 3 years. Afterwards, I lived in Mahāsamaya Chaung of Sāgaing Hills and studied in order to sit for examinations for about 12 years as a novice.

After my ordination ceremony, I stayed in Shwe-thein-daw-gyi Kyaung Taik for 2 years and endeavoured to sit for Pāli Examinations. I moved to stay in Yadanarbon Pariyatti Kyaung of Chanthargyi Taik, West Mandalay and made an endeavour to sit for Pāli Examinations, passing five kinds of Examination.

At the age of 27, I got back from India to Myanmar and studied Sanskrit in Ledi Kyaung Taik of Monywa.

For over 4 years, I studied Pāli Texts of Tipitaka, together with Commentaries and Sub-Commentaries in Mahāvisutārāma of Pakokku. While I was there, I often toured the Chin Hills in the west and performed missionary task there.

Religious Activities during War time

Before the World War II, I moved from Pakokku to Amarapura and there I studied Patthāna under the President Sayadaws of Tumaung Taik and old Mingalā Taik for one year. At the beginning of World War II, I finished my learning and went back to my native place; I spent my time there paying my humble service to my first-teacher Sayadawgyi and repairing old wells and broken ponds for the benefits of village-devotees.

During the six years of World War II, I resided at Vaso Kyaung and Aung Chan Thar Kyaung of Kamayut, Yangon, and gave lectures on Buddhist Texts to young novices and bhikkhus. I performed religious duties as a Vinaya Examiner and Vinaya Judicial member of Insein, Kamayut and Thamaing Townships. I also wrote occasional articles.

As I intended earlier, I went forth alone to Hilly regions in order to work a missionary after World War II, I tried to propagate the Buddha's teachings in the mountainous regions of Chin State. Kachin State, and Kaya State.

Mettā-tour to Europe

I had been to Assam and Manipur of India more than once for missionary purposes, but I had never been to Europe and so I intended to go there.

Over the last 3 years, I have been invited to spend the rainy retreat in Switzerland by lay devotees and I promised I would come to them when conditions were

favourable.

Since they frequently sent letters of invitation, I decided to spend the Buddhist Lent of this year in Switzerland.

The aged Sayadaws from Mandalay and Shwebo encouraged me to make a European missionary tour because they are far-sighted noble ones.

When some Sayadaws asked me "What's your main aim and objective in going Europe?" I replied rather in a mocking manner, "To prevent the third World War from breaking out by means of the dissemination of Mettā."

In fact, even before I intended to spend the Buddhist Lent in Europe, I have disseminated Mettā towards the leading countries all over the world in order to prevent a third World War from breaking out in this human world.

I have been performing this noble task for over twenty years. I have done it in advance by instinct for the wealth and welfare of all sentient beings and I firmly believe that the fearful fire of the World War, the fire of anger, the fire of conceit- all these calamities and scourges will automatically come to an end by the power of my Mettā and Karuṇā.

In those countries, I will preach the noble Dhamma and also discuss it with those who would like to ask questions; I will recite Parittas and disseminate Mettā in order to protect them from confrontation with calamities and scourges; these are my main aims and

objectives.

May all celestial beings, all human beings and all sentient beings be free from danger, anxiety and misery; may all be happy and peaceful !

Sayadw U Uttamasara
Chin Hill of Myanmar
Sojourn Add: 6 ½ miles
Kamayut Township, Yangon
Myanmar.

2nd Waxing Day, the month of Late Tagu. 1349 M.E
(19.3.1988)

INTRODUCTORY MESSAGE

Dhammācariya U Htay Hlaing

"I will take up the place where others do not like to live in; I will do what others do not like to do." That is the motto of Sayadaw U Uttamaśāra. Since young monkhood, the Sayadaw with this noble attitude, went forth to hilly regions where the *sāsanā* was not yet prosperous.

A Difficult Missionary Tour of over fifty years

In the colonial days, the Buddhist monks were not allowed to go to the hilly regions. If they did so, they were captured and sent to prison. Since then, the Sayadaw used to go there for missionary purpose even when he was still learning. The indigenous people in hilly regions are born in Buddhist Myanmar but they have no opportunity to know about Buddhism, the

teachings of the Buddha. As he felt pity for them, he toured for the propagation of the Buddha's Teachings in those areas for over fifty years. Now, he is 78 years old and his vassa (monkhood) 59 years long!

The missionary area covered Chittagong mountain ranges, Bominhtaung, Thethtaung, Phalanhtaung where Arakanese and Original Myanmar (Marammas) groups lived, some border areas in Bangladesh, and Assam and Manipur of India. He also toured in such historically famous places of India for several months as Buddhagaya, the Old Nalanda University, the old site of Jetavana monastery, etc.

As he wandered about from village to village, in the forests of mountainous regions and stayed at a suitable place for him, his body and malaria became well acquainted. Sometimes, he was attacked by malaria on his tour; at that moment, he would lean against a big tree or a stone-rock, take a pill, drink water from his water-bottle and take a rest for a while, covering his head with his robe. When he felt better, he would continue his tour again. The days that he had to pass just with a meal of a cob of maize or a sweet potato were numerous. When he was busy and could not come down to urban areas for years, he had no extra robes. On such occasion, he cut up worn-out mosquito nets, sewed the pieces together, dyed it with brown coloured bark and wore it as robe.

A Milestone of Missionary Tour

For thirty years, the Sayadaw has lived at a permanent residence, a cloister donated by Gurakha devotees, on the side of the Khamtim mountain near Falam. He came down to Yangoon to participate in the Sixth Buddhist Council of Myanmar, but in the early days, he used to come down to Yangoon only once in twenty years.

Following the noble example of the Buddhas-to-be, the Sayadaw never asked for donations and was content with what he received. Nay, he had no chance to live a cloistered life; sometimes he was a teacher; sometimes he was an advisor to the indigenous people in their ways of living and social dealings; sometimes he was a physician and gave advice to them in their health-affairs. Here, I request that I am unable to expand his life in detail.

We can appreciate his successful missionary tours in journals, magazines and newspapers; especially in old newspapers, Toe-tet-ye magazines, Thu-ri-ya magazines, Sāsana-young-gyi journals and Sasāna Alin journals in olden days, and Dhamma-byuhar journals, "The Personal Records" published by Sein-mya literary house, "the Experience of the Light-bearers and the National Prize Winner Story, "Wanting to break down the mountain ranges" published by Sar-Pay-beikman, "The bliss of monkhood", "Buddhist Teaching on Hilly Regions", "the History of Chin Nationals" published by Thint-bha-wa Literary house, and "the Power of

Loving-Kindness" published by the Buddha-Dhamma Loka literary House.

The Buddhas-to-be selflessly practised the Dhamma for the benefit of the world (Lokatthacariya); for the benefit of Kinsmen (Ñātatthacariya), and for the benefit of Buddhahood (Buddhatthacariya). Only the outward appearances of these three main objectives can generally be mentioned in his literary works. They are easy to be seen and easy to be appreciated, but the inner-core could not be perfectly stated therein. It is not easy to summarize them because they are very lengthy. The Sayadaw's articles in journals and magazines cannot be mentioned in full account.

Dhamma-essence as Recognized

Today people demand essence only, and some practically enjoy it as far as they can. I think it is fitting for the times. We have to use ways and means which can be easily and lightly followed. Moreover, as we have not yet the favourable condition, only the essence suitable for common people is given priority.

I am a reader of Sayadawgyi's literary works and I already respected him even before I had met him personally. For the last eight years, the Sayadawgyi has come down to Yangon, Lower Myanmar, about once every three years. Here he stayed about one week and gave Dhamma talks of the three nights. Fortunately, I met him four years ago. Before I personally met the Ven. Sayadaw, I had already appreciated Sayadaw's works and he had also sent me the letter of

encouragement about my literary works.

The Tour of Paritta and Mettā

At the special invitation of lay-devotees and bhikkhus, the aged Ven. Sayadaws of Lower Myanmar, who have known about his moral virtues, Sīla, Samādhi, and Paññā, he often came to Yangon. I have been told that for the purpose of the recitation of Parittas, in order to disseminate Mettā and protect the devotees from calamities and scourges, he was invited by his bhikkhu-friends in different parts of Myanmar.

He made an itinerary, starting from Chindwin, Shwebo, Monywa, through the towns of Ayeyawady Delta area and upto Tavoy, Magui of the Tanintharyi Division. This year, the Syadaw accepted the invitation of devotees and recited Parittas in many parts of Yangon, especially for the purpose of protection from the danger of fire. Before reciting Parittas, he preached night-Dhamma - talk for about 3 hours.

Mettā-tour to Europe

There arose a golden chance of hearing the Dhamma-talk for Yangonites when the Sayadawgyi arrived at Yangon and stayed for about 2 months. For, Sayadawgyi was repeatedly invited to spend the rainy retreat in Switzerland and to make a Mettā-tour in European countries, by Daw Aye Mya Mya Win and the lay-devotees in Switzerland. Thus, the devotees in Yangon had such a golden chance to meet Syadawgyi and hear his Dhamma-talk, while he was preparing for his foreign-tour.

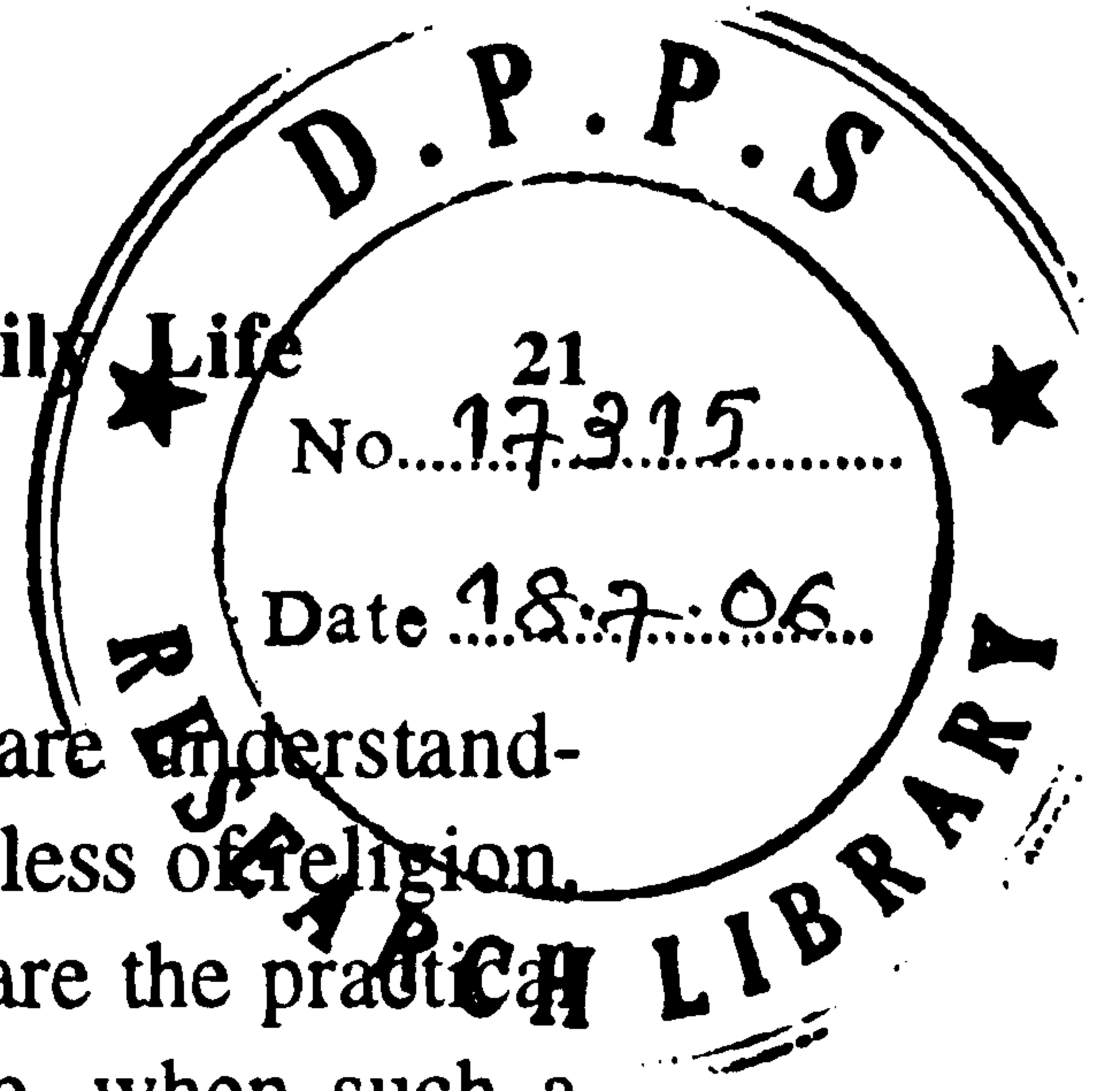
Everybody likes his Dhamma-talk

To tell the truth, I hardly ever go anywhere to hear Dhamma-talks. But, I am always the first one, sitting near Sayadawgyi whenever he preaches the Dhamma. An audience of about one thousand attended the Dhamma-essembly and some got there by walking eight miles. After the sayadaw had recited the parittas, the Paritta-Water and the Paritta-Oil in pots and bottles before him often boiled, bubbled and ran over. In most wards of Yangon after a paritta-recitation by the Sayadawgyi there was rarely heard the sound of the fire engine. According to the report of the Fire-brigade there were no fires like previous years, but only the small cases which were easily extinguished; they remarked that if the paritta-recitation were performed in every ward of Yangon, the situation would be much better.

There is a notable word of the Sayadawgyi in every Dhamma-essembly; "I am not a Dhamma-preacher (Dhammakathika), nor receiving the honour of Dāyakās."

But, there is always a large audience at his dhamma-essemblies. It was said that at the Dhamma-assembly in Meikhtila, the Dhamma-hearers asked him to continue the Dhamma for six days there. The Pāli Universities in Meikhtila closed and lecturer-Sayadaws and Scholor-bhikkhus and novices came to hear his Dhamma-talk; the assembly hall was full. It was remarkable that even panjapians and Indian Muslims came to the Dhamma-essembly and they had to sit

The Buddhist Way of Daily Life



outside the hall.

The Dhamma-talks of Sayadawgyi are understandable and beneficial to everybody, regardless of religion, caste, class, race, colour, and age; they are the practical ways of everyone's daily-life. Therefore, when such a huge group of people came there, they all enjoyed the peace of Dhamma. I myself witness at a Dhamma-assembly a Christian family speaking words of thanks to Sayadawgyi after they had listened to him.

The Buddha's Teaching not Patented

"The Buddhist way of daily-life" as taught by the Sayadawgyi is very easy to follow; his way can be used in different types of living and in every social condition.

It is obvious that by means of the dissemination of Mettā every problem can be overcome and by means of the recitation of paritta, numerous diseases can be easily cured as well. By using his paritta-water everybody can enjoy real peace and happiness and find a solution to their problems. Cancer clearly showed in x-ray, completely disappeared as if by magic under the eyes of specialists by the power of Mettā.

All these incidents prove that the Buddha's teachings, as understood by common people, are not Religion but are a practical scientific way of living. In fact, they are the natural laws of Dhamma, encompassed within the process of cause and effect, and they are not owned only by Buddhists. They cannot

be patented by any religious follower. This truth becomes known all over the world.

If the National Leaders realize this method

On their return the devotees seem to be thrown into delightful ecstasies over the Dhamma-lecture they had listened from the Sayadawgyi. It is stated in most of the Pāli Texts that those who listen to the Dhamma preached by the Buddha become ecstatic and delightful.

Samuttejesi., Sampahamseti. They appreciated the essence of the Dhamma and remarked upon it:

"Sayadawgyi's words are very valorous, just like the saying, the word of the wise man is similar to a thunderbolt."

Among them, the critical appreciation of my friends was very remarkable- and I was very glad to hear such great understanding:-

"The technique to overcome difficulties and to find a solution to problems shown by Sayadawgyi is very easy to practise: it is not difficult to follow it and it is very reliable. If only national leaders know this! It does not matter that common people do not know this!"

"As they have to work hard all through twenty-four hours, if they use this valuable technique, they will become active and find the easiest way of solution to problems."

"Especially in the affairs of nations, if they know this method and use it before they come to meet and

discuss with one another, the whole world will become happy and peaceful and all the nations will definitely progress."

**Admonatory speech on the Graduating Ceremony
of the Buddhist abbots**

On the graduating ceremony at the Training School of the Buddhist abbots, Kaba-Aye, Yangon, under the sponsorship of the State Saṃghamahānāyaka Committee, the Sayadawgyi made an admonatory speech one night. As the Dhamma-lecture was particularly given for the graduates, he explained his practical methods to them.

"At the beginning of World War II, a news conference was held and I myself put up a plan to the conference that there should be a Training School of Buddhist abbots. In those days, there were many abbots who had not even seen the book of homage to the Buddha."

"In the past, Englishmen wrote that Myanmar Buddhist monks were able persons because they became learned men without getting any graduation certificate from a college or a university. They talked about it, with poor knowledge. In truth, they did not know that there are so many ways and means to make the whole world happy and peaceful to live in, and to be free from all sorts of dangers and menaces, as instructed by the Buddha."

**From the method of Hindering Cyclone
to the Journey of Miraculous Power**

At the Dhamma-assembly that night, the Sayadawgyi explained how he gave protection the danger of fire, how he prevented epidemics from spreading out, how he made rain fall, how he brought a cyclone, the natural disaster, to a place where it should be, and destroy it, and even how it was easy to repair a monastery by a Dhammic power.

Moreover he told us an interesting story: once thieves stole materials in a hermitage but the monk in it did not care about it and went on meditating; thieves felt so hot that they could not stand it, and they had to replace the stolen properties in the hermitage. The Syadawgyi continued to tell a little of how the monk developed the meditation of Tezo Kasiṇa and Vāyo Kasiṇa and how he changed the visual light of Ānāpāna into the supernatural power of Knowledge. (please see the chapter of Samatha and Vipassanā as how the light of Ānāpāna emerges from the body of meditator.)

Although the Sayadawgyi showed the way to the bhikkhus, birds of the same feather in order to arouse enthusiasm in them, it may be difficult for young bhikkhus, who have not come into the field of perfect learning and practical endeavour, to understand and will take a long time for them to believe it.

**The Dhammic Power
needed not to Press the Button**

In connection with the light of *Ānāpāna* told by the Sayadawgi, we should remember Ledi Sayadawgyi's words.

Once, while Ledi Sayadawgyi was residing at the Ingyin-Myaing-Tawya, Pyinmana, he said to the young bhikku U Javana, his deciple, the Seikgyitawya Sayadaw-to-be:

"My pupil, Maung Javana, we...are trying to overwhelm this *Ānāpāna* to the end; the element of light passing through the two nostrils can encompass the whole world. Nevertheless, it is not easy to take it back, from the state of enlargement upto the condensed element; it is not yet clear and the element of light is full of sport."

"If we overwhelm this stage, we can make the whole world be what we like and we can put it under our control."

It is very very difficult to understand and believe *Anusāsanī pātihāriya*, one of the three types of supernatural powers, produced by the ardent practice of *Sīla*, *Samādhi* and *Paññā*. For it is not a kind of supernatural power such as flying through the space, passing through the earth, etc. It is a kind of accomplishment which is acheived as soon as the mind is inclined to do something, without pressing any button. Only such a kind is a real supernatural power. So, the Buddha urged to solely depend on such a kind, the

power of Sīla, Samādhi and Paññā.

*"Ijjhati bhikkhave Sīlavato cetopanīdhi
Visuddhattā"*

"O Bhikkhus, the person who is replete with Sīla may accomplish all his wishes because he has really achieved the purity of mind."

Thus, we find that the Sayadawgyi particularly takes notice of these important facts.

The Persons Lower than the Outcaste Devotees

At every Dhamma-assembly of Sayadawgyi, if he has two or three nights to lecture the Dhamma, the natural law of Kamma is preached on the first night; but if he has only one night to preach the Dhamma for three hours, the natural law of Kamma takes about two hours. He always urges every devotee to completely rely on his own Kamma and moral character and to establish more and more good Kammas.

This may be because he seems to realize that some devotees do not want to rely on their own Kammas (bodily, verbal and mental actions) and long for the outside help of Vijjhadharas, spiritual powers spending a lot of money, valuable time and energy. Those who are looking at the eternal help of charms, magical contrivances, spells, incantations, etc, but not wanting to rely on one's own kammas are called by the Buddha as the Outcaste Devotee- Caṇḍāla Upāsakā. The one who is eager to rely on his own Kammas, morality, concentration and wisdom is known as 'the Lotus

Devotee'- Puṇḍarika Upāsakā.

Those who are taking refuge in the imaginary men of supernatural powers, outside the realm of Sāsana, such as spirits, vijjhadharas, *bodaws*- noble grandpas, etc., are lower than the status of the outcaste devotee and they may be even violate and devastate the threelfold refuge.

**To the realm of Enlightenment by treading on
the Path of Kamma**

Some do not understand Kamma and its result. Though they are living in the teaching of Buddha Sāsana, they may be regarded as the ones with poor pāramīs. Why? Only those who have a firm believe in Kammas and its results are called the one's with righteous views - Kammassakata Sammādiṭṭhi. In reality, the Kamassakatā Samādiṭṭhi may still prevail even before the Buddha's Enlightenment and it cannot be said that the one with the view of Kammassakatā Sammādiṭṭhi really gains advantages from the teachings of the Buddha. Only when he proceeds to step up to the stage of Vipassna Sammādiṭṭhi and Magga Sammādiṭṭhi, Kammasakatā Sammādiṭṭhi plays the vital role as a basic foundation. Therefore, we can understand why Sayadawgyi gives priority to the natural law of Kamma. It should be noted how important it is. What else, apart from your own actions, can do good or bad for you?

Vebu Sayadaw who was known as Arahanta, urged

the lay-devotees who came to his residence to sweep the monastery compound and to donate flowers and water to the image of the Buddha and said:-

"If lay-devotees do not establish the good Kammas they can only be partially helped; I help them first to make their Kammas better, then I will make them Enlightened."

The Sayadaw pointed out that the path of Kamma should be first made in order to tread on the road to Jhāna and Enlightenment.

Chapters in this book

There are four main chapters in this book. They are:-

- (1) The Natural Law of Kamma
(Kamma Niyāma);
- (2) The Benefit of Mettā,
- (3) Learning how to die, and
- (4) Samatha and Vipassanā.

All these subjects are always given in the Dhamma-assembly of Sayadawgyi, and the Natural Law of Kamma and the Benefit of Mettā are always given priority. Everybody, regardless of caste, religion and class, likes to accept compassionate fellow feelings and good behaviour. Those who disregard Kamma and Mettā, whether they believe Buddhism or not, and whoever may be-- cannot achieve good result.

As a few lines of the subject in each receptive chapter are stated in Preamble, I shall not mention them here.

Difficult Publication of this Book

The Sayadawgyi was performing the Night-Dhamma-talks in Yangon during the whole month of February 1988. There were invitations to alms-food-donation and Paritta-recitation about nine or ten times a day, and the Sayadawgyi was very tired of coming and going here and there. Nevertheless, the Sayadawgyi did not seem to be tired of performing his *Sāsana* duties and took a rest in the car while travelling and he would take a short sleep in the car. Sometimes, he said, "We should follow the Arahanta's way of sleeping."

The Night-Dhamma-talks generally took a long time upto about 12 pm and got back his residence about 1 am. The sojourn residence for him was temporarily donated by his nephew, U Than Aung and his wife, Daw Thaung Ye (Aye Myanma Mechanical Workshop), Marlakar Garden, 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles, Hlaing Township. Usually he gets up at 3:00 am and performs his routine duties. How beneficial it is for him to follow the Arahanta's way of sleeping! Nevertheless, we, U Than Aung and I, who have to support him in every aspect, did not find it easy to live like him. Just like big fishes and aquatic animals, such as *kimi* and *timila*, do not want to live in small rivers and streams, but are happy to swim with all their might in the great ocean, so the strenuous diligence of the Sayadawgyi fits properly to *saddhā* - confidence of Yangonian devotees who would like to donate alms-food and hear the Paritta-recitation. As it took one month, the Night-Dhamma-talks had to

be ceased, too. But those who would like to invite the Sayadawgyi for alms-donation and to hear the Paritta-recitation were still asking for their appointment.

Complete Practices for Life

I myself supplicated to the Sayadawgyi, thus:- "Your Venerable Sir, you'd better take a rest. Your Dhamma-talks are very beneficial to the hearers. Though you preach them with all your might, it may be fruitless if they totally forget them at home. All the devotees who have heard your Dhamma-talk are very happy and peaceful and have the deep veneration in the Dhamma. Even the cassette tapes of your Dhamma-talks are passing from one hand to another and more people can hear the Dhamma in great veneration. A Traveller's Diary and General Records written by yourself were published in book-form. If we were able to publish these Dhamma-talks in book-form, it would be very fruitful to all devotees for ever."

Thus, the Sayadawgyi recollected his Dhamma-talks and wrote them down in one month. It was not an easy work but I believe it will be very beneficial to everybody for a long time.

For, these Dhamma-talks are the basic practices from Buddhist literature, and they are also the complete practices which the Sayadawgyi has followed through his life. In Dhamma-talks he presents the Pāli Texts simply and clearly. It is very eloquent and not difficult to understand.

Dhamma-friends in this Publication

The scripts written by Sayadawgyi were prepared for typing by myself and U Myint Ohn (Secretary of Nyaung-yan Pagoda Trustee Board) and submitted for correction to Sayadawgyi. I then inserted some necessary facts, by referring to the tape-recording of Dhamma-talks, Sayadawgyi's notes, the published articles from journals and magazines; it was then submitted to Sayadawgyi for another correction. As we prepared this publication in a short time, there may be some flaws and defects in our work and I will assume full responsibility for them.

Acknowledgement

We are very grateful to Pathamagyaw, Dhammācariya U Aung Thein Nyunt (Saya Ba Kyaw) who has translated Sayadawgyi's Myanmar script into English; he is a member of the Editorial Board of the Light of the Dhamma, Religious Affairs Department, Kaba-Aye, Yangon, and he puts a great effort into this translation with deep devotion. Miss Zunetta Ann Liddle (a) Ma Thandar, a British Scholar, who came to Myanmar for her Doctorate degree, concerning aspects of the anthropology of religious beliefs and practices especially the role and portrayal of women in traditional Buddhist Culture and way of life help him to make the language readable and fluent. As a Buddhist-devotee, she practised meditation for weeks and fairly studied Myanmar language during her stay

in Myanmar. She met Sayadawgyi in person, heard his Dhamma-talk, and read this Myanmar copy, "Bhawa nei-nee" as well. It is a sort of great help for the translator. Typist Maung Sein Nyunt endeavoured to accomplish his task as swiftly as he could by day and night. Daw Nyunt Yin Win (Senior Assistant Teacher of Yankin State High School No. 1) and U Than Lwin (Central Statistical Organization) made an arduous effort to produce thorough galley-proof and U Myo Win and his colleagues help us by their offset skills. We deeply appreciate their efforts and acknowledged their noble services to this publication.

Since his youth, the Sayadawgyi has learned English and this publication is aimed to be a supplement to his Dhamma-talks in European Countries. It is also may be an aid to the interpretation of Buddhist terms and their profound meanings. We are sure that this publication will be help on the Mettā-tour to Europe.

Some of the aged Sayadaws in Myanmar, who are intimate friends of Sayadawgyi, feel sure that the Mettā-tour is a golden chance for the Sayadawgyi to disseminate Mettā and recite holy verses parittas in Europe and will definitely be beneficial.

The Sure Way

The fixed abilities of Sayadawgyi, such as endeavour, diligence, zeal, courage, determination, etc, are very great like those of the Buddhas-to-be, and also his clear knowledge or brilliant wisdom is very great

and vast. Nothing can move or change it at all! However, the different sorts of myths and complications can make devotees perplexed and bewildered, and we are afraid that they will presume him a Vijjhādhara. Therefore, we convey such a long message. Thank you so much for your patient reading.

The noble abilities of Sayadawgyi, such as morality, concentration, and wisdom *Sīla*, *Samādi*, and *Paññā*, having fulfilled for years by himself are very excellent and we need to differentiate varieties of his virtues, and pay respect to him. His moral virtues and spiritual knowledges are unmeasurable, and beyond our own knowledge.

He says boldly, "There will never arise the Third World War; it has been long for twenty years to prevent it from breaking out."

Occasionally, he said to bhikkhu-friends, "If the light of *Ānāpāna* is sent out, the body of meditator will go along with it."

Let's tread only on the sure way leading to the blissful peace of the whole world, by practising true Dhammas with firm confidence, as instructed by the Sayadawgyi.

Be happy and peaceful living with true Knowledge!
Be the cause of attaining the Nibbānic Bliss!

Dhammācariya U Htay Hlaing

*8th Waxing Day, the month of Kason, 1350 B.E
23rd April, 1988.*

NAMO TASSA BHAGAVATO ARAHATO SAMMĀSAMBUDDHASSA

THE DISCOURSE ON NATURAL LAW OF KAMMA (KAMMA NIYĀMA)

"All beings are travelling in the journey of saṃsāric circle with their own respective Kammas"

Saṃsāra

The journey of saṃsāra that all beings are travelling literally means incessive arising of Khandhā, Āyatana and Dhātus. Let's say it colloquially: In fact, it is the repeated arising and passing away of existences or lives.

In an existence there arises (re)-conception (jāti) at its first stage; then it gradually grows towards the stage of decaying (Jarā). At times, it is tormented by diseases (byādhi); there are altogether 96 types of diseases which may arise at every moment harrying and at times overpowering the physical body.

Being marked by birth, old-age and disease, finally

it comes to death, when it is said that the existence of a being ends. In truth, it is not an end; it is just changing an existence to a new one and existences continue, loaded with the sufferings of birth, old-age, disease and death.

This long, long journey of existences is called, "Saṃsāra". It is similar to logs and floating rubbish drifting in the current of rivers and streams. Therefore, it is a common saying of noble persons that all beings are ceaselessly drifting in the whirl-pool of Saṃsāra.

Only Kamma is one's own property

Sabbeattā Kammassakā. All beings are the possessors of their respective Kammass.

You have to understand that all beings drifting in the whirl-pool of Saṃsāra are the possessors of their own Kammass; they possess no other property.

For example, materials such as gold, silver, precious stones, buildings, farms, cattle, carts, firms and factories, etc., which are all excluded from physical body - all are subjects to the five types of foes, being fire, water, thieves, masters and unworthy heirs; they may be destroyed and stolen; they may be confiscated and misused; they may be wasted. In reality they are not your own property.

Charity, morality and practice of Samatha and Vipassana which you yourself have performed- all these good kammass only are your own properties. They cannot drift with current; they cannot catch fire; they

cannot be confiscated and stolen , nor wasted nor misused. You have to understand this fact thoroughly.

Three types of Kamma

You yourself create your Kamma; no one else can do it. There are three types of Kammas; Bodily Kamma, Verbal Kamma, and Mental Kamma. Everyone creates them daily; everyone creates them regularly. Everyone is restlessly travelling with them throughout the saṃsāric journey. Therefore, we are to purify these three Kammas and live well in this world. Here I mean that we should endeavour to make ourselves more and more purified and noble.

Cetanā, the real Kamma

It is a common saying, "this one is lucky , that one is unlucky." Being lucky and unlucky cannot be created by any one else. You have to understand that you yourself create your own Kamma.

You may ask, "What is Kamma? Please show it to me substantially". The Buddha taught, "Oh Bhikkhus! I declare cetanā, intention, is Kamma; *"Cetanāhaṃ bhikkhave kammaṃ vadāmi"*. So, Kamma is a product of intention.

If intention is good, the Kamma will be good; if intention is bad, the Kamma will be bad; if intention is inferior, the Kamma will be inferior; if intention is superior, the Kamma will be superior; if intention is straight, the Kamma will be straight; if intention is crooked, the Kamma will be crooked; if intention is

poor, the Kamma will be poor; if intention is rich, the Kamma will be rich; if intention is pure, the Kamma will be pure; if intention is impure, the Kamma will be impure; if intention is high, the Kamma will be high; if intention is low, the Kamma will be low. You should take notice of all these facts. To show a perfect proof, place a big mirror in front of you and look at it, please. If you look at it smiling, you will see your smiling face; if you look at it contorting, you will see your wry face. This appearance is created by yourself; no other gods nor outside creator can do so. This is the Kamma as taught by the Buddha.

In this human world everyone can create his Kamma as they like; they are producing their own Kammas in accordance with their inclinations and wishes.

You must create your own Kamma

You have to know that you can create your own Kamma if you understand the characteristics of Kamma. In reality, whether you realize it or not, you are yourself creating your own Kamma daily.

To prove this fact, you will see it whenever you notice the circumstantial evidences of the whole human world.

The use of sweet language

Daily spoken language is, in fact, Kamma-Verbal action. Sweet language is good verbal action and foul language is bad verbal action. Good verbal action

produces good results for the speaker. Bad verbal action creates bad result for the speaker.

If you want good results, you should speak sweet language; if you speak well, you will receive sweet words from others; those who listen to your sweet words will become fond of you and show their love to you. Everybody likes to hear sweet words. No one is fond of hearing harsh language. No one likes those who use harsh language.

Everyone loves such a person who speaks truthful, advantageous and pleasant words; they admire him; they treasure him; they respect him; they recognize him; they are ready to listen to his words.

If they hear harsh words, they will be disappointed and displeased; if they hear sweet words, they will be happy and pleased.

A person who uses harsh language is not loved; he is disregarded, even hated and despised. But, a person who uses truthful, advantageous and pleasant words is well-regarded, admired and good to associate with.

So, I would like to urge you all to speak good words for the sake of the good verbal Kamma and to use sweet language for the pleasure of others.

Speaking harsh words is just like singing a song of bad omen which will arise one day in the future. Similarly, speaking sweet words is just like predicting that one will be prosperous sooner or later.

Therefore, I would like to advice that whoever wants to become a good person, should take notice

of whether their words are pleasant or unpleasant to others.

Similitudes of the moment when Kamma produces its effect

The Kamma that human beings perform produces its effect in accordance with its potential moment. It is like vegetables and plants cultivated by farmers.

Those vegetables and plants sowed in the beginning of the rains—

- (a) can be consumed in the mid of the rains;
- (b) can be consumed in the end of rains and in the beginning of winter; or
- (c) in the beginning of summer;
- (d) cannot be consumed during that year but can be consumed in a few years after.

The three types of Kammas produced by human beings are different from one another in terms of their effective moment.

The effective moment of Kammas

- (a) Just like the vegetables and plants sowed in the beginning of the rains which can be consumed in the mid of the rains, so also the Kamma that has been created in youth or at the first part of life can produce its effect at the second part of life (about 30-to- 50);
- (b) Just like the vegetables and plants sowed in the beginning of the rains which can be consumed in the end of the rains or in the

beginning of the winter, so the Kamma that has been created in youth can produce its effect in the third part of life (about 50-to-70);

- (c) Just like the vegetables and plants sowed in the beginning of the rains which can be consumed in the beginning of the summer, so also the Kamma that has been created in youth can produce its effect at the fourth part of life (over about 75 -to- 100);
- (d) Just as the vegetables and plants sowed in one year cannot be consumed during that year, but can be consumed in a few years after, so also the Kamma that has been created in this existence, can produce its effect in the existence hereafter.

Kamma Satta Vibhajati

Kamma generates its different effects to different beings - *Kammam satta vibhajati*. The person who performs merits reaps good results and the person who performs demerits reaps bad results. It is Kamma that differentiates white from dark.

For example, those who commit killing and stealing have to reap the bad result of being in hell, or the animal world and being oppressed in the existences of peta; those who perform charity, observe different types of precepts and develop the contemplation of smatha and vipassanā will have to reap the good results arisen out of these meritorious deeds.

Being Old and Invalid

It is impossible to deny the natural phenomena of Kamma. When the generative power of Kamma arises, it will definitely have an effect upon the Kamma-doer, whether he believes it or not.

I would like to tell a true story of how a wrongdoer was effected by the bad results of his own Kamma when it ripened.

When I was young, I witnessed a respectable abbot, who lived strictly according to the Vinaya-disciplinary rules and acted simply. He resided in Thein-kyaung monastery, Ywa-thit village, Depei-Yin Township, Shwebo District, Upper Myanmar. His name was U Tejavanta. He was very popular among lay-devotees and bhikkhu-saṃghās and he was well-respected and adored.

My first teacher Sayadaw told me how cruel and stupid U Tejavanta was in his youth.

When U Tejavanta was young, his parents sent him to school but he did not go there; in those days, the monasteries were the only learning centers in the villages of Upper Myanmar; quitting the school, he used to wandering in the near-by forest. He stole rice and other food from the villages and cooked it himself for his meal. He would hunt animals in the forest the whole day and cruelly killed and ate them.

For the next day's meal he would break the legs or wings of some animals, pierce the eyes of the other and tie the tails of water lizards together. He did not

know that those bad Kammās would effect him one day.

Experience of Remorse

At school age he was very cruel and stupid but when he grew up he was kind-hearted. His mind was inclined towards the monastery. He used to live well and tried hard to study lessons. Thus, he was initiated a novice and become a fully ordained monk. As he was very desirous of profound learning, he went to Mandalay and Sagaing in order to study higher Buddhist Texts.

Later, he was invited in accordance with the instruction of his first teacher Sayadaw, to reside in the Thein-kyaung monastery of Ywa-Thit village by the village-devotees.

The time when his Kamma generates

It is true that the Kamma will generate timely. The Sayadaw U Tejavanta was well-respected by his village-devotees as he was a learned and virtuous monk.

Upto the age of fifty, he had been in good health; he was strong and well-built; there was no need to worry about his health.

Nevertheless, when he grew older into the age of sixties, his health deteriorated; the kamma he had done knocked at his door:

Sometimes he felt sore-eyes; sometimes he felt sore-knees; sometimes he had a bad back; he cured

himself with the indigenous medicines and his health did not grow worse, but not much better either. Then, when he grew older, he felt, first of all, sore-eyes. Gradually his eyes became blurred and at last he was totally blind. He was also, at that time, tormented by sore-knee and as it grew worse he was unable to walk. Bad back and head-ache were felt at the same time, too. He was entirely oppressed by different kinds of disease when he become old!

I am really old and invalid!

We can take lessons on Sayadaw U Tejavanta whose physical state became deteriorated only at the fourth part of the life-span, but we cannot share the pain with him!

It is because he mercilessly tortured and killed animals with cruelty and foolishness at the first part of his life-span. These demeritorious deeds cannot be washed away with water. It is a natural law that what one does is one's own. Only his wise companions have understood this fact.

Therefore, Sayadaw U Tejavanta warned his intimate friends not to torture and kill animals if they wished to live in peace and happiness. And he often said to his friends and laydevotees "See me, please! I'm really old and invalid; I really came to be broken in my knee and I'm really blind; Now I reap what I sowed! no one else can help me!" We have to understand the fact that those who commit other

demeritorious and sinful deeds apart from killing living beings will be effected by their respective bad Kammas.

Ambasakkara, the Licchavi King who did not believe in Kamma.

I would like to tell you another story. It was the time when the Buddha was still alive. The Buddha resided at the Jatavana monastery of Sāvatti and a Licchavi king named Ambasakkara reigned in Vesālī.

The king held the view of Annihilation- Natthika Micchāditti and he did not believe in Kamma and its effective nature. His sole view was that though a person performs bad deeds he cannot be overwhelmed by any bad results; there is no good or bad results arising out of what one does; in this world everything manifests itself aimlessly.

In a place of Vesālī, there lived an anonymous grocer.

Inborn Morality

The grocer was good-natured and virtuous; he did not kill any sentient beings, nor loved others who committed killing; he did not take whatever was not given, nor loved others who committed stealing.

He did not tell lies, nor committed sexual misconduct, nor used narcotic drugs and intoxicants. In fact, he was possessed of five precepts by nature.

He had no hatred, nor ill-will nor jealousy, nor covetousness, nor did he speak harsh words; nor loved others who spoke harsh words; nor did he speak gossip;

nor was he interested in the gossip of others. Nevertheless, he used to speak of other's reputation and virtues and praised them deservedly, but not exaggerate it!

There was a foot-path near his grocery. When it rained, it was covered with rain-water and passers-by had to pass through the water. As the time went by the path became muddy.

Some persons jumped over it; some had to pass through the water. He took pity on them.

One day, he found in a bush, white skull of an ox which someone had thrown away. It had no foul smell and he brought it and laid it in the middle of the muddy pool as a stepping-stone. The passers-by trod on the skull and passed over the mud. They thanked him for his good service.

The grocer sitting in his home felt happy seeing the passers-by treading over the mud with ease. And he thought to himself in happiness; "My service to others is very easy. It is just a trifle to lay a skull of an ox in the mid of mud. It was thrown away in a bush like a rubbish; my good *cetanā* and my good idea, how beneficial it is to others!"

There are many good works to be done in this world if you like to serve others with good *cetanā*.

One day, the grocer arrived at the river-bank while his friends were swimming in river. He, in fun, collected their clothes on the bank and hid them. he stayed behind a bush and laughed at them. Those who

had lost their clothes dared not come up to river-bank and felt unhappy and uneasy. After he had been gratified with his humour, he took their clothes out of the bush and gave them over.

A Resultant Kamma in a good order

Let us shorten the story as to how effective the Kamma is in a good order.

The grocer was, one day, involved in a criminal case and sentenced to death. The reason why he died will be revealed later. After his death he became an Earth-Deity "Bhumatṭha-devatā" due to the power of his good *cetana*. He was very handsome and graceful.

Let us stop here, and return to Licchavi king of Ambasakkara who held the view of Annihilation. As I said earlier, the king had no belief in merits and demerits. He believed that it did not make difference in this world whatever one does, good or bad!; that there were no resultant nature of good or bad Kammas!; everything manifests itself aimlessly. Such a view is called Annihilism Existentialism-Natthika Ditṭhi.

Very dreadful and horrid it is! Those who hold such a view will do whatever they like!

The Idea of *Du-Sa-Na-So*

The king, riding on the royal elephant, was, one day, going in royal procession through the city and the people were waiting for and paying respect to him. A young lady was watching the king from the window of her house and the king glanced at her and felt

affection toward her. An attendant was sent to her to ask whether she was married or not. The reply was that she was married. So, he ordered that her husband must attend to the king daily, for, as a king, he could not forcibly take her hands.

From that time onwards the husband and wife felt unhappy. Without being ordered to do any work, the husband had to attend the king before the throne in kneeling posture all day long. Two or three days later, the king gave an order to him:-

"My man! there is a lake protected by a Dakarakkhasa Deity three yojanas distant away from the Vesālī. You must fetch the red soil and water-lily from there in one day and give them to me; if you neglect your duty you will be sentenced to death."

That was just like pushing him into the den of death. The man understood it thoroughly. But he could do nothing but go; otherwise he would die. That was a king's order. It was rather late in the day when the king gave him the order. The distance was three yojanas, about forty miles! The lake was protected by Dakarakkhasa Deity!

A courageous man of strength

In truth, the husband was a man of diligence and courage; he, with firm resolution, at once, went back home, informed his wife, made her prepared a bundle of food and rushed towards the lake with the bundle, got there before noon. His wife was left behind crying.

As soon as he got there, he undid his bundle and was ready to have. Nay! he was wise and heedful! Before having his meal, he made an offer of his meal in homage to the Deities of the forest, mountains and the lake, and shred his merit with them all.

That is the notable point! The Myanmar follow this custom. There is no one who does not like to be respected and honoured well or given something.

Short to the point, the cruel Deity who protected the lake became fond of the man and taking on a human form, he allowed the man to collect the red soil and water-lilies as he wanted. Thus the man did it hurriedly and rushed back to the city of Vesālī. At that moment, the sun was coming down to the west horizon and it was nearly sunset. He was totally regardless of his death, rushing through with panting. No sooner did he arrive at the gate of the city than the gate-doors were all closed; he could not enter the city. He shouted loudly to the door-keepers and there was no reply at all! But the sun was not yet setting in the west horizon!

He stopped shouting for a little moment and thought to himself; "The king planned in a mean way for want of my wife; let him do it in his own way! but I should be rightful; I should be diligent and courageous; What will shouting achieve? I must have an eye-witness to prove to the king I had actually arrived at the gate before sunset." But there was no one to be proved near by!

Bhumatṭha Devatā, his Eye-witness

He made a sweeping survey around outside of the city and saw a criminal who was impaled, being accused of theft, not far from him. He was completely nonpulsed and finally he went there and asked him to be his eye-witness. The criminal replied, "My friend, I will die today or tomorrow; it is impossible for me to do so; I'd like to give you a piece of advice. Bhumatṭha-devatā, a powerful Earth Deity comes here and encourages me every mid-night, riding on a celestial flying-horse; and so you should wait a little, and possibly he may be your eye-witness."

Human being, Be Alive!

The man replied "well" and waited for the Earth-Deity. A little while later, there arose a fragrant smell and the surroundings shone. Then there appeared the Earth-Deity riding on a white celestial flying-horse. The horse, Manojava, which is as swift as human's mind, was beautifully harnessed. The Earth-Deity got near the criminal and spoke these words as usual, "Human being, be alive; Noble is still being alive!" After saying that the Earth-Deity moved to go back but the man asked him to stay on and asked for his help. As the Earth-Deity was a kind-hearted and righteous one, he immediately accepted his request.

The next day, the king ordered the man to be sentenced to death for negligence of duty, but the man supplicated to the king:

"Your Majesty! according to your royal order, I really got back the city before sunset after I had fetched the red soil and water-lilies from the lake but I could not enter the city because all the gates were closed."

The king did not believe in his strange words. Therefore, the man continued to explain that the Earth-Deity riding on a flying-horse usually came to the impaled criminal outside of the city every mid-night and how beautiful and splendid it was. The king became interested in this event and said "I would like to go and see this event with my own eyes whether or not it is true." On that night the king went to the place not far from the criminal and was waiting for the Deity.

At the right time, he smelt the fragrant smell and beheld brilliant rays around him. After a little while, a white celestial flying-horse on which a beautiful Deity was riding appeared and he was gazing at the wonderful scene without blinking. As usual the Deity approached the man and said, "Human being, be alive! Be wishful to live! Noble is still being alive!" On seeing and hearing this event, the king was completely surprised. It is unbelievable for a person who believes in only what can be seen with his own eyes.

Annihilism

The world is very wide; it is very strange. The places we have been to, the things we have seen and heard are actually very little. We should not think

highly of what we know and are capable to do. The believer in Anihilism does not believe in Kamma and neither does in this he believe in future life; Furthermore, they do not believe that there can be Noble Ones who practise for true enlightenment, or those who have practised in order to fully realize the existance of lives, worlds, universes with penetrative insight. They blindly cling to Annihilism. Even in this modern age there may be such a modernization.

When the king who held such a belief saw the deity with his own eyes, his belief was shaken and he became adaptable a little bit and curious. As the deity turned to go back after doing his duty, the man reminded him of his story and asked him to be his witness. The deity affirmed, "What he said is true." And so the man was also released from the death sentence. In this way, the husband and wife were in peace and happiness again.

Uncle's Mettā and Cetanā

The king asked the deity not to go back immediately, because he wanted to satisfy his curiosity.

"On dear deity! wait a while, please; let me ask some questions if you please!"

"Yes, of course", replied the deity.

"Why did you come here and urge the criminal to be alive every mid-night?"

Now, you will hear the story of the grocer in Vesāli.

The deity said, "Your majesty! this criminal is my nephew of my preceding existence."

The king remembered the case. The nephew was a thief and his uncle, (the deity, at present), was a person who received stolen property. The two were accused of theft. The deity standing before the king was grocer sentenced to death by the king himself. In reality, the grocer was honest, but as he was associated with his foolish nephew, he was sentenced to death without knowing that the stolen property was hidden in his home.

The deity continued to say, "Your Majesty! in spite of his foolishness, I come here with an uncle's love every mid-night; if I do not warn him, this foolish one will definitely go to hell on account of his stealing; compared with the hellish suffering, he is more comfortable to be alive; therefore I said to him, "Human being, be alive!"

Knowing all, the king felt shame-faced and respected the honest and good-hearted deity. He become more interested in him and continued to ask another question.

"Dear Deity! your horse is very white and splendid; how did you get it?"

"Your Majesty! There was a pool of mud in the foot-path before my home in your Majesty's Vesālī. Passers-by were always having difficulty when passing over it. Whenever I saw them in trouble I felt unhappy. Therefore, I took a skull of an ox from a bush thrown away as rubbish and laid it in the middle of the muddy pool. Due to this merit I got this celestial flying-horse."

"Let me ask again, please. We experienced lustrous rays and fragrant smells before we beheld you. Why?"

Lustrous Rays and Fragrant Smell

"Your Majesty! in my past human existence, I was by nature replete with the five precepts. In particular, I never used abusive language and used only pleasant words. I was always in peace and happiness. I never felt anger, nor ill-will, nor covetousness, whenever I saw wealthy and properous persons. I felt happy and pleased for their good fortune. That is why I possess the lustrous rays and fragrant smell of celestial being."

The Annihilist considered what he had said. He also noticed a strange thing about the body of the deity. Ah! the deity was very very beautiful and splendorous! But, there was no waist-cloth at the lower part of his body! The king dared to ask about this matter and deity replied shamefully.

The result of Bantering in the Circle of Re-birth

The deity answered, "The reason why I have no waist-cloth is that in my past human existence I hid my friends' clothes in fun while they were swimming, leaving their clothes on the river-bank."

Here, you should notice this fact, joking is also a sort of demerit; it is a nasty thing! It should not be considered a trifle. Everything that you do will have results in good time. The deity went on saying, "Your Majesty, for sure one would go to hell if one commits stealing or killing; in comparison for having played a

joke, my punishment is duly one."

The king became a bit shaky. For, he did not hesitate to commit adultery and give death-sentences. He was also prone to bantering. Sometimes he hid even the blind's walking-stick while they were taking a rest on their journey. Furthermore, his view was that bhikkhu-saṃghas are just beggars irrespective of their virtuous morality. When he saw the respectable Mahātheras with their eyes cast down near his palace, he snatched the black bowl from them and broke it into pieces on the ground and tore their robes. How cruel and foolish he was! In his own view, there was no advantage or disadvantage to do such things at all!

**All men are the same, but different only in
breath**

The king was bewildered by the words of the deity and remembered all his past deeds. Nevertheless, as his wrong view was firmly embedded in his mind and he did not want to believe the present occurrences even though he had experienced it with his own eyes and ears. He was still searching for more proof.

"My friend, deity! you said to me, "good deed produces good results and bad deed produces bad results. In order to make me believe, what further proof can you show?"

"Your Majesty! in this world, human being are different from one another; some are rich; some are poor; some are beautiful and handsome; some are ugly;

some are literate; some are illiterate ; some have many attendants; some have no attendant at all. All these differences are the result of their good or bad Kammas in the past. If there were no good nor bad Kammas there would be no difference between them."

On hearing these words, the king thought deeply, but he could not completely believe it. In regards to this matter, the Buddha gave the Cūlakammavibhaṅga Sutta in Mūlapaṇṇās a Pāiḷ in which it is explained how different standards of living occur due to different Kammas. Well, anyway.....

The deity patiently explained Kamma and its result, based on his own experience, to the Licchavī king regarding of the king's disbelief. Whilst the king had seen it with his own eyes, the deity had more experience, having died, and so felt remorseful for his past false deeds.

"Your Majesty! Whether you believe it or not, those who had committed demerits bodily, verbally and mentally are now severely suffering in the four realms of punishment, including hell, animal, petas (ghost) and Asura-demons; those who perform merits bodily, verbally and mentally or those who practised charity, morality, etc., are now enjoying the pleasure of higher realms such as human world, celestial abodes, etc."

How to give fine clothes to the deceased

"Your Majesty! although I was born in this human world I was in poverty due to my poor merits; apart

from good-heartendness and virtuous morality, I could not give charity and carried a poor bundle of merit through my saṃsāric journey; after my death as a human, there was no one to share merit with me, making virtuous offerings; I had no chance to be glad at the merits of others. Therefore, I have no waist-cloth as you see now."

More than being concerned about Kamma, and having hard evidence, the king took pity on the deity.

"What can I do in order to give you a waist-cloth, my friend deity?" asked the king. He was uncertain about his own belief, and thus became more interested in Kamma and its result. Up till now, he could not understand it thoroughly. He was still in bewilderment. He wanted someone who was well versed in the righteous teaching to explain it to him thoroughly.

Just like the saying, "Killing many birds with one stone", all problems seem to be solved easily with only one solution. As the king had asked for more proof of Kamma and its results, the deity said, "Your Majesty! I am very glad that you are willing to help me. I don't think it will be burdensome to you. Out of the bhikkhu-Samghas who are now residing in your Majesty's Vesālī, there is Mahā Thera called Ven. Kappitaka, who is possessed of loving-kindness, great compassion, virtuous morality and high psychic power. He was a wide scope of knowledge. As he lives simply no one knows he is a real Arahnta." "In order to share merit with me, you should offer one or two robes to

this Mahā therea; after you have done this, you should verbally share your merit with me. If you do this I may have waist-clothes."

These words are not strange to the traditional Buddhist. It is the duty of sons and daughters to give charity in order to share merit with their parents and be good worthy heirs. By sharing of merit with their parents and relatives, if they are reborn in Peta-realm and if the offering of clothes is donated to the virtuous bhikku-saṅgha, they may get fine clothes as a result. These facts are emphatically stated in Itodinnakathā of Kathavatthu Pāli, Jānussoṇi sutta of Aṅguttara Pāli and pubbapetaḍisapañhā of Milindapañhā Pāli.

Just like a Marvellous Plot in a film

It is difficult for non-Buddhists to understand how Kamma produces its result. As for the king who did not believe in Kamma and its result, it was very strange. He wanted to know by experience, and he wanted to help the deity. So he took eight sets of the robes and went to the Mahā Thera and donated them, revealing him all the events he had met with.

After his donation, he verbally shared his merit to the deity as he had been asked. At the moment of sharing merit, the deity uttered sādhu, sādhu, sādhu- 'well-done!' 'well-done!' 'well-done!' and appeared before in the presence of Mahā Thera and the king.

The deity was lustrous and adorned with beautifully made celestial costumes. A divine fragrance filled the

air. The beautifully harnessed white flying-horse was an insatiable sight to behold. He was surrounded by lustrous celestial attendants. How marvellous and splendiferous it was!

The king looked at everything in open mouthed bewilderment and uttered, "How wonderous and glorious the sharing of merit is! If film had been invented in those days the scence would be a marvellously beautiful show!

Here I would like to explain about Earth Deity-Bhumaṭṭhadevatā. Before this part of the story the deity was not a real celestial being-devatā; he was partly a peta, the departed ghost, and partly a celestial being, devatā: Due to his good deeds, he possessed a flying-horse and other virtues. Only at that moment, did he become a real celestial being, included in the six celestial worlds and endowed with a lustrous, retinue. That is the reason why this story is included in the Petavatthus, the story of petas-departed ghosts.

The king takes Refuge in the Presence of Mahā Thara

The story does not end yet. The king forsook his wrong view as the deity had urged him to, saying that unless he gave it up, he would not be able to meet him again. The king swore that he was remorseful of his past deeds and would perform merits in future. Then, sitting in a squatting posture, he put his palms to his forehead and uttered this following solemn vow

in the presence of Mahā Thera:-

Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

(I take refuge in the Buddha)

Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

(I take refuge in the Dhamma)

Samghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

(I take refuge in the Saṅgha Order)

He also took the five precepts. Then the deity asked the king for one thing.

Release the criminal

"Your Majesty, we have met each other due to this impaled criminal; I urge you to release him inspite of his foolishness and stupidity." And so the king made a promise to release the criminal. Then the criminal had been impaled outside the city for about twenty days without being given any food or drink. A stream of blood had flowed over his body which dried up and he was deserted outside of the city to die gradually, but he had not. The king himself got near the criminal and released him. Then, he supported him tenderly and told the royal physicians to cure him.

The extent of Buddha's Teaching and the power of kamma

The king become friendly with the Mahā Thera and asked him more questions, about the Buddha's Teachings, which he did not understand. The Mahā Thera firstly explained about the belief in Kamma and

its result which is the primary concern of the Buddhism. Then, he continued to explain about charity, morality, going to celestial abodes, the loathsomeness of sensual abodes and the way to Nibbānic peace according to the Buddha's Teaching to the full satisfaction of the king.

One day, the king supplicated to Mahā Thera, "Your Venerable Sir! In spite of committing demerits which can send one to the realm of hell, is there any way to erase that bad Kamma?" That is a worthy question. But it cannot be answered fully in a short time. The Mahā Thera taught him four categories of Kamma from the Abbidhammā:-

- (1) **Diṭṭhadhammavedaniya Kamma**
(Immediately effective Kamma which is experienced in this life)
- (2) **Upapajjavedaniya Kamma**
(Subsequently effective Kamma which is experienced in the subsequent life)
- (3) **Aparāpariyavedaniya Kamma**
(Indefinitely effective Kamma which is experienced at any time from the third life until one attains Nibbāna)
- (4) **Ahosi Kamma**
(Ineffective Kamma which does not operate in any probable life due to its lack of circumstances)

Man can create what the creator cannot

There is a Myanmar Saying: "Much water extinguishes little fire and much fire overthrows little water." In daily life, every one does many good and bad actions, bodily, verbally and mentally. Equally, everyone carries with them the power of their karmas from previous lives. If one endeavours to perform merits from the moment of his true realization, the power of bad Karmas will become weak, and some may be completely fulfilled.

It is very important to avoid committing evil deeds and to establish and strengthen virtuous deeds. It is an important point to note that there are some Karmas in Buddhism which can totally overwhelm and eradicate the power of bad Karmas done in the past existences. No creator god can reduce or eradicate the force of bad Karmas one has accumulated; it is up to each of us to do so ourselves.

What are these Karmas? In brief, they are noble *Mettā Bhāvanā* and virtuous *Ānāpāna Bhāvanā* which are the rootcauses of *Appanā-Jhānic*-concentration. They are the most powerful and effective Karmas in the mundane world. There are also *Magga Ñāṇas* arising out of the practices of *Vipassanā Bhāvanā*, which can entirely eradicate defilements and lead to the path of *Nibbānic* peace. These Karmas, whether they are mundane or supramundane, would be helpful walking-sticks through your *saṃsāric* journey.

While the *Mahā Thera* was still preaching about the

power of kammās and the ways leading to the Nibbāna, the king attained the first-stage of Ariyahood-Sotāpanna. Here it should be emphasized that anyone who is currently a non-Buddhist can attain such a blissful noble peace.

How beneficial the words of the deity were to a non-Buddhist!

**Before the attainment of Nibbāna
can there be peace?**

I will tell you of happier event than this! The nephew was a foolish thief. Due to his foolishness, his uncle suffered much and was sentenced to death. But the uncle sympathised with him in his foolishness and looked after him kindly and patiently. Now, he was free from his danger. As he was a person who had reached his last existence in the saṃsāric circle (Pacchimabhavika), he could not die, and his uncle had to help him to gain the final goal. You will see how noble and fruitful an existence of human being is! Even a dying person who has suffered a lot can reach his goal! Let's see how true it is!

The criminal was carefully cured by royal physicians and all the wounds on his body soon healed. He considered his future.

"How foolish I am! How great my uncle's help is! By nature of a worlding, I did whatever I liked. I have done a deed which can send me to hell and I myself made my benefactor suffer! Human-mind and human-

life is uncertain! The existence of a human being is not really long! Prolonged is saṃsāric journey! In order to perform good deeds in the remaining part of my life, I'd better ordain as a bhikkhu!"

With this resolution, he went forth at once to a monastery in Vesālī. Let's shorten the story. As a virtuous bhikkhu who was ordained with firm belief (Saddhā), he made an arduous endeavour in contemplation of samatha and vipassanā meditations and completely eradicated all defilements which had clung to him through the saṃsāric circle. Finally he attained Arahantship. How noble it is! We should notice here that immoral deeds or bad Kammās and their results can disrupt us right up to the gate of Nibbāna. In fact, they are very fearful and remorseful!

In the whole story the main character is the Earth-Deity. It is a good example of how a person who is virtuous and good-natured can make himself and his environment happy and peaceful. A good tree can make the whole forest smell fragrant. A good tree can be a peaceful resting place for thousands of birds. Take a lesson from this story of how effective Kamma is, and try to make yourself and your environment happy and peaceful. Let's make a systematic attempt for the benefit of all, including ourselves.

The circle of life

I will tell you about the circle of life. The circle of life literally means incessant lives in circle. Every

sentient being is restlessly roaming the saṃsāric journey, being born and reborn in a long series of lives according to their Kammas which they themselves have created.

An Iguana, the Incarnation of Kappiya U Kyaung

"Incarnation here means the persons who can tell the events of the past lives. Here I would like to tell you of Kappiya U Kyaung's three lives.

I remember well that when I was a monastery-student, he, as a kappiya *, lived in sayadaw U Revata's monastery of Takai-thar village. It was an ancient village situated about one mile south of my native village in Depeyin Township, Shwebo district. Sayadaw U Revata was my great grandfather and I used to go there to pay my respects to him occasionally.

When U Kyaung had reached old-age, his wife passed away and he was left childless. As he did not want to lead a lonely life, he asked the Sayadaw for permission to live in the monastery and attend the Saydaw as a kappiya.

This is the great peculiarity of his life! After his death, he, in his next existence, was reincarnated as an iguana in a nearby forest called Kyaung-Oh-Gyi.

One day, the iguana, was killed by a cruel young man, Pho Htu, of Takai-thar village and was re-born

* *Kappiya* : a monastic term: male devotee who lives in a monastery and attends to the monk according to the Vinaya Disciplinary Rules.

as a boy in that village. His name was Maung Pwint. Mg Pwint is now over forty years old and leads a happy-marriage-life with sons and daughters.

Maung Pwint recalled and narrated the event of the past two lives, how he behaved in life of U Kyaung and how he climbed up and down the trees in the life of an iguana; ---- and how he was caught and killed by Pho Htu, etc.

Maung Taw Kyi, The Reincarnation of an Ox

I have met a young man who transferred from the life of an ox. It happened in the Inbin village, about three miles far from my native village, Ngwe-twin-gone. There had been a big keen plough-ox in the house of my cousin, U Bo Yi of that village. It was named, "Nyo-Gyi*" because its skin was brown.

Nyo-Gyi, being very keen and intelligent, was liked by everyone. After World War II, Nyo-Gyi died and everyone was sad.

However, Nyo-Gyi having disappeared from the life of an ox and reappeared as a human being in Taung-gone village, not far from Inbin village. That was a great rare occurrence to the village-people.

In Taung-gone village, Nyo-Gyi was reborn as a boy. He was named Maung Taw Kyi. His parents were U Ywe and Daw Tin Thein.

It was astonishing to the people who saw Maung Taw Kyi behave strangely. In his child-hood, his

**Nyo Gyi means big brown*

parents followed his wishes, knowing that he was indulging in the behaviour of an ox and ruminating over his past life. According to his desire, one hand was tied to foot of a couch and he used to stand on all fours like an ox. A small cup with fresh tender grass was put before him. He was satisfied with its smell and he did not eat it. When he saw a herd of cattle passing before his house he would make a lowing sound and growl. When he became old enough to speak well, he used to recall his past experiences as an ox. Everyone was amazed at his strange words. It was more marvellous that he could tell, in detail, his past experiences when the ox, Nyogyi, was rescued from a trench of a bomb-shelter by a group of people whose names could be remembered exactly. Even U Bo Yi, the owner of Nyogyi could not remember as precisely as he could. It is amazing that he was very keen and intelligent even in the life of an ox. Some are accustomed to speak abusive language to cattle because they consider them ignorant. Now it is likely to be said that this ox was more intelligent than an ordinary person.

He used to say to the elder daughter of U Bo Yi, Daw Tin Shei, who had been a cowherd in his past life as an ox, "I don't forget your whipping my back." "Since you were an ox, I had to whip you". replied Daw Tin Shei in a comforting tone.

A Ruminant Bhikku

In the Vinya Pāli it is written that in the life-time of Buddha there was a man who had been reborn from the life of an ox. He was accustomed to the behavioural tendencies of the ox and could not abolish them even in a life of a bhikkhu. After he had been fully ordained as a bhikkhu, he could not abolish that tendency and used to chew cud at night. When the bhikkhus saw him doing so, they reported the matter to the Buddha. He was allowed to do this only because the Buddha knew that he was reborn from the life of an ox. Thus, the bhikkhu did not break the Vinaya Disciplinary Rules. In these rules monks are not allowed to eat after midday.

A Bird, the reincarnation of Kappiya Twan-hmong

I had kappiya, an old Chin national, Twan-hmong by name. He had lived with me in my monastery in the Chin hills for many years. While I was away on a journey, he passed away at the age of eighty five.

Just before I left, I myself had accompanied him to his native village as there was no one to help him in my monastery. While saying farewell to him, he sobbed and paid respects to me. He was left behind speechless, gazing at me with eyes full of tears.

While I was away, he died. Two years later, it became obvious that he was reborn as a small bird and stayed in a tree near my monastery.

The little bird came to me daily and showed affection behaviour towards me. Noticing it's strange habits, I stopped and asked, "Are you Twam-hmong?" It replied making a sweet sound, "Kyi-kyaw, Kyi-kyaw, Kri-kri", and seemed to affirm my question. After that, I used to call out, "come here, please, Twam-hmong!" and whenever I called its name out, the bird appeared from somewhere and came to me. Whenever I went to the stream to take a bath, the little bird waited for me in advance. I was warmly welcomed whenever I met it. Sitting on a low branch near me, the little bird used to speak to me bird's language.

I was filled with pity for the little bird, seeing it roaming about the dense forest as in the life of the little bird. And I jotted down all its strange behaviour in my diary every time I met it.

Transformed into a life of a centipede and a snake

Twam-hmong greatly loved me as we had lived together for many years. No other person had treated him kindly, and I myself had taken more tender care and looked after him better than his kinsmen. He said to others, "I have known no one but this abbot who treats me kindly; only when I became close to him, did I really know everything about him inside and out."

It is common to all that they love those who look after them when old. There was no one to attend and look after Tawn-hmong when he was over eighty years

old; he had no children although he had married. It is said that he had a son but the child died in his youth. He had married another woman but they divorced. He had lived alone in Kon-yan village on Chin hills since he was fifty.

I was invited by a Gurakha group of Lay-devotees to live in a monastery in the forest which they had built. Twan-hmong asked me for a permission to built a hut in the monastery-compound and I gave him permission to stay there. Then he became my kappiya.

From then on, he felt very affectionate to me. After his death, he was reborn as a little bird many times. At one time, he came to me in the life of a centipede. One night, I rose up from my reading table and I saw a centipede moving to and fro before me. I thought to myself, "It is very unusual to see a centipede in my monastery." and, I said to it, "Hey! I think you are Twan-hmong, are you now a centipede? How miserable your life is! You might be Twan-hmong; do you want to see me? Now let's go; follow me." So saying I went to the main-door and it followed straight behind me. When out of doors, I said, "Don't come here next time, please! May you go to the good realms!" Later, he did not come to me in a life of centipede.

A family of snake

Nevertheless, he came to me again in the life of a snake.

I used to put my blanket to air in the winter morning

sun. There was a board of planks before my monastery to dry blanket in the sun. One day, when I went there to get my blanket I saw a little yellowish-green snake sleeping soundly on it. I said "Very unusual it is. Really, it may be Twam-hmong!" Then, I continued, "Twam-hmong! You are now to be a snake; please go away! get off!" And it slid down to the ground. It did not seem to go to any distance. I noticed it looking at me affectionately from under the board.

Though it was in another existence, it's affection towards me was still strong. Next times, it changed to another form as a little snake with multicoloured skin of yellow, red and brown. Whenever it changed into another form as a snake it came and greeted me. It used to come and wait for me at the main gate of the monastery compound. Sometimes it seemed to want to go into the monastery and I had to prohibit it with my walking-stick, and it went away easily, I felt pity for its miserable life but I was unable to save him. I could do nothing but watch!

Final life of a snake

Once, a group of three little snakes under the water-pot-stand near the main door of the monastery were waiting for me strangely. I said to them, "Hey, Twam-hmong! Are you coming to me? You are snake; you should not love me; go away please." They were hesitant and I had to push them out with a little stick. Of them, the two younger ones may have been children

and the remaining one a mother. At night, the bigger one was waiting for me at the main-door and I thought it may be the mother, and Twan-hmong, the mother snake, seemed to have come again in order to see me closely. It was unusual because the infant snakes never leave their mother. Therefore, they had come to me in a group in the day time. From that time onwards, they never came to meet me again.

Whirl pool of Saṃsāra

As a result of self-experience, I realized that they are drifting in the whirl pool of Saṃsāra, as I myself am. In the same way, for others to fully understand and clearly grasp the nature of Saṃsāra, a first hand experience will be an important basic. Once you, fully comprehend its nature, repeated consideration & contemplation should be developed. There will come a day when you will understand it with a special insight.

The more you realize it fully, the more you get wearied of the whirl-pool of Saṃsāra in which you yourself re-drifting. When you are often wearied of the Saṃsāric suffering, you come to understand that one day you will be free from it.

The Buddha expounded in the Dhammapada Pāli, "**Atha nibbindati dukkhe esa maggo visuddhiyā,**" meaning, "When having fully realized that conditioned things are transient, one becomes weary of the Saṃsāric suffering; this is the root-cause of weakening and

abolishing defilements or the noble practice leading to the attainment of Nibbānic Peace."

First of all, you have to bear in mind that every conditioned thing whatever arises and passes away; you have to practice this contemplation; if you realize fully by your repeated contemplation, you will become weary of this aggregate of mind and matter which constitutes one's body; you will never long for another one.

In the same way, you will become tired of birth and rebirth in the insessant circle of Saṃsāra. When you are really tired of this Saṃsāric suffering, you will be terrified to remain drifting in the current of Saṃsarā. You will realize what suffering is in one existence and come to despise it. At that time you will be on the right path to Nibbāna.

**Peace and happiness arise only when the nature
of existence is realized**

Everyone in this world enjoys five types of sensual pleasures, assuming them to be the basis of happiness. Every day they try to enjoy more sensual pleasures and therefore increase their attachment to them. But they cannot be satisfied with these sensual pleasures even in this very life, and so they long for a heavenly paradise where they can fully enjoy them without ever experiencing old-age, disease and death.

For those people, the noble teaching of the Buddha seems like a depressing philosophy based on a

pessimistic point of view, and reject it on these grounds.

In reality, the aggregates of mind and matter which make this body are wearisome bundle of suffering; the five sense organs are themselves transient and therefore also suffering. Although we assume the enjoyment of sensual pleasure to be good and lead to happiness, they are in truth wearisome, boring and detestable. That is the meaning of "**Nibbindati dukkhe.**"

However saying, it is one thing; knowing it by experience is another.

As I said earlier, the more the noble ones see the past and future lives of beings, or know how they are in troubles and miseries, the more compassionate they are. Actually, this is called the Buddha's great compassion; the more they realized, the more they took pity on them. Nevertheless, those who know nothing about it, feel happy and cheerful and still enjoy these sensual pleasures.

This teaching was promulgated by the Buddha Himself who knew different kinds of sentient beings, different kinds of lives, different kinds of universes, ect. He knows everything with His powerful penetrative insight. After viewing over them thoroughly, just like scrutinizing something in his hand, He declares the truth to the world. It is not a one sided view, nor dogmatic. Whoever wants to practise this way may obtain the benefits they deserve. Practical ways and

means are clearly explained in His teaching.

Therefore, the Theravāda Buddhism boldly invites all to come and see its essence, and declares, "**Ehipassiko**", in order to penetrate the whole world, including the world of beings, the world of formations, the world of universes so that they can see as they really are, showing everyone the way towards the realm of genuine peace and happiness.

Predominance of Mind

Wondering about in the noble existences of the circles,

Is due to the predominance of mind;

Being tormented in the four states of Hell,

Is due to the predominance of mind;

Being prosperous, potorious, noble, ignoble,

Is due to the predominance of mind;

Arriving at the island of safety, as a local,

Is due to the predominance of mind.

**A DISCOURSE ON THE BENEFIT OF
METTĀ, LOVING-KINDNESS**

**The Phenomenon urgently needed
for Human Kind**

In this so-called modernized age what is urgently needed? It is Mettā, Loving-Kindness that is urgently needed in all over the world.

Mettā and Compassion, Karuṇā

Mettā and Karuṇā are always related to each other. To say the truth, they are like brothers. For the one who is replete with Loving-Kindness also possesses compassion. And Compassionate noble ones are replete with Loving-Kindness, too. They are always joined as a pair, very profound and subtle to be known.

There may arise the question, "Of these two, which should be developed, first?" The answer is that you can

start wherever you like.

If you ask, "Which is better?", the answer will be, "These two are of the same quality."

For example, if you start from the prayer, "May all beings be happy and peaceful!" the compassion has already included in your desire.

Again, if you start by praying, "May all beings be free from dangers- *Sabbe sattā dukkhā muccantu*", the Mettā, Loving-Kindness is already included too. That is why I said they are like brothers.

You should start by developing whichever has the most appeal.

The great Compassionate Buddha

The Buddha is said to be "The great Compassionate One", but not to be "the Buddha of great Loving-Kindness." People have often asked why is this so.

All Buddhas are the great Compassionate Ones. Why? They are filled with great compassion for beings, seeing them repeatedly tormented by sufferings such as old-age, disease, and death; they all are striving to save them from these dangers, and looking after them with all their might both day and night.

That being so, why aren't they called "the Possessors of great Loving-Kindness?" By being called compassionate, their strong willingness to make all beings free from dangers is emphasised as they realize the sufferings and miseries of all beings drifting in the whirl-pool of Saṃsāra. Therefore, they are not called

the Possessors of great loving-kindness, though it cannot be said that they have less loving-kindness.

And since their Compassion far exceeds that of ordinary persons, they are called the great Compassionate Ones.

In this world, a person, however prosperous and wealthy, may commit immoral deeds with his misbelief. There are immoral deeds from the past existence. You should not forget them; if these deeds in the past existence have a chance to generate at one time, you may descend to the four planes of punishment until you reach the stage of being Ariya-individual. You cannot be protected against the menace of this punishment. All the Buddhas take pity on all beings for these reasons; the greater their knowledge of these menaces imposed on beings, the more compassionate they are!

Loving Kindness, Mettā

There are different attitudes of worldlings (puthujjanas) towards love; you love your children with parental love; you love your siblings with brotherly and sisterly love; This kind of love is based on pure attachment.

You love your parents with pure attachment, but in this case, the love based on gratitude and dependence is the predominant factor.

The love of husband and wife, however, is completely different from the aforesaid attitude towards love among children, parents, brothers and sisters. The

love of husband and wife for each other is predominantly lascivious. It is a kind of love based on craving. So, such a kind cannot be said, 'Pure Love', but it may be said, "the love of pure attachment." However, its natural essence being lust, it is similar to a wreath of flowers covering an unpleasent corpse. In fact, love based on attachment is just superficial as in this case.

Nevertheless every marriage is not based on impure love; some husbands and wives love one another partly in lust and partly in pure love, Loving-Kindness. From the start of their married life upto their death, the majority of married couple in Myanmar, love each other in the aforesaid manner. Only about 2% of the population of Myanmar, said to love with a balance of lust and pure love.

It is commonly said that according to historical records, the ancient Myanmar couples enjoyed such a kind of love; and that today such love is prevalent. However it is only when their married life ripens, especially after the age of about fifties, those couples start to live with a partly pure love.

It may also be seen abroad. It is usual that when couples grow old pure love is stronger than the lust.

Marriage which is an equal combination of the pure love or Loving-Kindness and craving or lust, exists for life long. The Myanmar song, "Let us live together for a life-time's affair" refers to such couples.

Those couples who live in pure love and sensual

lust on a balance can lead a happy married-life and live together for long.

If there is no equilibrium, they will not be happy in their lives. If they are in extreme pure love or sensual lust, their married life will be difficult. If sensual lust exceeds pure love, married life will be miserable and finally they will have to divorce. It is common to all married couples in this world to accuse each other of indulging in their lustful desire.

Imagine, Married life, as a pair of scales and pay attention to see which one is overweight and which one is underweight, and make an attempt to equalize them. There won't be just one existence in the Saṃsāric journey; there will also be further existances to live as part of a couple. If the balance cannot be equalize, there will be endless disputes between you and your life-partner all through the circle of births and rebirths. Amend your ways of living while you are endowed with understanding.

The nature of Mettā, Loving Kindness

True Mettā exists in the minds of the noble. Because Mettā produces happiness and peace, these noble ones are happy and peaceful in outward appearance. Due to the real Mettā, flowing from the inner part of their minds those who meet them also become happy and peaceful, cool and calm.

It is natural that those who are able to see the way in which the possessors of Mettā live become

automatically happy and peaceful. Just like the Myanma Saying, "the Body knows nothing, but the mind knows all". Mettā can be experienced by purely mental contact and this contact enables one to realize the existence of Mettā.

Most people who come to meet me generally ask; "We would like to receive Your Venerable's Mettā; Kindly disseminate your Mettā to us." They have a real desire to receive Mettā.

People who cannot be the possessors of Mettā themselves, nevertheless, like to receive Mettā from others, especially from the virtuous noble ones. It is obvious that they want to live in peace and happiness.

Dissemination of Mettā

The dissemination of Mettā, as it is a mental action, can be done by directing your thought to a person whom you want to be happy and peaceful. Whether they be near or far since it can be done like this great noble ones of powerful Mettā are always in the habit of disseminating Mettā.

I will show an example of how to disseminate Mettā to a far distance. A lay-devotee who lived in Myeik of Tanintharyi Division sent a letter asking me for dissemination of Mettā. At that time I was living in my monastery in the Chin Hills.

In his letter, he wrote: "My eldest son, an old bachelor of about thirty, does not speak, nor do any work; after having meal he lies down and sleeps. All

his younger brothers have married.

If you think he is mentally ill, please, give us, a prescription in order to cure him."

He asked especially for me to disseminate Mettā towards his son. Thus, I immediately concentrated and send Mettā, Loving-Kindness, to his son. It was not usual for me to do this, but out of pity I sent Mettā to whom I had not seen. I myself firmly believe that the one (whose Mettā pāramī has already matured properly or the one who has perfectly cultivated Mettā can send it effectively to any goal.

Let me tell you of its strange effectiveness in brief. The letter was sent to me during rainy season in 1349, Myanmar Era (about July, 1987). The sender of Mettā was on the Assam border of Chin Hills, 7000 ft. above Sea-Level and the receiver of Mettā was in Myeik of Tanintharyi Division. The sender had never seen the receiver before, but it may be assumed that the Mettā reached its destination.

I left for Myeik passing along through Mon and Kayin states. The aeroplane I boarded landed at the Myeik Aerodrome in the afternoon of 7th Waxing day of Tapotwe, 1349 Myanmar Era (Monday, 25th January, 1988). No sooner had I put my foot on the soil of Myeik than the receiver of Mettā, who had been living without speaking, amazingly began to speak. That he spoke was surprising enough, but what he said was wonderful: "I would like to be ordained as a monk."

At that time his father, U Hoke Sein, was away from his home on business; but his mother heard his words for herself and was greatly overjoyed to hear that which she did not expect.

I think it is similar to the case of the charioteer Sunanda who was overjoyed at the first words of Temi prince, the Buddha-to-be, who had not spoken from birth. The mother replied cheerfully, "Well, my son! You may do as you like; now I will go and get a set of robes to be ready when your father comes back home", and immediately went off to buy them.

Since then on, it was found that he spoke well. When his father got back home, he was also greatly overjoyed and arranged for the Ordination Ceremony as soon as possible. And then they came to invite me to it.

On Sunday, 13th waxing day of Tapotwe, 1349 M.E (31.1.88), the Ordination Ceremony was grandly held in the Ordination Hall of Payar-KoeSuKyaung-monastery in Myeik and six sons and grandsons of U Hoke Sein were ordained as monks together among 109 members of Saṃgha order. There were altogether thirteen newly ordained *dullabha*# monks, including U Hoke Sein's nephews. Arlms-food, rice and vegetable curries, were offered to the bhikkhu-saṃgha in the noble Ordination Hall.

It was very insatiable to see the breath-taking

Dullabha: a bhikkhu who is temporarily ordained.

scence that Lay-devotees standing in a queue were offering dried rations to over one hundred member of bhikkhu-saṅgha in procession.

When I went back to Yangon, U Hoke Sein's son, who had once been a non-speaker, was remained in the life of a bhikkhu. Their happiness was boundless when he said, "As long as I am happy to do so I will stay in the Saṅgha Order"

U Hoke Sein also said to me, "I feel really overjoyed to let him stay in the Saṅgha Order as he himself wishes to; no one could make him do it if he did not wish to do so."

I replied, "I have cultivated and disseminated my Mettā towards your son as requested in your letter; now you have succeeded; he got near me and we exchanged words, and he is now a fully ordained *dullabha* monk; that is the benefit of Mettā, isn't it?"

He agreed, "Yes, of course, your Venerable Sir! We completely believe in your dissemination of Mettā; we can do nothing without you; and solely rely on you, Sir."

This joy may have resulted from the coincidence of their pāramīs (perfections done in their past lives) and my Mettā. Here I wanted to show you an example of the dissemination of Mettā over a great distance. Whoever cultivates the practice of Mettā will achieve good result. You should make a habit to practise it while walking, standing, sitting or whatever you are doing.

Searching for Peace and Happiness

Nothing is better than the Mettā in this human world. Living in practice of the cultivation of Mettā is how to live in peace and happiness.

Living in practice of the cultivation of Mettā for the good benefit of others, you feel happy and peaceful before they have received its gift.

Just as you enjoy peace and happiness, sending Mettā to others will enable others to experience the same contentment without reducing yours.

The key-point is that when you disseminate Mettā, your mind should be directed towards the inner part of the receiver and not outer part, the form of his body.

I will explain how to live in peace and happiness. First of all, be clear in thought and your mind will become stable and purified. Then, you will be happy and peaceful. Don't be distressed in your mind. If you are accustomed to living in such a way, you will no longer take interest in your surroundings. Just as you don't allow rubbish to be thrown in your tidy garden, so also you will not be distressed in your mind if you do not react fruitfully in spite of having been told irritating words. Take care to live with a lucid mind!

As you have been able to ignore the happenings of your surrounding, your mind will wipe them out of the sense. Therefore, you may do the cultivation of Mettā regularly. If you are absorbed in disseminating Mettā, you must understand yourself that you are now standing on the foundation of how to live in peace and

happiness. You need to establish your foundation firmly. You will see how easy it is to practice it. You must know that the water cannot enter into the bottle which is filled with oil.

Bodily Happiness and Mental Happiness

People all over the world are now searching for the way to live in peace. But they are hunting for bodily happiness and trying to invent new materials so that they can live in comfort and luxury. They are producing different kinds of goods by means of scientific techniques in order to make life comfortable and pleasant. Probably, they think that if they have bodily happiness, they will get everything they want. As expected, they get what they want and enjoy it to their full satisfaction. But they have pleasure for a certain period of time only. Later, their enjoyment and pleasure are realized as illusory and these things became tasteless.

Mental Happiness Surpasses all sorts of happiness

Of the two kinds, Mental Happiness is a real happiness. If you are upset, although you are in good health which is a sort of bodily happiness, you will not be happy. You may be wealthy and prosperous but it cannot be definitely said that you will actually be happy. If you are faced with unhappy events, although you are living in comfort and luxury, you will not be happy.

If you have mental peace and happiness, although you are poor you will be satisfied with what you have and feel happy and peaceful. If you have no worries though living in poverty and scarcity, you will be more peaceful and happier than a rich and prosperous person, who is faced with unpleasant things and feels disappointed.

Real peace and happiness, therefore, depends only on your own mind. It is certain that if you have mental peace and happiness, you will be satisfied. Indeed Mental Happiness is the greatest of all sorts of happiness.

How to live in Peace and Happiness

What should you do if you would like to live in peace and happiness? You have to live with Mettā; you have to disseminate your Mettā all over the world to all sentient beings. That is the foundation. Let me tell you the easiest way to disseminate and cultivate your Mettā.

The easiest way

- Those all human beings, celestial beings, sentient beings who live in countless universes;
- May all be free from danger, anxiety, misery!
- May all be happy and peaceful!
- May all be satisfied with good results they are longing for!

This is the summary of how to disseminate and cultivate Mettā. You must recite this summarized verse.

To begin with, it may be like the recitation of a lesson, but will come to know its meaning in course of time and take interest in it.

Now, you have committed it to your memory; you have realized its meanings; you have been absorbed in it. If so, you may recite it in your mind only, disseminating and cultivating the element of Mettā.

You will become more absorbed in it and actually, you will be filled with Loving-Kindness and sympathy for all beings. Now, you have to understand that you have started to become a possessor of loving-kindness or a possessor of compassion.

The dissemination of Mettā means sending or cultivating Mettā to all beings in this world with good intention-cetanā overcovering and spreading it over and making it pervade into the inner parts of their mind.

Inborn Nature or Normal Consciousness

Men are different from one another and so is their inborn nature or normal consciousness, as a result of their different past lives.

Let me classify my normal consciousness. I am easily moved to compassion. I think it may be the reason that I have fulfilled perfections of Mettā during my incessant past existences. I can disseminate Mettā and Karuṇā to every sentient being, human being or animal, and the power of dissemination is also very strong, owing to the maturity of cultivation arisen out of good intention-cetanā.

Any Lay-men or bhikkhus, will not be forceful in dissemination of Mettā until they practise it repeatedly. Therefore, cultivate and develop it repeatedly. When it becomes a habitual action, it will become forceful day by day. It is very important to practise it regularly.

Explanations of Countless Universes

In Buddhism there are complete statements about the worlds or abodes where all sentient beings dwell.

A Universe is composed of the four great islands encompassing the *Myinmo* mountain, Mahā Meru, the centre of a Cakkavala system, the existence of world. The earth is naturally surrounded by the Rocky mountain ranges of the universe. In the centre of the earth is the mountain called Mahā Meru, (Myinmo, in Myanmar) which, from its base to its summit, is 168000 yojanas high, 84000 above water level and 84000 under its surface. On the top is the deva-loka (celestial world) called Tāvātimsa and the Sakka, Universal Monarch, resides in his grand mansion there, ruling over all the celestial beings.

Around the Mahā Meru, there are seven mountain ranges, each of which is smaller than the others. Of them, the highest mountain range is called Yugandhara and on its top, four catumahārāja celestial beings are dwelling in their respective grand mansions at the four cardinal directions.

In the remaining six mountain ranges there live respectively Dragon-snakes (Naga) Galon-birds (Garula)

Ogres (Gumbhanda) Monsters (Yakkhasa), unhappy spirits (Asura) etc. These mountains are located encircling the Mahā Meru in ascending order.

The Four Great Island

I have said there are four great islands: the eastern island, western island, northern island and southern island. These islands encircle the Mahā Meru and human beings live on each island.

The great island on which we are now living, situated to the south of Mahā Meru and is called, "Jambudīpa-the southern great island."

The rocky wall of the universe stands firmly just like joining metals by means of metallic cement. The height of the wall is 42000 cakkavāla yojanās (ancient Buddhist commentarial measurement). The whole enclosure of the universe is full of water within; the great lands emerge from the surface of the water and so they are called the great islands.

So, you can imagine what is a *Cakkavāla* or a Universe of the four great islands in which Mt. Mahā Meru situates. An existence of Cakkavāla cannot be observed from an air liner; only those hermits and bhikkhus who possess Jhānic and psychic power can see it, flying in space by means of their own marvellous ability. In ancient times, there were such noble ones who could fly through space by means of their own jhānic, or psychic power.

Those cakkavālas exist in groups and there are ten

thousand cakkavālas in each group. There are so many groups of Cakkavālas in space that they cannot be calculated. So, while disseminating Mettā, it is recited, "all beings who live in countless Cakkavālas or universes."

If you want to see with your own eyes how the Cakkavālas exist as stated in detail in Buddhist Texts, you should make an attempt to possess Jhānic, or psychic power. When you gain this ability, you may fly through space and observe them for yourself. Then, you will definitely believe it.

All human beings, sentient beings

Most Buddhists know that there are thirty-one abodes, where all beings dwell, as stated in Buddhist Texts. All these abodes in Cakkavālas are called the world of locality (Okāsa Loka), and those who live in Okāsa Loka are called the world of beings (Satta Loka).

The Human world, six abodes of celestial beings and twenty abodes of Brahmas, all these abodes exist, hierarchically in space. Imagine the beings in all abodes and direct your mind towards them, sending Mettā to them all. To be concise and easy, the word, "human beings and celestial beings", including *dava* and *brahma*, is used.

There are four kinds of beings inferior to men and celestial ones; they are degraded ones, being tormented in hell due to their immoral deeds such as killing sentient beings; those *petas*, unhappy ghosts being

oppressed due to their demertorious deeds ; those asura-demons and animal living on land or in water. They are grouped as sentient beings for the convenience of the dissemination of Mettā and thus all small animals, insects and even germs, may be taken as the objects of the dissemination of Mettā.

So, in order to make the recitation easy and convenient "all human beings, celestial beings and sentient beings" is thus grouped as "one".

Four Kinds of Mettā

- In Pāli : (1) Averā - May all be free from danger ;
(2) Abyāpajjā - May all be free from anxiety;
(3) Anīghā - May all be free from misery;
(4) Sukhiattānaṃ parihārantu - May all be happy and peaceful.

It may be summerized as such :-

May all be free from danger, anxiety, misery and be happy and peaceful!

Let us recite together in union ;

"Those all human beings, celestial beings, sentient beings ; May all be free from danger, anxiety, misery and be happy peaceful!"

Everyone wants their wishes to be satisfied. So, we have to add a wishing : If we say, May all be satisfied with what they want", it may be a disadvantage to them. For, some people occasionally long for things which would be disadvantageous for them to have. Therefore, adding a modified word, "good", we should have a wishing:-

"May all gain the good results they are longing for to their satisfaction."

The easiest way of Mettā reciting

May all human beings, celestial beings, sentient beings be free from danger, anxiety, misery! May all be happy and peaceful! May all gain the good results they are longing for to their satisfaction!

Repeat the Mettā recitation daily. Sooner or later, you will become interested in it and feel deeply compassionate and filled with Loving-Kindness for all sentient beings. You are going to be a possessor of Loving-Kindness, now.

He who always cultivates Mettā for the benefit of others, far or near, will definitely be adored and well respected. If he is a real possessor of Mettā, he will receive the hearty cetanā and deep devotion of his environment, though saying, "do not love me, please."

The four Sublime States

The Pāli word, "Brahmavihāra" means Sublime States or Cardinal Virtues. It is a way of living in peace of mind like the brahmas who dwell in the higher celestial abodes. It is also the way of living followed by a noble one who leads a secluded life in forest. I have been living alone in the way of brahmavihāra for the last fifty years in remote border regions but I have never encountered any difficulties or dangers.

The wild animals in the forest such as tigers, bears, snakes and leopards have never endangered me.

Furthermore, I have never even seen these wild beasts. They may see me somewhere but through my powerful dissemination of *Mettā*, they stay away from me. Knowing this, I am not afraid of tigers and there is no reason to be afraid of wild beasts.

It may be said that the wild beasts are more truthful than human beings; they will never endanger anyone who is not threatening. That is their true nature.

There are four kinds of Sublime States, *Brahmavihāra*; namely *Mettā* (loving-kindness), *Karuṇā* (compassion), *Muditā* (Sympathetic joy), and *Uppekkhā* (Equanimity). The *Brahmās* in higher celestial abodes are in the habit of living in these four sublime states and therefore are called *Brahmavihāra*. (Way of Living like Brahmas).

Detailed Explanation

- (1) *Mettā*: The natural phenomenon of the *Mettā* is non-hatred (*Adosa*), imposed upon all the sentient beings; it is actually against anger. *Dosa* (hatred) and *Mettā* (Loving-Kindness) are directly opposite. When *Mettā* become forceful, it overwhelms *Dosa* and vice versa.

Imposing Loving-Kindness on all sentient beings, just like loving oneself, is a step towards living in peace.

For those who are not used to live in this way, it may not be practised to its full extent. But it is possible for those noble ones whose mind is repeatedly

cultivated and developed by means of the dissemination of Mettā.

(2) *Karuṇā*: "Sabbe sattā dukkhā muccantu (in Pāli):

May all be free from all sorts of misery!"

This is the recitation of Karuṇā Brahmavihāra. It is a cultivation and dissemination of sympathetic joy (Karuṇā), wishing all beings a perfect release from all misery they now encounter.

There may arise a question, "Can it be done so?" The answer is, "Yes, of course." But there is an exception. The noble ones who have already been replete with virtuous morality and one-pointedness of mind can disseminate their wishing over all sentient beings except for those who commit the five great sins (pañcānāriya).*

Feeling for the sufferings of all beings is the main characteristic of Karuṇā.

(3) *Muditā*: "Sabbe satta yathā laddhasampattito māvigachantu (in Pāli): May all properties already possessed not become less!"

This is the recitation of Muditā Brahmavihāra. The true dissemination and cultivation of Muditā Brahmavihāra means that a noble person feels sympathetic joy when seeing those who are in good health, wealth, prosperity or higher status. He has no

* Pancanāriya : Killing father, mother and Arahāt, raising a blood blister on a buddha (The life of Buddha cannot be taken) and making a schism among the disciples of a Buddha.

jealousy, ill-will, or covetousness but his mind is always directed to the wealth and welfare of them.

For such good-will repeatedly arisen in one's mind is necessary. The one who is filled with sympathetic joy never feels ill-will and jealous. The sympathetic joy, indeed, is the root to real peace and happiness.

(4) *Upekkhā*: Sabbe satta Kammassakā : All sentient beings possess only Kammassakā as their own properties"

This is the recitation of *Upekkhā Brahmavihāra*.

Upekkhā or equanimity is completely different from the aforesaid three sublime states. I will explain about it in full.

Upekkhā is devoid of Loving-Kindness, Compassion and Sympathetic joy. It is a way of Living, contemplating on the objects of being with equanimity, without experiencing in the aforesaid states of mind. It is a sort of living light-heartedly; it is a way of living in equilibrium between the two scales, love and hatred, or compassion and cruelty, or sympathetic joy and jealousy.

Without taking care of any object, it is very cool and calm, as it is unnecessary to make effort of taking objects, it is a way of living light-heartedly.

For these reasons, the fifth *Jhānic* trance can be obtained through the arduous cultivation of *Upekkhā Brahmavihāra*, but the contemplation of the other three *Brahmavihāras*, may arise only upto the Fourth *Jhānic* Trance. The Hermit *Sumedā*, the Buddha-to-be,

possessed psychic power by means of these noble practices of Brahmavihāra.

Uppekkhā in Colloquial Usage

I need to explain, here. Some say, "What a foolish man he is! No need to pay attention to him! Let him be alone! give him Uppekkhā! Colloquially, it means; "As he is a foolish one, leave him alone or let him die there." In fact, it is just abusive language, said in anger and displeasure. It has nothing in common with the Uppekkhā of Brahmavihāra.

Uppekkhā is very subtle and profound in meaning. It is a contemplation on seeing those living beings, from a view-point of kamma, who are drifting in the current of the whirl-pool of Saṃsāric sufferings.

It is contemplation on the root-causes of kamma, in order to see it as it truly is, thinking: "What one does is one's own; everyone has to accept the effects of Kamma he has already done".

All sentient beings who were repeatedly born in different planes of Saṃsāra have to fulfill their Kammas arising in accordance with their wishes.

Having sowed the seeds of Kamma, they have to reap the fruits of its effect; those who performed demeritorious deeds will gain bad results and those who performed meritorious deeds will gain good results. Living with equanimity, Uppekkhā Brahmavihāra, means scrutinizing the natural law of kamma and contemplating it as it really is.

Different sentient beings in different situations and status are not created by a powerful creator, nor did they appear naturally on the earth as grasses and plants.

The root cause of existence is their own intention-cetanā which they create for themselves. The predominating Cetanās are the intention of greed (Lobha cetanā), the intention of hatred (Dosa cetanā), the intention of delusion (Moha cetanā), the intention of craving (Rāga Cetanā), the intention of confidence (Saddhā cetanā), the intention of wisdom (Pañña Cetanā) and so on.

One has to realize that good or bad results are achieved according to kammic action arisen out of intention, Ñāṇa (wisdom) and viriya (endeavour) and it should be contemplated on often. This task of contemplation is the cultivation of Upekkhā Brhmavihāra.

Fully realizing that "His property is his kamma; My property is my kamma", you should discern this truth and not forget it. Then you will understand how to cultivate and develop Upekkhā Brahmavihāra.

(This is the brief explanation of how to develop and cultivate the four Sublime States.)

The easiest way of Developing the four Sublime States altogether

"All human beings, celestial beings, sentient beings; May all be free from danger, anxiety, misery and be happy and peaceful. May all be satisfied with good

results they are longing for."

Recite this verse! In doing so, the four sublime states will also be included in it.

Pronounce it repeatedly, as shown the above way, until it becomes a habit. Strong good-will, cetanā plays vital role in your recitation. In the course of time, you need not recite verbally. It may be recited in your mind only.

As it becomes a habitual action, you will definitely feel the strange sensation of the cultivation of Mettā. Now, you can have eternal happiness and peace of life. Directing your mind towards a being or a group of beings, or all beings, disseminate your Mettā to them; at that time real good-will, cetanā, may flow out of the inner part of your heart. If you can reach at this stage, realize that you are completely successful in the cultivation of Mettā by means of mental action.

The pure good-will or intention, cetana, sprung out of the inner part of the purified heart on account of perfect cultivation of sympathetic joy and the perfect cultivation of Equanimity, is an invaluable treasure and at this stage, you will understand that only such a kind of good-will is your only property. Maintain and look after it with care while it is in your own hands.

The stability of mind can be controlled and maintained by means of concentration; When repeatedly practised, the power of concentration becomes stronger and more stable than before; the moment when the sublime states are maintained in your mind will be

longer and longer, from day to day, from month to month and from year to year. In this way, the longer the course of time, the greater the power of your mind, in the cultivation and dissemination of Metta.

Depending on the Power of Contemplation

The power of the cultivation of Mettā and Karuṇā is much greater and more stable, due to the power of other contemplations (bhāvanā) practised daily.

There will arise something notable during the course of time; you will realize it if you pay attention to the aggregates of your body and mind with care. It may be found that your mental state and physical body will become more and more stable and purified than before.

There arises in your mind the good-will of Mettā for the well-being of all creatures, the good-will of Karuṇā for all beings of release from dangers, and the good-will of Muditā, the sympathetic joy for all beings of progressive health, prosperity and higher status.

During the time of the repeated arising of good-will, cetanās in your mind due to the development of Brahmavihāra, you may feel a sensation, i.e. a feeling of rapture through your body.

The most important fact you should have noticed at that time is that you must proceed with your development of the cultivation of Brahmavihāra with mindfulness.

It is natural that the mind takes different objects

swiftly and you have to put your effort with care.

Proceed with firm determination: "Such a good time should not be abandoned." Prolong your concentrative mind and tighten your endeavour, too. You will realize it practically and taste the different flavour of the Dhamma. You are sure to understand that it is very enjoyable for you to engage in such a task.

Wanting to know how to develop the Brahmavihāra some devotees sent letters to me and some visited me in person. Here, I will convey all these explanations in brief.

Just Like Living in Jhānic trance of Mettā

As mentioned earlier, if you succeed once, it is very easy for you to succeed twice, and even up to ten times. After that you will feel rapture through your body and the power of your cultivation will become greater. Go on cultivating enthusiastically; and you will easily succeed hundred times or thousand times. Such a way of living, cultivating or developing Mettā repeatedly, is called "Living in Jhānic-trance of Mettā." This is the specific term of Yogis who are always in the habit of practising Mettā Bhāvanā. (i.e, dwelling in a trance of Mettā for long.)

The time that Kamma Generates its Effect

Those bhikkus, or novices or hermits, or lay-devotees who are in the cultivating the Four Sublime States or any one of them will gain with good results or whatever they are longing for in accordance with

their deeds or karmas; I will not mention the textual stories of yore as I touch briefly on the benefit of Mettā, but I will tell you some real life-stories.

Mental action plays vital role

You have to understand that the task of cultivation of Brahmavihāra is mainly concerned with the cetanā of Mental Action. I mention earlier to recite the words of the cultivation by means of verbal action but it is just for beginners. It should not be recited with discursive mind. If you are entertaining rapture with the forceful mental power inclining your cultivation of Mettā towards all beings or a particular one who is intended for your Mettā, it is a sort of real loving-kindness and you have to notice yourself that you have reach the most effective stage of contemplation.

The Benefit out of loss

The Foe Feeling Hot due to Mettā

(Pañcaka Nipāta, Ghata Jātaka)

Here I would like to tell you an example of the benefits of Mettā. No one can endanger the person who practises the cultivation of Mettā. Though they may forcibly overwhelm the possessor of Mettā, finally they are defeated. He may be defeated at times but he can achieve benefit out of loss. He may achieve success out of failure.

In the life-time of the Buddha, while residing at the Jetavana monastery of Savatthi, the following story

was preached relating to a minister in the palace of the King, Kosala. The minister was greatly honoured with titles and properties by the king Kosala due to his faithful service. Later, he was imprisoned because the king took the false words of other ministers as truth. In reality, the minister was an honest noble one, being loyal to his master, the king. Those who are good-natured and good-tempered, though they encounter difficulties and danger, never put the blame upon others; they are never pessimistic. Nor are they disappointed with the situation, or feel depressed. They only entertain such a thought as "I get in trouble due to my bad Kamma; I need to perform more good deeds to be release from this bad situation." They are always cool and calm, without getting angry.

The minister's mind was always inclined towards the Dhamma while being imprisoned and not long after, he attained Sotāpanna-Ariyahood.

Just like the saying, "As the state of mind is straight, the performance is also straight; as the performance is straight, the outcome is straight too", the nature of the Dhamma produces true knowledge only and the true knowledge in turn influences its environment.

During that time, the king Kosala came to understand the minister and felt pity for him. So, he issued a release order at once.

The minister, then took flowers and perfumes and went forth to the Buddha. The Buddha who had seen

the incident before the minister come to him about asked, "Dāyakā! did you have any loss?"

"Your venerable Sir! I was lost, in deed; But I have achieved benefit out of loss. I have, in fact, attained Sotāpatti Maggañāna", replied the minister calmly.

"Dayaka! You are not the only one who has achieved benefit out of loss in this world; those wise persons of your ancestors have done so! As the minister requested, the Buddha related to him the following story .

The King Ghāṭa who was good natured

The king Brahmadata reigned over the country of Barānāsī and had a son, the Buddha-to-be, Prince Ghāṭa, by name. The Prince, after graduating from Takkasila (University), he returned to his country. Later he took the royal throne and ruled over the country. At that time, a minister in the palace committed a crime and, being found guilty, was exciled.

Because this minister was a cunning fox, he went to Vaṅka, the rival King in neighbouring Śavatti. The minister persuaded the King Vaṅka to seize the King Ghāṭa and to occupy his country.

Vaṅka easily accepted his advice. Not long after, they fought a battle, seized the King Ghāṭa and occupied his country. The King Ghāṭa was kept in fetters in a prison.

However, the King Ghāṭa was the Buddha-to-be who had already fulfilled perfections (Pāramīs) and he

did not feel disappointed or depressed.

He did not care about his situation and looked upon it as a nightmare and never intended to fight against his foes. He bore no resentment against the King Vanka.

Just like a person who is thrown away onto the bush by an Bus Sondaicus he looks upon everything optimisticly and accepted it a good time to practise the Dhamma.

Those who are good-natured and have fulfilled pāramīs, though faced with the vassacitudes of life, understand how to live in peace and happiness.

The right way to live in peace and happiness is to keep your mind stable; cool and calm. Being a noble one, his mind was also cool and calm. The King Ghaṭa thought: "Now, I am completely free from the yoke of country-affairs and have a golden opportunity to live in peace. At this time, I should make use of it and try to practise the way of peace and happiness." Though he was imprisoned in a cell, he imagined that he was in a meditation-cave in a peaceful forest to practise meditation peacefully and was thankful for it.

From that time onwards he made arduous efforts to practice meditation and in short time, he could achieve very powerful concentration and attain Psychic Power (Abhiññāṇa), so that he was able to sit cross-legged in peace. Being pleased with his present situation, he was greatly elated living in Jhānic-Trance day and night.

Here is a notable point. It may be said that the nature of loving-kindness occasionally can effect a specific happening in an opposed person, if so is desired. Why? Because at that time the King Vaṅka felt hot through his body. But it was not created by the King Ghāṭa. Take note of this fact, please.

The King Vaṅka felt unnaturally hot and happened to send for his attendants to inquire how the King Ghāṭa was in the cell. When he knew the report, he was surprised. He thought the King Ghāṭa would be very depressed and would look pitiable. But in fact, he was not like that.

There were no marks of worry in the face of the King Ghāṭa. Rather it was fresh like a newly bloomed flower; it was very graceful and splendid. In astonishment the King Vaṅka asked, "Oh, the King Ghāṭa! most people who are imprisoned are depressed and cry for mercy; some look pitiable with tears in their eyes; but you are now graceful and your face is like clear water. Why don't you worry about your fate?"

The King Ghāṭa replied:- "My friend, the King Vaṅka! worry and anxiety cannot bring back the peace and happiness of the past, nor bring peace and happiness of the future. I therefore do not worry about my fate; I do not be friend with worry and anxiety; I accompany the friend of Jhānic-bliss only. There is no worry, nor anxiety in me."

The one who is a companion of Jhānic bliss

The King Ghāṭa continued:-

"My friend, Vaṅka! the one with worry and anxiety is pale and wane; he does not want to take food; Being pierced by the sharp sword of worry and anxiety gratifies his foes and being depressed in such a manner is a sort of pleasure to them."

"Oh My friend! Whether I have to live in city or in forest, on land or in a pit, perverted thoughts caused by worries and anxieties will not come to me; Now I am dwelling in the Jhānic bliss of Loving Kindness."

"My friend, King Vaṅka! Say for instance, a King may have thousands of friends and allies; no one in the world will be able to make him happy and peaceful if he is unable to have the Jhānic-bliss arising out of the cultivation of Mettā."

The King Vaṅka, who had captured a rival king unopposed, was greatly surprised at the strange words of King Ghāṭa.

The King Vaṅka thought to himself:-

"The King Ghāṭa is a good-natured and good-tempered one; how noble and marvellous it is!" Then, he was filled with remorse for his misdeeds. And he paid respects to the King Ghāṭa and made an apology to him. Afterwards, he returned the kingship and country to the King Ghāṭa."

King Ghata, the Buddha-to-be, though he regained his throne, was not satisfied with the pleasureable circumstances of the palace and handed over his

country to the council of his ministers. He then went forth to the Himalayan forest and led a secluded life, cultivating on the four sublime states in his own hermitage for the rest of his life. After his death, he was reborn in the Brahma abode due to the merit of his Jhānic-practices.

This is an example of noble ones who are in the habit of cultivating the four sublime states. A person fully cultivating these four sublime states does not want to indulge in the degrading emotions of anger, conceit and other immoral inclinations. Those who have not yet known this bliss are delighted with illusory pleasures in their tragic surroundings.

Three Types of Mettā

I would like to mention three types of Mettā as stated in Buddhist canonical Texts. They are:-

(1) Bodily Loving-Kindness (*Kāyakamma Mettā*)

All bodily gestures for the benefit of others arisen out of good-will cetana and loving-kindness, Mettā, are called Kāyakamma metta. Every one in this world recognizes this Kāyakamma Mettā and is thankful for it. This human world should, in fact, be encompassed by the string of bodily loving-kindness.

(2) Verbal Loving Kindness (*Vacīkamma Mettā*)

All verbal gestures for the benefit of others arisen out of good-will, cetana and loving-kindness, Mettā are called Vacīkamma Mettā. A good piece of advice and admonitory words are notable examples of this kind.

(3) Mental Loving-Kindness (*ManoKamma Mettā*)

This is a kind of mental power. For the benefit or well-beings of others, whatever it may be, this sort of loving-kindness arising from the inner, purified mind, can be disseminated throughout the human world by means of mental power. This element of good-will, *cetanā*, and loving-kindness, *Mettā* is the most powerful and effective kind.

It can make the whole world happy and peaceful. It can make the whole celestial abode happy and peaceful. It can be spread to all sentient beings, far or near.

The Way of Disseminating *Mettā* on a Journey

When you are going to make a journey, you should disseminate your *Mettā* in this way, "May all beings, who are living in the east including human and celestial beings, be free from danger, anxiety and misery! May all beings be happy and peaceful! May all beings be satisfied with the good results they are longing for!"

When you are on journey, you should cultivate your *Metta* like this, "May all beings who are living in the west including human as well as celestial beings, be free from danger, anxiety and misery! May all beings be happy and peaceful! May all beings be satisfied with the good results they are longing for!"

In this case, the mentally cultivated *Mettā* plays vital role. In the same way both directions of upward

and downward should be covered by the dissemination of Mettā.

Practical Benefit

You will never encounter with any difficulty or danger, you will reach your destination safe and sound; whenever you go, you will see sweet smiles and be warmly—welcomed. You will see everything run smoothly to know how wonderful it is; you should practise it.

(N.B. you should, in advance, disseminate your Mettā towards the person whom you are travelling to meet whether or not you have seen him. If you are to meet many, make dissemination of your Mettā towards all of them. By disseminating Mettā in advance you will find that everything you have to perform will run smoothly; you will come to know by experience.)

My Own Experience

I will tell you of how I am free from danger due to the power of my Mettā. Whenever I make a journey I disseminate Mettā towards the east before starting my journey as protection against dangers along the way.

While on a journey I also disseminate my Mettā towards the west. for the good and gain of all the creatures. Upward and Downward directions are not left without cultivating Mettā. These are my habitual practice whenever I am on my journey.

For about fifty years, I have been wandering in

remote forest, especilly on the Chin Hills Border, b̄ut I never met with the peril of wild beasts, nor with anyone who wanted to cause me trouble. I have read the biographies of other missionaries in which their dangerous encounters with wild creatures are mentioned. As for me, it is just hearsay. I think it may be due to the practical benefit of the cultivation of Mettā̄.

In the Dark mid-night

Sometimes, I have been on journeys in deep forest at mid-night. I did not use a tourcehlight but I was accompany only by my walking-stick. I have pssed through the valley of mountain in the dark. At that time the wild beasts are usually wandering about in the dark. It would be natural for me to encounter with one or two.

The mountains and forests in which I usually wander about are full of tigers, leopards, wolves, and other wild animals. The Chin nationals who used to roam the forest with guns on their shoulders in search of prey were frequently attacked by wild animals even in the day-time. Nevertheless, I myself did not meet any wild animals at any time.

I think those animals may see me wandering in forest, indeed. I beleive they stay aloof from me simply because they do not want to endanger me through loving-kindness.

In fact , deep forests and high mountains are

abundant with wild beasts such as lions, tigers, leopards, bears, wolves, snakes, etc. I finally believe that on account of the devoted recitation of parittas during the journey and powerful cultivation of loving-kindness, from the inner part of the heart, they do not hurt me, but stay away from me.

Not only on journeys in Myanmar, but in Assam and Manipur, of India, I have never met any hardship, nor with any danger. Everything I had met on my journeys were astonishingly favourable. Though I occasionally had difficulties with transport, it always came out smoothly in one way or the other. All these happenings are just a small part of my experience.

If I wandered about in the forest without the cultivation of Mettā, I would have probably been killed by a wild beast during my mission in the Chin Hills.

It is notable that wild beasts are by nature disciplined. They are very loyal in their conduct. They never attack or hurt those who love them. I think the protector celestial beings of forests and mountains may protect me from different sorts of dangers due to my dissemination of Mettā. I presume that they made wild beast stay aloof from me, because such examples are mentioned in Aṅguttara Pāli. One of the Benefits of Mettā as explained in that Pāli text is being adored and protected by celestial beings; being adored by Rakkhasas-Demons.

Mettā that Secures the whole World

With reference to these happenings, every human being in this human world should keep Mettā as his own treasure. Here, I would like to urge you all to disseminate Mettā every moment.

There is nothing else but the charm of Mettā which can secure your life. It is very dependable. For the purpose of happy and peaceful existence in this saṃsāric suffering, there cannot be anything else in this world except the reliable charm of Mettā.

You should be righteous

I would like to warn you of one thing. The human world is composed of mutual relations. If you are righteously living with purified Mettā, you will definitely achieve the good result. You will practically realize that your surroundings react to you well, being contacted by your purified Mettā. Even wild animals will stay aloof from you, if you have loving-kindness towards them. Nothing needs to be said about the amicable and amiable relation of human beings.

If you always keep loving-kindness in your heart, it will gradually mature and grow. If so, you will notice the specific characteristics of Mettā. At the same time you yourself will experience the effective power of Mettā.

The Owner of the Human World

A person of loving-kindness who repeatedly

cultivates Mettā can overwhelm the whole human world by power of Mettā. He may overcome the ups and downs of life easily and settle every problem by the cultivation of Mettā. It can change a foe into a friend. If you cannot believe it, practice it now. You will definitely know it—by experience.

How to change Hatred to Love

Here is a secret.

Say for instance, if anyone feels aggressive and attempts to endanger you or looks upon you as his foe or curses you by words, you must feel pity towards him, not hatred.

Inclining your mind towards him, you must contemplate thus:-

"He is not a happy and peaceful being but aggressive; he may be in great pain and agony. What a pitiful thing! What would I do? Indeed, anger is like fire; Loving-kindness is like water. I must use water to extinguish fire; I must protect myself, using water against the danger of fire."

Can water extinguish fire?

You should contemplate it in the above way; this is how to resist aggressive situation. This is the way to live with right on your side.

Here is the second way of reacting to aggression:-

"He is a being which is impermanent; I am also a being which is impermanent. One day, both of us must die; We are the corpses-to-be; we both are just

alive for a while in this human world."

"He is a corpse-to-be; I am also a corpse-to-be, there should not arise anger or conciet between two corpses. Though he is aggressive, I myself should not be so; Indeed, he is a person worthy of compassion."

By this Method you bear compassionate feelings toward him first. It should be repeatedly contemplated. If you really regard him as a pitiable creature, you will succeed in your cultivation of compassion; then the cultivation of loving-kindness should be practised. If it follows consequently, be mindful not to miss it. When combined with good-will, cetana, hold on to it. Meanwhile, stay disseminating your Metta towards him whole-heartedly.

It is not important to take a long time in dissemination of Mettā; But, it is necessary to disseminate Mettā whole heartedly during that moment. The more sincere you are, the more effective the power of your Mettā; the more powerful your Mettā, the more quickly you succeed in the task.

Please, put it to the test by yourself; Imagine a person who presumably hates you; Incline your process of thought toward him and develop the dissemination of Mettā. He may be male or female, young or old, Buddhist or non-Buddhist; Myanmar or other national; whoever he may be, whatever it is, you have to have good-will, cetanā. If you can relinquish hatred, loving-kindness automatically will come into your heart. Even those couples who have been divorced, if they

practically apply this method, will change their mind and reunite after long years of separation. This is the way to change a foe into a friend.

Note that the real development of loving-kindness is fully experienced if you sincerely feel goodwill, *cetanā*, which is inclined to do good for all beings or a particular one, toward those whom you are inclined your dissemination of *Mettā*. Note also that you have reached an effective stage of the dissemination of *Mettā*.

Method of Disseminating *Mettā*

using a glass of water

Here again, I would like to show you another practical method of disseminating *Mettā*. If you cannot succeed by following the application of the aforesaid method, you'd better proceed this method, i.e., disseminating *Mettā* by using a glass of water. You will surely achieve your goal.

How to apply: Incline your process of thought toward the person who is intended for your *Mettā*, and then put a glass of fresh water on the shrine: sink a clean pebble or a small stick into it, and cover it not to let rubbish or dust in.

Disseminate your *Mettā*, contemplating thus:- "May his mind be cool and calm like this fresh water! I have put his pain and agony into the cool water in order to permeate coolness through it!" Be mindful of yourself, at that moment, not to feel distressed and

perplexed. Be steady, stable, cool and calm. Proceed to contemplate thus:-

"I don't want him pain and agony. To bring about our friendly reconciliation, I have dropped him into this fresh water!"

You must yourself know thus:

"Now, he becomes cool and calm like the water; he become pleased with me; his aggression and ill-will to me have gone away!"

Here, the very important fact is that you yourself have been cool and calm, and you have already been replete with good-will, or real cetana which is then directed towards his peace and happiness. After a certain period of time you will find that he comes to a change of mind. Due to the mental power of your dissemination of Mettā his anger and conceit will gradually come to a state of coolness and calmness. Then, he will understand and feel pity for you. At that moment, his anger and conceit are transformed into loving-kindness.

Now, he becomes good-tempered and feels happy and peaceful. He may beg your pardon for doing wrong and he will not be quarrelsome any further. Like extinguishing fire with water, all his anger is quenched peacefully. Or else, he may avoid you simply because he does not want to confront you.

All these are normal occurrences, which I have explained in order that they may be fully understood. You may use this method in every situation. Have a

firm belief that only the owner of Mettā finally can overcome all the difficulties and hardships in this world present. If you use it with confidence, even a peevish person who has run away from home will surely come back; in the end.

Here I'd like to say one thing more. The noble persons such as bhikkhus, hermits ect. are those who should keep loving-kindness in their hearts forever. When confronted with the vicissitudes of life occasionally, they should contemplate thus:-

"I am not a wicked one; I live in accordance with the law of Dhamma simply because I like to do so. While I am living in this human world whatever problems I confront, I will settle them by means of the dissemination of Mettā.

Mettā, a companion through the Samsāric Journey

If you make a friend of Mettā, though you are faced with unpleasant things, you will immediately find the way how to live in peace. Only the possessor of Mettā, will sooner or later, be able to fulfil his wishes to his full satisfaction and easily overcome every hardship. He may achieve success out of loss. Believe in this true law of nature which never goes astray its path.

Conversely, if you give priority to anger, hatred or conceit without regarding Mettā as a true companion, realize that you have done wrong. As I said earlier, there is nothing greater or better than Mettā in this world.

Let's go to the Realm of Nibbāna with a Companion of Mettā

There is more than that to be said about the benefits of Mettā. It can indeed lead the way to the realm of Nibbana-Eternal Bliss. The one who has a companion of Mettā through the saṃsāric journey and always cultivates Mettā, need not worry about how to live in peace and happiness and how to die in coolness and calmness. He has a golden chance one existence after another, in the peaceful saṃsāric circle. He may not wander about in degraded lives but sure to live in higher existences. Believe it as the eternal law of true nature.

Therefore I urge you all to regard Mettā as a truthful companion along through the saṃsāric journey.

How to live and How to Die

While you live a human life, it is very important to know not only how to live but also how to die. You should have to be prepared, in advance, to die in peace and happiness or coolness and calmness, contemplating the cultivation of Mettā upto the last breath. In order not to forget your preparation for the last breath, you should have repeatedly practised it.

By means of such a precautionary measure, you may gain benefits in the life hereafter. In your next existence, even though you may not be reborn in Brahma abode, you may definitely expect a noble existence.

Accharāsaṅghāta Mettā Sutta

While the Buddha was dwelling in the Jetavana monastery of Sāvatti, the Accharāsaṅghāta Mettā Sutta was preached:

"Accharāsaṅghātamattampi ce bhikkhave bhikkhu mettacittaṃ asevaṃ (bhāveti). Ayaṃ vuccati bhikkhave arittajhāno viharati sattū saṅgahakaro. Ovāda patikaro amo ghaṃ ratthapiṇḍaṃ bhujjati. Ko pana vādo yenaṃ bahulikarontīti.

"Oh Bhikkhus! If a bhikkhu develops the cultivation of Mettā for just a moment like the snapping of the thumb and the finger once, he may be regarded" the Bhikkhu who is associated with Jhānic trance." In deed, he really follows the teaching of the Buddha; he practises the way instructed by the Buddha; he partakes of alms-food donated by lay-devotees of the country without doing so falsely."

"Oh Bhikkhus! As for those persons who have lived in the arduous practice of Mettā repeatedly, there is no need to say more about them, is there?" (Aṅguttara Pāli)

Here, you will see that the Buddha urged the bhikkhus particularly. Nevertheless, it may be understood that the word, bhikkhu denotes not only monks or holy persons but also lay-devotees.

The blinking of an eye for one day

In the above-mentioned words of the Buddha, the blinking of an eye, a flash of lightning and the snapping

of the thumb and the finger, all these durations are the same; they are just momentary. Even in this short moment, if you live with Mettā, you will achieve great benefit.

The Buddha praised the bhikkhu who cultivates Mettā for just such a short period, and praised him as a hero of the missionary task to propagate His teaching.

Here you can understand how beneficial and fruitful the cultivation of mettā is just by hearing this teaching of the Buddha, Himself. You should emulate him. Take this example. It is very easy to do so!

The Moment that you are a human being

Now, you have a rare chance to be a human being and you happen to come across with the teachings of Buddha! You should aim at the life of noble person and put an arduous effort in the cultivation of Mettā as a routine, thinking that, "This task is my principal duty; this is my main aim."

At the very least just for a short moment, please meditate on the cultivation of Mettā, twice or three times a day, disseminating your mind towards all directions of the whole world.

Benefit of Mettā

I will explain, the benefit of the cultivation of Mettā as stated in the Mettānisaṃsa sutta of Āṅguttara nikāya:

"If a person, with a mind which has abolished anger, disseminates his metta toward only one person, he may attain merit due to his cultivation of Mettā.

The noble person who is always disseminating his Mettā to all living creatures through pity and kindness can create a great deal of merits."

Let me explain it further. There is no difference between the dissemination of Mettā toward only one person and to all living creatures. But, their consequential outcomes are not the same. What is the difference ?

The Noble Person rich in Mettā

It is said that a noble person who cultivates Mettā to all living creatures with immense compassion may achieve a great deal of benefits arisen out of his firm and stable good-will, cetanā.

Therefore, you have to understand that the benefit you gain depends on the number of persons to whom you direct your Mettā, i.e, the more the people, the greater the benefit, and vice versa.

How to start your task

There are various ways of instructing in the dissemination of Mettā. Here is a different start.

I have instructed you earlier that you should disseminate your Mettā toward all living beings. Indeed, it is a way of the noble ones of great compassion, especially as it is usually practised by the Buddha-to-be and other Noble Disciples (sāvakas) who have already fulfilled perfections (paramis). Note that it is the best way.

And then, you should disseminate your Mettā toward a particular place or a person wherever or whoever you choose; if so, it will be more effective and beneficial. Just like the Myanmar saying, "Only if you start well, you may surely achieve your goal," you should start it systematically, based on a wealth of Mettā and great compassion. If you can practise it properly, note that you have succeeded in your task.

Eleven Aspects of the Benefit of Mettā

Those who are always in the habit of the dissemination of Mettā may gain the following benefits without wishing for them:-

- (1) sleeping well;
- (2) awaking well;
- (3) not dreaming nightmares;
- (4) being adored by human beings;
- (5) being adored by celestial beings and orges;
- (6) being protected by celestial beings;
- (7) not being burnt, not being poisoned and not being killed with weapons;
- (8) being able to concentrate the scattered mind swiftly;
- (9) having a clear face;
- (10) a cool and calm death, and
- (11) being reborn in the Brahma abode before attaining the Maggañāṇa which exceeds Mettā.

All these eleven aspects are shown in the Eleventh Aṅguttara Nikāya Pāḷi and Saraka Jātaka of Jātaka Atthakathā.

Mettācetovimutti

The Buddha showed bhikkhus the way how to practice the cultivation of Mettā and urged thus:-

"On Bhikkhus! the eleven aspects of the benefit of Mettā can be obtained by releasing the mind through the association of mettā which has been practised well, which has been developed well, which has been cultivated repeatedly, which has been contemplated again and again and which has been observed devotedly.

Mettā cetovimutti- having the mind released by means of the association of Mettā, denotes the moment of dwelling in peace and happiness arisen out of forceful good cetanā in association with the Mettā, being directed towards a particular person or all living creatures.

The blissful peace of Nibbanas is called "Vimuttisukha" in the Buddhist canonical Texts. It is, indeed, a sort of blissful peace arisen only in the purified mind devoid of all sensual pleasures.

In fact loving-kindness, Mettā, devoid of all mental defilements, is "Mettācetovimutti" and it can also be compared with the blissful peace of Nibbāna-Vimuttisukha.

**Personal Experiences of Mettā,
using a glass of water:**

**A solution to a dispute on a higher post
of an Embassy.**

There are so many personal experiences of how it is beneficial to the observer of Mettā by means of using a glass of water.

Once there was a dispute among the members of staff in an Embassy in Yangon. The dispute was about a higher official post. The rivals were an American and a Myanmar. They competed for that official post and people said that they were fighting a quarrel against each other for a higher official post. The Myanmar's mother was very upset because of it and sent a letter to me, expressing her feelings, "I'm very upset; I'd like to rely on you on this matter; help us, please and disseminate your Mettā towards us."

I replied to her;

"You must follow the method of disseminating your Mettā by means of using a glass of water. The person who would like to observe Mettā should avoid using drugs and intoxicants and if possible, only vegetarian food; he may observe the precepts occasionally; he should not be angry nor bear conceit and I will disseminate Mettā towards you all from a far distance." I also inserted a line of special information in my letter; "If you follow my instruction, you may fulfil all your wishes to your satisfaction within three months and all the disputes will be completely solved."

Not long after, I received another letter from her. She said that as she had showed my letter to her son, and he agreed to settle the dispute by way of fraternity; he was not in the habit of drinking and he used to take the precepts, and ate vegetarian food.

One month later, I got another letter. In this it was said that, as the American resigned from his office and returned to his native country, the situation became stable and they need had no more worries. I was pleased because there was no quarrel between them.

The next yet another letter came from her. In her letter, she expressed that a gazettee to appoint her son in the place of the American had been issued but he had not yet been appointed; they followed my instruction and partook of vegetarian food and took precepts occasionally; so, they were now less worried.

After three months, the third letter arrived. Her son was appointed to the disputed post and they were satisfied with the situation.

This is the example of solution to a dispute by means of cultivating Mettā, using a glass of water. If you make use of Mettā in the way of noble ones, you practically can achieve benefit you are wishing.

A Teacher against a group of three teachers

It happened in a government high school that there was a disagreement between a young teacher and a group of three teachers, concerning the distribution of school duty. Whenever new instructions arrived at the

school, headmaster had to distribute duties to teachers and the disagreement had arisen among them. The headmaster did not know it. The young teacher was the headmaster's nephew and he asked his uncle for permission to transfer to another school. The headmaster did not accept his application and urged his nephew to stay on so long as he was still there. In fact, the headmaster did not know why his nephew had asked for a transfer. A group of three teachers were set against the young teacher, thinking that the headmaster gave his nephew special favours. That was the reason why the young teacher did not want to stay on there.

One day, the unhappy young teacher came to me and explained all these events. I asked, "What shall I do for you?" He replied, "Please, disseminate your *Mettā* towards me for my peace and happiness." So, I taught him how to disseminate *Mettā* towards his unfriendly companions by means of using a glass of water.

One month later, the young teacher came to me again and said that the situation in his school had changed: two of the three teachers were transferred to other places and two new teachers had filled their vacancies; the remaining one had apologised to him; so that now he was happy to stay on there.

My advice which he had applied was to put a glass of water in which there were three little sticks before the image of Buddha in the shrine of his house. He took the three sticks as his unfriendly teachers and

disseminate his Mettā towards them, contemplating "May they all be peaceful like those sticks in the glass."

Within one week, two of those teachers quarrelled with each other and asked the headmaster for transfers. Soon after, they transferred to another school. The remaining one, as he made an apology to the younger teacher, was again on friendly terms with him. This is the example of solution to a dispute by way of noble persons.

A Lecturer Monk against a group of three Lecturer Monks

Let me tell you another incident. It was one of my friends, a young lecturer-monk. I was staying at the Pabbavideha Hall of Kaba-Aye, Yangon, to participate in the Sixth Buddhist Council of Myanmar. In those days, young lecturer-monks were very popular because many Pāli Universities had been opened throughout Myanmar, and young lecturer-monks were in great demand.

My friend, the young lecturer-monk was a nephew of the President of a Pāli University; he was honest and well-disciplined; he never associated with too many friends and liked to lead secluded life. Three Lecturer-monks, colleagues of his, had become unfriendly towards him and tried to make him leave the university. He did not want to stay on there, but his uncle the president sayadaw did not allow him to do so. But it was very unpleasant for him to stay there. Therefore,

one day he came to me and told me all about his situation. I gave him a piece of advice, "My friend, it is very easy to find a solution; you are holy person, a monk; you should settle it by means of Mettā; it would be wrong for you to find another means; if you can befriend Mettā, there will be no need to worry even about your saṃsāric journey." And I instructed him how to disseminate Mettā by means of using a glass of water. I urged him to believe it totally and disseminate real Mettā towards his unfriendly companions.

In a short time, one of these three aggressive lecturer-monks apologised the young lecturer-monk for his wrong doings and the remaining two quarrelled with each other and had to leave for another Pāli University.

It is usual that the foes who are devoid of anger become friendly with the possessor of Mettā again and make apology toward him, but those who are quarrelsome, in one way or the other, have to go away from him. Every incident follows this pattern!

A Landlord and a Tenant

In this modern age, the strange happenings in this human world may arise unexpectedly. Occasionally, a rat may, perhaps, chase a cat.

Recently, it happened in the Township Judicial Office in Meikhtila, middle of Myanmar, that a tenant prosecuted his landlord. The Township Judicial Office passed judgement on the case that the law favoured

the landlord as the winner. As the tenant did not accept the judgement, the case proceeded to the Divisional Judicial Office.

The back-ground history of the case was that the landlord had rented his room to the tenant by written, lease, in which three years of stay-permit was stated. After three years stay in that room, the tenant was notified by the landlord to give his room back. But the tenant refused to do so and put up a lawsuit to the judicial court for judgement with the help of authorised persons.

When proceeded the case to Divisional Judicial office, the landlord was very disappointed and tired of engaging in his law-suit; he had to seek for an advocate and travel many times; thus he had to spend much money.

Being disappointed with his present situation, he wrote a long letter to me: "You Venerable Sir! please, disseminate your Mettā toward us because we are now engaging in a lawsuit and we do not know how to control the situation; Be kind to us, and help us, please!" In deed, it was usual for me to hear such news.

It is my duty to help others when they make a request!

In the olden days of the Ava Dynesty of Myanmar, there was a man called Maung Htu in Ava city. He had a medical prescription which came from a traditional physician from Yo area. (In those days, Yo-area in Myanmar was very popular for its medical

preparations.) He administered that medical prescription to whoever asked for treatment from him; thus, he was very popular for his treatment and his name became well-known to the royal family, and later, he became a royal physician in the Ava palace.

The medical prescription given by the physician from Yo-area was that:

"A mixture of water with one tical of matron, one tical of ripe tamarind fruit and one tical of salt-- the mixture should be made into paste and made then into pills; Take this pill of medicine with water and it will cure all the 96 types of diseases."

It was said that Maung Htu's medical prescription could be used for all sorts of diseases. One day a person who had lost cattle came to Maung Htu to ask for help. Master Htu, as usual, gave him his medicine to search for the lost cattle. The person in full faith swallowed his medicine with water. Not long after, there arose violent pain in his abdomen and he had to go into a bush to purge. Fortunately he saw his cattle there hidden by thieves. Thus physician Master Htu became more popular than before for his medicine which enabled the man to bring back the cattle from the thieves.

I also follow Master Htu's example. Whoever asks me for help, I instruct them on how to disseminate Mettā by means of using a cup of water; that is my only instruction to them; I never change it.

In the case of landlord and tenant I urged the

sender of the letter, the landlord, to follow my instruction. "Anger should not be borned in your mind; you cannot succeed by anger; note that you will completely succeed in your task if you cultivate Mettā based on compassion; that is the most important point in your dissemination of Mettā."

One month later, I got a reply letter from the landlord: "According to your instruction, my wife was disseminating Mettā to the tenant by means of using a glass of water. One week later, the tenant fled away from our home without anyone noticing. I received no information about him and he did not give us rent for three months. But as there was no plaintiff, the lawsuit was closed by the judicial court. Therefore, we are all pleased with our present situation."

Just like the medical prescription of the Ava physician Master Htu, my instruction may also be beneficial to the follower; though it is simple, use it without doubt.

With the help of this Mettā by means of using a glass of water, you may overcome hardships and obstacles such as the gossiping of your neighbours; repeated demands of the creditors and the threats of aggressive persons, etc.

All beings try insatiably to fulfil their wishes to their satisfaction; Whatever you want to do, or whatever you want to be, my method of the dissemination of Mettā can be used practically.

For instance, if you want to be promoted, you may

achieve it by means of dissemination of Mettā to the person who can promote you to any higher post. In the same way, if you want to pass your examination, you may apply my method of the dissemination of Mettā towards the examiner.

I don't know whether they have gained they wanted, but I am released from the danger getting earache!

Whenever you disseminate your Mettā, the most important thing is to do it with whole-heartedness and great compassion. You will definitely achieve your goal; I will always recommend this method in future. Surely!

How to regard all sentient beings

The Buddha taught that in the case of disseminating Mettā, the mind should be inclined towards all sentient beings;

"Oh Bhikkhus! the bhikkhu should disseminate Mettā, in two ways: **Odhisa Mettā**- disseminating Mettā towards a specific person or a specific group of persons and **Anodhisa Mettā** - disseminating Mettā towards all sentient beings without defining any specific person.

The real Mettā accompanied with good will cetana for the well-being of the persons whoever they may be, a friend or a foe, should be disseminated whole heartedly. Your Mettā should be equally disseminated without discriminating between male and female, high and low, young and old, rich and poor, etc.

The Practical Benefit of Brahmavihāra

Lay-devotees, when they meet me, ask the question, "What sort of practical benefit did you get by living in the four sublime states?" I always give the same.

Bhikkhu-friends often asked this question too but I replied curtly. In fact, it may be my inborn-nature to keep secrets, I am not interested in giving complete answers. So, I never intend to do so.

Every person Welcome me Warmly

It is a distinct benefit that whenever I am on a journey, in my native land or abroad, all people welcome me warmly; they are really happy to see me; I notice their facial expressions showing their delight to meet me; they eagerly wait for me if they know that I am going to meet them. I think all these situations may be a sort of strange occasion.

It is usual that whenever I leave them, they are unhappy and say farewell to me, "Please come to us, again next year!"

Whilst I am with them they are very happy to stay together with me, and talk or discuss with me endlessly. I think it may be the reflection of Mettā. Moreover, when I have been to a certain place once, the people there look forward to my coming in the next incessant years.

Just like a Universal Monarch (Cakkavatti)

The possessor of Mettā may be compared with the

Universal Monarch (Cakkavatti) who is the great lord of the four Islands. It is said that the islanders love Cakkavatti very much. When they know that he is going to see them, they eagerly wait for him, wishing "May he come to us swiftly!" When they have chance to stay with him, they are very happy and pleased with his presence. They want him to stay on together with them there. When he goes back, the people there are unhappy and lament. It may be because he lives with the people for a long time with loving-kindness and compassion. Like the relation between the Cakkavatti and the islanders, I have been meeting with lay-devotees and bhikkhu friends for a long time.

Bees never sting me!

There is another special benefit I would like to say here, that is, bees never sting me. About thirty years ago there was a cart-wheel-like beehive at the side of the **Khantim** mountain near my monastery. The bees come and stay there annually; they are a very large and poisonous type of bee; a sting of one bee can make a person feverish and more than one can be fatal.

One day morning, a group of Chin national workers from the Government Agricultural Garden climbed up the side of Khantim mountain, collected a lot of hay, piled it up and set fire to it so that they could get honey from the beehive on the mountain side; the whole group stayed inside a mosquito net which was set up at the place, to prevent them being stung.

The bees being fumigated became angry, got out of their beehive and were flying to and fro. They were stinging whoever and whatever they saw; men, cattle, poultry, pigs, cats and dogs- all were being stung wherever they were. All those who were stung by the bees were running to and fro due to the severe pain. Even the herds of Gorakha cattle were being jostled against one another by the flying bees.

I saw the people and animals walking on the road at the foot of the mountain where my monastery was. When the bees came and stung them they were running into each other and crying for help. Those Chin nationals in the Government Agricultural Garden were not left unstung. I heard people and animals running and crying for help everywhere. The group of problem makers in the mosquito net at the side of the mountain were severely stung as they all were the nearest persons, and all were sent to hospital.

At that moment I was coming and going here and there in my monastery compound; the angry bees were flying around me but never stung me at all. When the Chin nationals and Gorakha devotees saw this strange event, they were very surprised.

Hornets never sting me!

In the same way, hornets never sting me, either. When I was making a missionary tour on the Assam border ranges, I resided at a bungalow, called Seven-Villages Building. There was a state primary school

near the bungalow. In a bush of jujube on the mountain side in the school compound, there was a big nest of hornet. Children who gathered jujube were often stung by the hornet.

They are, in fact, large insects of the wasp family and able to inflict severe pain. They are red in colour and fly swiftly. People were often stung by these hornets coming out of their nests.

One day I told them that bees never stung me. Some did not believe it. Therefore, I said to them, "I will stand near the hornet nest." Those students who wanted to see for themselves followed me in a group.

When we were a stone's throw from the nests, the hornets came out and flew after the students behind me and stung them all. They all ran away!

I stepped forward alone and stood near the nest. The hornets never stung me at all! Then only were they all surprised. Some said, "This monk must have a powerful charm in order to protect danger."

Dogs never bite me!

As bees and hornets never sting me, so dogs never bite me. I have stood before a bad-natured dog; even the dogs which were in the habit of attacking strangers never bit me but they stayed aloof from me and went away.

Some dogs bark at me for a little while but then wag their tails and stayed in front of me lying or sitting, looking at me. Most dogs never endanger me

at all and they stay away from me. Therefore, I am not afraid of dogs.

Forest Fires never catch me!

Not being caught by fire is one of the benefits of *Meitā*. Though there are many bushes and trees in my monastery compound, they never catch fire.

My monastery is located in the dense forest over 7000 feet above sea-level. When summer comes, forest fires engulf the whole forest around my monastery but my monastery does not catch fire. When the fires reach the edge of the monastery-fence, they cease and never go forward. I have seen forest fires catching bushes and trees around me while I am on tour.

Sometimes, while on tour, I had a premonition, "My monastery may be on fire now!", but when I got back and observed the situation, I noticed that the forest fire had gone out just outside of the monastery-fence.

It is marvellous since the monastery is surrounded by trees and there is no vacant plot of ground around my monastery; the monastery compound is connected to the forest by bushes, trees, dry grass-lands and dry fallen leaves; naturally, the forest fire should go forward but it ceased just outside of the fence. You see, how truthful to nature is a lifeless forest fire!

In brief, you all need to live in loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and to develop on the **Kammasakatā ñāṇa**, i.e, realizing that what one does is one's own.

I myself have been practising these four sublime states-Brahmavihāras. So, I am happy and peaceful; and as a result I am healthy. Here I would like to urge you all to practise these four sublime states as we all have to go on travelling in the saṃsāric circle until we attained the blissful peace of Nibbāna.

May all sentient beings and celestial beings, be free from danger, anxiety, and misery!

May all be happy and peaceful!

May all be satisfied with good results what they wish!

Ashin U Uttamasāra

LEARNING HOW TO DIE

JUST as you need to know how to live, so it is important to learn how to die. Everybody should have recourse to something in facing death. In Buddhism there are many instructions of how to confront the king of death.

The only thing every being owns is their action, kamma. Their daily lives are dependant on their own actions - thoughts, words and deeds. No one creates them.

They create only whatever they wish. Every body should create their Kamma in accordance with their own wishes; it is possible; keep this fact in your mind.

**"HOW TO DIE"
more important than
"HOW TO LIVE"**

No one knows when the saṃsāric journey starts, nor when it stops. In the Saṃsāric circle, we all making an endless journey being low or high, inferior or superior. To reach superior realms, we have to establish good kammās; day after day we should practise to make ourselves more noble, more pure and more excellent.

In travelling through the saṃsāric journey Mettā is the best companion which cannot be compared with anything else in this world.

I have told you of Kamma and Mettā. They are the only reliable methods of how to live in this existence.

Life is ceaseless; it does not mean just living; it is also associated with death - the temporary termination of life. Everybody has to face death one day; but it is not a frightful thing; being frightened won't overcome it. If you live properly, you will be able to face death systematically. Nevertheless, I will tell you of how to die so as to gain a proper method. Indeed, I'll teach how to die.

There are so many schools in this world; but I have never heard of the school where a method of how to die is taught. If such a school were opened, no one will attend it.

But it is more important to know 'how to die' than 'how to live'.

There is a Myanmar saying, "Death is one thing and life is another; the coffin is beautiful only if the society is good." It seems to mean that the mourners who escort the coffin are like make-up and lipstick to a woman. When monks die, the funeral ceremony is even more grand. The coffin is decorated with beautiful towers, made of bamboo strips and paper and honoured with dramatic troupes and stage-shows. So some Venerable Sayadaws said that it is a worry as to whether the coffin will actually fly, or whether it will dive into lesser realms.*

Some can be saved and others cannot

Everybody whether he is a monk or a lay-man, educated or uneducated, whether he performs many meritorious deeds, if at the point of death there arises in his mind one bad thought, it will not be easy for him to reach the realm of gods. The meritorious actions which he performed through his life will produce their good results in certain future. But if he cannot control his mind to consider these meritorious deeds and objects, he becomes subject to bad effects.

He has no time to say, "Excuse me!"

**In this case, there is a Myanmar Word: "Phoneyi byan" 'Phoneyi' means 'monk' and 'byan' means 'deceased' 'passed away', or 'flying to the higher realm.' 'Monk is naturally high in moral character and thus, he may reach to the higher realms. Therefore, when monk is dead, devotees said, Our Venerable monk is now flying to the higher realms of existence': they don't say 'Our monk is dead.'*

As I am an old man I have heard stories and personally experienced bhikkhus and lay-men at the point of death suffered because they did not know the right method. Some can be saved and helped but some cannot. If a person accidentally arises in the abode of Peta, spirits or ghosts, it is possible for him to be saved; but if some one reaches the realm of animals and hell, he cannot be saved at all. Indeed, they themselves have created their Kammas.

I have told you of my pupil, Kappiya Twam-hmon, the Chin national, who transferred from one animal life to another within few months. I will tell you of another exciting story I experienced. My own mother was not able to concentrate her mind on good objects when she was at the gate of the death. Before this story, I will explain to you what happens at death.

Break the Chains of Attachment

Just like a drowning person grasps onto whatever he can reach so also a dying person's mind may be inclined to whatever object he is attached. He clings to it passionately. It is very important to break these chains of attachment.

It is very hard for men to forsake the properties he has earned through his life. Some have strong attachments to their homes. The most difficult is to cut the attachment to parents, sons and daughters, teachers and relatives who have lived together with one through life. Think it over. Is it not difficult to break these

chains? There are the things which will make you go to lower abodes.

In fact, life is just a tiny moment of the Saṃsāric circle. Sons and daughters, husbands and wives, teachers and relatives temporarily meet one another in this human world. You must be dutiful but should not be attached to them. Everybody has been on his own way through countless Saṃsāric journeys. Be pure in your mind!

The Bridge between the two Existences

As the journey is endless you should, beforehand, establish the bridge between two existences. In your mind, there should be a clear way to your goal:- "How will I confront death?" "Dāna (charity), Sīla (morality) and Bhāvanā (meditative Insight)- what support should I die? What can I rely on it?"

You should draw up a plan before your death: "What sort of Dhamma-object should I concentrate on? How should I go to another existence? How should I face death?" To reaffirm it, you should often think it over. Be in the habit of conjuring up a good Dhamma object of concentration- **Āsannakamma**, so that you are always prepared.

If **Āciṇṇakamma** is systematically controlled, the **Āsannakamma** (the object which appears in the mind at dying moment due to frequent practice) will arise out as one wishes. In fact, **Āciṇṇakamma** is one's daily effort and **Āsannakamma** is one's object of mind appeared in dying moment.

My mother, Age 87, Left Me

My mother, when she was living, did many charitable deeds, observed precepts and practised meditation on suitable occasions with the help of her teachers and I.

Nevertheless, when dying, she could not control her **Āsannakamma** and went to the realm of Peta-Demon-ghost. My mother, Daw Thay Tar, passed away calmly in her village on Friday, 8th Waxing day 1314 M.E. At that time I was on my missionary tour in Hu-Khaung Valley, Chin hills. Only when I had completed my tour programme and got back from Myitkyina to Yangon, I was told of her death by telegrams.

Indeed, it is just another goodbye after meeting in a turn of the Saṃsāric circle. Only one's Kamma is effective? Everybody makes his own way and has to continue his own journey.

Maternal Love, Maternal Attachment

When I got back to my permanent residence on Chin Hills after a tour to Assam, on the Indian border, I heard all about how my mother passed away; When she was near death she lost all appetite and did not eat or drink and was just lying on her bed. Staring at my photograph hanging at the head of her bed she would put her hands on her breast and sobbed continually. Although my elder sister Daw Yu and family persuaded her not to cry and attended to all her needs, she was morbid and depressed. When the southern wind blew

and the monsoon rain came in June and July, she would cry, "Oh! where is my big (dear) son?"

I think that my mother when dying was preoccupied, thinking, "I may never meet with my big son again." How deep and how great parental love is!

Mother as a Demon ghost

When I arrived at my residence, I passed my precious time by performing noble religious duties. Many years after the death of my mother, I had a dream: In the dream my mother with a despondant and melancholy face came and stood in the grounds in front of my monastery, "My son, young bhikkhu, please give me a set of robes if you can!"

I realized that my mother had become a demon-ghost due to the improper object of concentration at death and now she was ready to be released from that unwholesome life. So, I shared the meritorious deeds I performed particularly for her benefit.

Besides this, I sent a set of robes to my eldest sister, Daw Yu to offer together with meal to the Sayadaw of our village. In my letter I gave instructions to invite our deceased mother to the robes-donation ceremony and to share the merit with her. We can serve our parents with food and several fruits when they are still living but when they die, this is the only way to serve and respect them.

The Duty of Sons and Daughters

According to my advice, my eldest sister made a donation during Lent and shared merit with my deceased mother. But in the early morning of the next day my sister had a dream: In her dream she saw mother sitting beside the house and said "Are you here, mother? Yesterday, I had offered food and robes and shared merit, Haven't you got it?"

"You did not invite me when you went to the monastery; how could I go along with you?" replied mother. So, my sister made another donation exactly as the day before, inviting my mother going to the monastery. After pouring libation-water, my sister shared merit calling our mother by name. From that day, she never dreamt again of her mother.

In the rounds of rebirths, I was very happy to have the chance to fulfill my duties to my parents with deep gratitude. You have to understand the following five duties of sons and daughters towards parents:-

- (1) Serving the parents with food and drinks ;
- (2) Attending to the parents;
- (3) being worthy of parents' inheritance;
- (4) Donating and sharing merits with parents after their death, and
- (5) Maintaining a good lineage.

**A new Existence by the chains of attachment
still remain**

Due to the strength of her worldly attachments my poor mother was reborn in our family again, as a daughter of my eldest brother U Bo Tin. She was Mi San by name, a grand daughter of my mother, Daw Thay Tar. Even since she could talk Mi San could explain in detail the life of her grandmother. When she talked with me she used to shed tears. One day, when she went to fetch water from the well with her girl friends, they agreed to go and see the tomb of Daw Thay Tar. On seeing the words on the tomb, Mi San sobbed her heart out. How fearful the rounds of rebirths is until we attain Ariyahood. Although we reach a new life, the fetters are still firm and strong.

At present Mi San is about 26 years old. Whenever I returned to the monastery of my native village, Ngwe-twin-Kon; she cooks food and brings it to me. She pays homage to me, sitting near me and gazing at my face.

The fetters of existence are very strong and it is very difficult to release from them. We all have to make utmost endeavour in this present existence, having the intelligence and insight to do so. Only the Buddha's teaching is reliable in the sufferings of mundane world.

Though my mother become a Peta-Demon ghost, she had the chance to be saved. It is not easy to have such a chance; though it is easy, it is unsafe to rely on others.

Fearless Dhamma

Then so, let us draw a plan of how to die- the plan of **Āsannakamma**. Everybody should have a recourse in confronting with the King of death. A carnibal, **Porisāda** was preparing to eat the flesh of the king, **Mahāsutasoma**, but at that moment the king was not afraid at all, nor felt depressed a little bit. Therefore, **Porisada** asked **Mahāsutasoma**, "Why aren't you afraid of being killed, **Mahāsutasoma**?"

"I have done so many meritorious deeds; I have saved my parents, relatives and friends; I have donated offerings to the bhikkhus and Noble Persons; these noble actions have already cleared the way I have to travel. Therefore I am not afraid of being killed", replied **Mahāsutasoma**.

Therefore, of charity (**dāna**), morality (**Sīla**) and meditation (**bhāvanā**)- what shall we depend on? Most Myanmar Buddhist do charitable deeds. These deeds may be inferior, or superior, expensive or unexpensive but you have to think it over and recall one with which you were fully satisfied. You must repeatedly recall it (**Cāgānussati**) so that it will be in your mind when you die. In this way you will reach a higher abode after death.

U MYU, Donor of a monastery who died supported by his good deeds

Here I'll give you a remarkable example. In my native village, **Ngwe-twin-kon**, there was a donor of

monastery, U Myu, by name. As a novice I was used to chat with U Myu. By order of my teacher-sayadaw I had to preach Dhamma on Sabbath days in lenten season. He always sat near me in front of the audience and respectfully listened to my Dhamma-talk. After the Dhamm Assembly he used to remark, "My novice is very clever at teaching the Dhamma." He taught me from his personal experience.

As a boy he was not a good learner so he could not read the Dhamma Texts in his old age. He spoke little. When he was young he did not go hunting and killing animals. So, he was healthy up to age of over ninety.

When I came back from India and arrived at my native village I was very happy to see old men and woman living with peace and calmness. I myself served them with Horlick and milk and at that moment I asked U Myu, "How do you live in peace?" He explained in detail:-

Preparing for Death Sitting on an Ox-cart

After the death of his wife, Daw Nwe, he lived together with his daughter, Daw Lon Mi and her husband, U Chit Maung who attended their old father with true love. He needed not care for anything in his old age, nor worry about his livelihood. When he could not work properly he was speechless. Making his mind purified, he lived in peace. It may be said that he was preparing for his calm death so as to transfer his present

life to another noble existence.

There was an ox-cart in his compound, not far from his house. Only a lane divided the monastery which he had donated and his own house. The old man, U Myu spread the rough mat on the ox cart and used to sit or lie on it after his meal. In the past, he had constructed a big monastery with seven spires and donated it to the presiding Sayadaw. While laying or sitting on his cart, he would gaze at that great building and was satisfied with his noble deeds. In fact, he was practising Cāgānussati, the recollection of charitable deeds. It is sure that he has reached higher abodes.

The King who did not eat

without offering meal to Saṃghā

About two thousand years ago (about one hundred years B.C) there was a king whose example should be followed. He was very popular due to his generosity. His name was king Duṭṭhagāmani from Sri Lanka. He was well-known for his missionary works. He even fought wars, not to capture Kingdom, but to spread religion. His charitable deeds were also very famous and exemplified. He never ate without offering to a member of Saṃghā.

Once, he uninocently ate a chilly while he was fighting a battle. When he had gained the throne, as if to punish himself, he constructed a Ceti, 60 feet high and 560 feet in girth. It cost altogether nineteen crores. The ceti was named, "Maricavatti" a round chilly pod.

Over One Hundred Crores Donated

The warriors, Duṭṭhagāmani, Abhaya, etc together with their soldiers had been fighting against the rebel, Damilha for Śāsaṇā in 29 battles over two years. Finally they overwhelmed the island of Srilanka and Duṭṭhagāmani became King. Having won the throne, the king's right-hand man, the warrior Abhaya went into retreat, exchanging the mundane world for the internal battle against Kilesā- defilements. Soon, he became an Arahanta who possessed of Supernormal powers and Jhānic trance.

During a reign of 24 years, the king Duṭṭhagāmani constructed religious stupas such as Maha Ceti of 120 cubits high with steeples and nine spires roofed with bronze plates, ninety-nine monasteries etc. Over 1049 crores in cash were donated but the jewels decorated in those buildings were uncountable.

Many Charitable Deeds not Remembered

I would like to say here that king Duṭṭhagāmani was very afraid to face death because he did not remember the charitable deeds he had performed. He cried remembering on the past. The only object of his memory was his best and intimate friend, the warrior, Abhaya.

He entertained such a thought:-

"The rebel Damilha and his followers fought bravely against me, but now since they realize that they will be defeated beforehand, they will not fight against

me again."

In fact, he remembered nothing helpful!

You should notice here that we are all likely to forget the importance of self-reliance when we encounter hardships.

Nevertheless, the Mahā Thera Abhaya saw this situation by the power of the his Divine Ear, and he came to the King and stayed at the head of his bed. The King, as he thought about his friends, supplicated to the Mahā Thera Abhaya.

A Good Choice

The Thera taught the king how changeable and transitory the conditioned things were and comforted him. He explained how to meditate on the nature of mentality and materiality, and how to develop Bhāvanā. But the king could not follow the lecture. As soon as the Mahā Thera noticed his weak-point, he changed his teaching method:-

"Oh Noble King! You've done so many meritorious deeds in this saṃsāra; Recollect all these one after another repeatedly and choose one which pleased you most. Then, recollect only that repeatedly. A little bit of charity can make you reach to the higher realm; there is no need to speak of your numerous meritorious deeds!"

According to the Mahā Thera's instruction, the king made his registrar recount the list of his charitable deeds, in his presence. The registrar cited all the items

of the lists to the king, including bronze monastery of 30 crores, the cost of Mahā Ceti, 99 monasteries and others but the king did not seem to be pleased with his great donations.

The registrar continued to recount the list of lesser worth. One item of little amount fully satisfied him and he showed his satisfaction with gleeful words.

The item that satisfied the king was:-

"While he was wandering about in a dense mountainous forest during the war between two brothers, he donated a Mahā Thera all he had to eat, and also at the time of food scarcities he sold his royal ear-rings and served Five Mahā Thera with poor alms-food.

In short, the king Duṭṭagāmani, though he had unaccountable meritorious deeds, died with the thought-process including towards those acts of merit and went up to the abode of Tāvatiṃsa. This is the example of being able to reach higher realms only with the mind of charity in dying moment.

To Die with Morality and Importance of Repeated Performance

Here I will show you of how to die with morality. The kamma-actions performed mentally, verbally and bodily at the gate of the death are called **Asanna - kamma**. When near death, the body is weak and only mental actions are prominent. Therefore, we have to depend only on them.

As the dying moment only comes once, it is very important to be exact and perfect in whatever one does. So, I emphasize this fact.

**Remembering the donation of robes only when
seeing the red flames of Hell**

Some one may have done numerous meritorious deeds; however numerous they are, if he inclines his mind towards unwholesome objects when dying, he may reach to the lower abodes; the thought moment at death determines his destination. If the meritorious deeds he has done through his life are out of his thoughts, they cannot come into his thought-process when dying. The good results may arise later, but the unwholesome objects at that instance, will produce bad effects.

In the life-time of the Buddha, a dying devotee who had offered a set of robes had vision of such objects of hell as flames, warders and cauldrons on account of his demeritorious deeds done through his life. Fortunately, he remembered his donation of robes when he saw the red hellfires.

At that moment, the hellish objects disappeared from his thought-process and objects of heaven immediately appeared. Thus, he went up to the higher Deva Lokas due to the immediate remembrance of the donation of robes at the dying moment. Keep that fact in your mind.

Therefore, the Buddha expounded **Śīlānussati** and

Cāgānūssati - the repeated recollection of one's own morality and the repeated recollection of one's own charity.

Āsannakamma Similar to an old Ox

In Buddhist texts, **Āsannakamma** is compared with an old ox. The one who raises cattles opens the gate of his cow-pen to let cattles go out every morning, drives them to pasture and watches them on the grounds. When evening comes, he drives them back to their pen and shut them in.

On their return way, they jostle with one another at the gate of the cow-pen. Of these, the stronger cattles enter ahead and the weaker ones follow later. Thus the old ox moves aside and have to let the stronger ones enter first and have to follow later. When the old ox gets into the cow-pen, there are only soggy areas left because the stronger and younger ones have already taken good places. So, it has to take the place near the gate of the cow-pen where cow-dung and rubbish are piled.

It really had to enter later and stays at the entrance of the cow-pen. But, when morning comes and the cow-herd opens the gate for their pasture, who will come out first? The stronger ones? or the old ones?

This example is very notable. No matter how many stronger ones there are, when coming out of the cow-pen, the oldest and weakest will be first. In the similar way how many notable meritorious deeds through the

life, a little bit of merit or good thought process done at the gate of death will first effect the next existence. The last one in is the first one out:

From Āciṅṅakamma to Āsannakamma

In brief, perform meritorious deeds as routine and always remember them. Such a bit is called **Āciṅṅakamma** - regularly practised kamma. As the object regularly practised many times becomes habitual action, it can never be forgotten even at the time of dying when one is distracted by pain.

U Koe ends his life with Morality

I will now tell of U Koe who ended his life with morality. He lived in my native village Ngwe-twin-kon. U Koe was a donor of a Marble Buddha Image which was bought from Mandalay to be donated in the village monastery. U Koe and U Myu lived in the same village; U Koe was a toddy tree climber and U Myu was a farmer. They each had ten children. They were of the same height and both of them were widowers. But U Koe with beautiful moustache, was younger and more handsome than U Myu.

U Myu lived with his eldest daughter, receiving her gentle care but U Koe lived alone in his own house when his wife, Daw Nwe, died. Both were happy and peaceful. U Myu depended on others but U Koe led an independent life, and was more free than U Myu.

Regular Observance of Precepts:

U Koe always took precepts daily and went to the village monastery every morning and again in the evening. When he got to the monastery, he would go to the hall of Buddha Images and say prayers squatting before the image he had donated. And then, he took precepts. Sometimes he would sit in the shade and would read Buddhist literature such as Biography of Buddha (Jinatthapakāsani) and stories of Dhammapada. At other times he would perform monastic duties and count beads. Indeed, he passed his time by doing good deeds!

Seeking the Way to Peace after Wiping Tears

In the War-time I returned to my native village and met with U Koe. It seemed that I reminded him of his sons and daughters who were living in Yangon. He said, "Before my death, I would like to see my sons and daughters again; I fear that I may not see them again in such a abominable age!" That is indeed the strong attachment of parents to their children.

I said, "Sons and daughters are, indeed, like the extra carriage of a train in this Saṃsāric circle; you need not to be overwhelmed with the anxiety of them. Note that it is very important that the journey to the next existence be good!"

Then U Koe wiped his tears as he realized the nature of Dhamma and promised, "I detach myself from the bound of my children."

From that time onwards, he performed his noble routine regularly and ended his life in peaceful state without any pain. It is sure that U Koe being replete with the regular observance of precepts and putting his mind in a good state may reach to higher realms of abodes.

Indeed, these people are not rich and literate but their simplicity and attitude towards their religious life are very notable and remarkable.

Seven Hundred Sailors in Life-time of Buddha

Here I would like to tell you of how to face the death being embedded in noble precepts.

It was the time when the Buddha resided at the Jetavana monastery of Sāvatti. A crew of seven hundred Sailors went out for trade in their vessels which was as swift as an arrow. After seven days, they unexpectedly ran into a strong storm and great waves swamped over the deck and floundered the bilge of the vessel. The water was rising and whole vessel was gradually sinking.

Fearless State in Pure Mind

At that moment, the sailors were crying for help, running to and fro in terror on the deck. Some said prayers, calling the respective names of the spirits they worshipped, clasping their bundles of possessions, sought refuges. The whole vessels was floundering filled with cries and all the crew in helpless-chaos. But

a Buddhist devotee, at that instance, was cool and calm as the waves crashed over him; he sat with his eyes closed, not seeing or hearing anything. Indeed, he was calmly sitting !

It is natural for men to be worried and panic when confronting hardship. How unendurable it is to face death ! It is very important to face hardship calmly with the mind purified. That Buddhist sailor had already determined to face the present situation, and had courageously face the king of death just like the king, Maha Sutasoma. Therefore, he could fearlessly sit cross-legged with firm resolution.

How to Live in Fearless State

Those sailors who noticed his strange manner asked him in surprise, " My friend, aren't you afraid in such fearful conditions? Why are you sitting here in such a fearless manner ?" He replied calmly, "My friends, let me explain ; - it is useless and fruitless to be afraid of facing danger ; as for me, I prepared my refuge, first; on the day I boarded the vessel, I offered a meal to the Bhikku Saṅgha, undertaking the five precepts together with the three refuges-tisaraṇas. My precepts are still maintained; at this present moment, I am recollecting these precepts together with the three refuges. Therefore, I'm not afraid of this dangerous situation."

Indeed, he was recollecting his pure precepts **Sīlānussati** as he was more interested in his precepts

than his noble donation - Cāgānussati. This is one of the Forty Subjects of Smatha Kammṭhāna - a task which develops one's own merits.

"Let us ask you, please, my friend; can others undertake the precepts together with the three refuges?"

"Yes, of course, you may do whatever I do." Therefore, the sailors asked him for the method of how to live in fearless state.

Observance of Precepts in Sinking Vessel

At the time of adversity, these precepts and refuges are dependable. Thus the seven hundred sailors were divided into seven groups- one hundred in each. In the sinking vessel, each group undertook five precepts together with the three refuges. They did it as quickly as they could, but-

- While the first group was observing the precepts, the water in the vessel sank upto their ankles;
- The second group, upto the knees;
- The third group, upto the waist;
- The fourth group, upto the navel;
- The fifth group, upto the pith of the stomachs
- The sixth group, upto the ocsophagus; and
- The seventh group, upto the mouth and they swallowed the salty water of the sea so that they had to follow the words of the devotee with garbled voice.

After they all had undertaken the precepts, the

Buddhist devotee called out to them, "My friends, stay calm with recollection of your precepts." Not long after, all were drowned.

Due to the immediate observance of precepts, all the sailors reached to the higher abodes of Tāvatiṃsa, living in golden mansions peacefully and happily.

As soon as they reached to the Tāvatiṃsa abode, they thought over why they were there and knew that it was due to the friendship of a Buddhist devotee sailor in their previous existence. They assembled together, went forth to the Buddha and supplicated their gratitude to the devotee.

Un countable Gratitude of the Noble Ones

It is very pleasant to know that the six deities on behalf of the seven hundred, supplicated one by one the uncountable gratitude of the devotee to the Buddha. The first deity supplicated:-

- (1) **Sabbhi reva samāsetha**
Sabbhi Kubbetha Santhavaṃ
Sataṃ saddhamma maññāya
Seyyo hoti na pāpiyo.

Live with the noble one; befriend with the noble one; knowing the ethical practice of the noble one, a person can increase his status, but not decrease. The others supplicated in similar phrases; "Knowing the ethical practice of the noble one - only the last sentence was different:-

- (2) The second deity specifically supplicated:-

"A person can achieve the wisdom which cannot be attained from the foolish."

(Just like only the sesamum oil is crushed into oil but the grains of sand cannot be done so.)

(3) The third deity supplicated:-

"A person who is associated with noble ones can live in peace and happiness among panic and chaos."

(4) The fourth deity supplicated:-

"A person associated with noble ones is possessed of glory among his relatives".

(5) The fifth deity supplicated:-

"Those who are associated with noble ones may reach the wholesome abodes."

(6) The sixth deity supplicated:-

"A person associated with noble ones has eternal blissful peace."

Note Worthy Facts for Seaman

After the supplications, one of the deities supplicated again, "Your Venerable Sir, whose is the most truthful and excellent?"

The Buddha replied, "All of your supplications, are truthful and excellent. But, you all have to listen to my notable words:-

- Sabbhi reva Samāsetha
Sabbhi Kubbetha santhavaṃ
Sataṃ saddhamma maññāya
Sabbadukkhā pamuccati.

(Meaning: Knowing the ethical practice of the noble ones by associating with them and following their practice, not only can you again the achievements that you all have supplicated, but also you can be released from all sorts of sufferings, attaining the noble achievement of Arahatsip.)

How benifitial and fruitful the association with noble ones is!

If the seven hundred sailors had not had the fortune to meet the devotee sailor, most of them would have gone down to the unwholesome state of hell. Now they may achieve the blissful peace of higher abodes. Therefore, depending on their inclinations, they supplicated the Buddha in the above-mentioned manner. You have to understand that the benefit of the union of noble ones can completely be known only by the fully enlightened Buddhas.

The deities, after uttering solemn words, Sādhu, Sādhu, Sādhu, flew up to their abode- Tāvatisa Deva Loka. This story is retold in Devatā Saṃyutta of Saṃyutta Pāli. Those sailors who have to risk their lives in the sea should take note and follow this example.

Bear in your mind with firm confidence that even those who were not genuine Buddhists can achieve such a benifits due to the immediate observance of five precepts when facing death. Especially, recollect your regular practised precepts through your life at the time of dying. Just like the devotee sailor in the story, you should firmly observe your precepts to be happy to see

your pure precepts.

Four Methods of Death

Since you are healthy, you have to consider how to face death. I have already explained two methods of death, the one with charity and the other with precepts.

Now, I have to explain the one with Bhāvanā but I will touch it later. In conclusion of the one with precepts I will go on touching with **Saraṇagamaṇa** - the three refuges.

When a dying person cannot open his eyes, nor raise up his head, and his consciousness is blurred and can only grasp vagued objects; at that time he can do nothing - neither recollect the precepts and his donations, nor even the development of Bhāvanā meditation., What should he do at this important moment? He should recite the words, "Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi; Dhammaṃ Saraṇaṃ gacchāmi; Saṃghaṃ Saraṇaṃ gacchāmi - I take refuge in the Buddha, I take refuge in the Dhamma, and I take refuge in the samgha. Each should be recited three times. He should practise it when he regains consciousness.

Nine Gāthās without ei sound

All Buddhists have always recited the above-mentioned nine gāthās. While you are healthy or you are conscious when ill, you should always make it a habit to recite them. Bearing their meanings in mind, you should practise it in advance.

If it is practised while walking, going, living, sitting, it becomes a habitual action. There will be no danger nor hardship on your journey by reciting it. For everyone it is very beneficial to do so. Therefore, the old teachers say, "Nine Gāthās without 'ei' diphthong." It is also called, Sabbamaṅgala Gāthā as it can carry all auspicious things.

Whenever you are on journey, you should recite it. By doing so, it may be said that you have two benefits: You do not meet with danger and you are already prepared for your dying moment.

Ariyasāvatti Gāthā and Three Anussatis

Do not think of it as little value because every body learns it by heart. It is more beneficial than other kinds of gāthās because it is a genuine teaching of the Buddhas and fundamental to a Buddhist. It raises a man upto the life of a genuine Buddhist and so it is called in Buddhist texts, "Ariyasāvatti Gāthā." Anyone who does not recite these three gathas may not be called "A genuine Buddhist."

When your recitation improves day by day the clear outlook of a Buddhist and the pure sentiment in its meaning may gradually arise in your mind.

You will definitely realize Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha how noble they are, how reliable they are, in the whole world. And, according to the scope of your knowledge and realization, you may already have recollected the three kinds of recollections on Buddha,

Dhamma, and Saṃgha Order - **Buddhānussati**, **Dhammānussati** and **Samghānussati**. Such noble ones as Buddha, Arhanta, etc, as they fully realized their value, urged devotees to recite and recollect them for ever. Therefore you should follow their noble instruction repeatedly.

**Corporal U Hla Shwe, going to Higher Abodes
with the Three Refuges**

I will tell you about U Hla Shwe who went up to the higher abode after ending his life with the three refuges. He was no other than my intimate pupil Kappiya, U Hla Shwe the corporal.

At afternoon of the 4th Waxing Day (Wednesday) of the month Tagu, 1341 Myanmar Era, I was washing the spitting basin in the stream at the west of my parmanent residence. At that moment my pupil Maung Chit Shwe came to me and said, "Your Venerable Sir, a man from Pakokkhu is waiting to see you in your monastery."

"Let him come to me", I replied and continued my work.

Light-Living as Paccēka Buddhas

The guest was smart and immediately came to see me and paid homage to me respectfully. After that, he said to me, "Your venerable Sir, let me wash your spitting-basin", but I did not give it to him. As I was used to living in the forest, I did not want to depend on others.

Following the noble examples of the ancient Pacceka Buddhas dwelling in the Gandhamadana of Himaliyan mountain ranges, I myself wash my robes and bowls.

When I returned to my monastery he followed me. He was shorter than I and I had to look down to him. His nose was pointed and he wore a short moustache. Indeed, he was handsome with this bushy moustache.

Arriving Here By Admission Letter

Sitting on a chair, I asked, "Are you Corporal Hla Shwe as you come from Pokokkhu?" He said "Yes, of course, I came from Pakokkhu, via Gangaw and Kalay." He brought only a small bundle of his own property - an old military bag and an ewer as he was an ex-army man. He also brought gifts for me, a pair of slippers, four packages of soured peas and a rice bag containing about four pyis which he had brought from Kalaymyo.

I allowed him to stay with me as he wanted to attend to me and perform meditational works. Before he arrived, he had written to me twice, asking for my permission.

It was the hot season when he arrived but the climate on Chin Hills is usually cold at night, as the rain falls occasionally. He could not sleep at night with one thick blanket and I had to give him another woolly blanket.

Daily Diet

At that time, I had two Kappiyas in my monastery:- U Chit Twe of about 70 and his pupil, Ko Chit Shwe of about 30 who came from Shwebo. Now, Ko Hla Shwe had come to live together with them; their diet became a bit difficult. The breakfast was rice gruel and the morning meal before noon was rice with vegetables.

Once a month, they had to go to Falam to buy rice in the Co-operative shop but only a quota could be bought. Due to rice-scarcity they could only eat rice-gruel in the evening. U Chit Twe did not take food after noon as he undertook eight precepts. There was no village where we had to go alms-rounds, nor any person who would send something to have. Nevertheless, the alms-rice was sent from Kalaymyo regularly and we had enough alms-food with vegetable curries.

Collecting Vegetables and Woods, and Daily Reading and Meditating

The daily routine of my three Kappiyas was hearing Dhamma lectures and reading Dhamma texts at mid-day, and meditating with me in the afternoon. Their Kammatthāna was breath-in and breath-out meditation-*Ānāpāna*. Once every week, they went to the post office of Falam Township and brought necessary provisions such as salt and vegetables. In this way, Ko Hla Shwe was happy to lead a solitary life in the dense forest and high mountainous regions for over three

years.

Ko Hla Shwe became intimate friend with some Chin nationals and Gurakha devotees of near-by villages. He was a man of industry and perseverance; he did not waste his time. Not long after he arrived, he cleared the whole monastery compound which was covered with grass. I did not ask him to do so for he did it with good cetanā, voluntarily.

When the hot season came, U Chit Twe and he carried dry wood from the forest to the monastery. Occasionally they collected vegetables from the forest to eat. He became accustomed to the seasonal weather, lived for about four years in the forest. Once a year, he went to his native place, Gan-gaw, in the winter.

A New Life of Ko Hla Shwe

Ko Hla Shwe had great rewards living with me. As a Myanmar Saying goes; "In association with the noble ones, a person may become a noble one", he become a pure-minded person and he lived a noble life, being gentle in all verbal and bodily actions. He refrained from doing evil deeds and observed the nature of noble ones. In comparison with his past events which he himself personally admitted, I can evaluate his status of personal qualities.

As a matter of fact, he may have fulfilled perfections in his past existences. After reading my articles in the Dhammabyuhar series, he decided to live with me in the dense forest and follow my way of living

in order to gain the life he longed for and to improve his health. He was, in deed a clever one who put to effect that he was determined to do.

He had been a drunkard when he was in the army. When he lived with me, he stopped drinking and restrained from eating meat. He persuaded others not to eat meat, explaining how detestable and undesirable it was.

As A Dullabha Bhikkhu

Every night, we all were sitting in meditation in my monastery. They read different kinds of Dhamma literature such as Dhammapada stories, Five Hundred and Fifty Jataka Stories, etc. My Ko Hla Shwe always read the book, "Arahanta and other Noble Ones" written by Dhammacariya U Htay Hlaing and revered the ancient noble ones whole-heartedly. Therefore, I urged him to be ordained a Dullabha bhikkhu and he agreed.

At the fullmoon day of Kason, the Buddha Day, 1345 Myanmar Era, the Falam Buddhist Association held an annual Ordination and Noviciation Ceremony and Ko Hla Shwe was fully ordained a Dullbha bhikkhu by an epithet of U Revata. I was satisfied with this auspicious event and he was very please with it, too.

Ko Hla Shwe was a good attendant and he knew how to assist his teacher. When I was unwell, he tenderly looked after me and when he was in ailment, too, I returned his tender care. We may have been life-partners in a certain past existence and therefore, I led

him to the peaceful way of life in this short turn of the saṃsāric wheel.

The Full Realization of How to live

Basically I taught him how to live in peace and happiness with loving-kindness. A part from this, I showed him other different kinds of ways of living-how to develop breath-in and breath-out meditation (Method of *Ānāpāna Kammatthāna*) to make a swift release from Saṃsāric suffering; how to recollect the great virtues of the Buddha (Method of *Buddhānussati Kammatthāna*) to live in higher status of Saṃsāric circle; how to scrutinize the world of beings who are making rounds and rounds of Saṃsāric Existence; how to incline; how to scrutinize the world of beings who are making rounds and rounds of Saṃsāric existence; how to incline the mind towards the weary nature of the lives seeing into beginningless and endlessness of Saṃsāric circle; how to contemplate one's own body as a detestable and abominable formation (*Asubha Kammatthāna*) in order to eradicate egoistic views etc, etc.

I think he, living together with me in forest, knew the different ways of living between the two lives: the secluded life of a holy person and the worldly pleasures of an ordinary human being. At least he may peep at these differences through his eyes of wisdom.

Tracking His Past life

Ko Hla Shwe was born in Pakokkhu, descended from a lineage of boat-man. His father died when he was an infant. At about 18, while he was in school, he joined the army and wandered in different regions of Myanmar; Shan State, Mon State, Karen State, Irrawaddy Division etc. After about his twenty years of service his ear was hurt by a bomb on a local Hinzada train and at about forty, he left the army. He returned to live with his mother at Pakokkhu. After his mother's death, he moved to Gan-gaw.

One year after his arrival, Ko Chit Shwe returned to his native village and there were only two Kappiyas left, Ko Hla Shwe and U Chit Twe. When U Chit Twe went into Central Myanmar, Ko Hla Shwe was alone in my monastery. He occasionally said, "Your Venerence gets older and should have a permanent attendant Kappiya; I shall not, I think, live with you much longer."

In his youth, he had married a Mon lady and had a child. While he was stationed at the front the mother and the child were killed in a battle. Intending to remarry, he moved to another places.

The Aim of Permanent Stay at Kalaymyo

"Your Venerable Sir, I think I am still young enough to get married; to earn a good livelihood, I want to move and live in Kalaymyo permanently.", he said to me openly. As I had taught him how to live in peace

and happiness I easily allowed him to do so.

He seemed to be satisfied with his life of a Dullabah bhikkhu and thought that he could achieve a perfect manhood. Having returned to the life of layman, he moved to Kalaymyo, and earned his living making sandals. His business prospered. While he was travelling to Gan-Gaw on business, he came down with a fever on the boat. As he had already had malaria, he was severely ill but managed to get back to Kalaymyo.

Unexpected Final Departure

As his fever was very serious, he was sent to Kalaymyo hospital by his landlord, U Than Tun. Doctors and nurses gave him intensive treatment but seven days after admission, he died at about 3 p.m on Saturday, 3rd Wanning day of Tawthalin, 1345 M.E. The next day a funeral ceremony was conducted by the War Veterans Association of Kalaymyo.

Finding one hundred Kyats in his pocket, it was used for his funeral ceremony. His body was buried in cemetery, east of Kalaymyo. Some of his friends did not know of his death. Whenever I talked about him, I felt sorry for him. I remembered his words; "At my youthful age, I have to earn money like others and lead a settled life at Kalaymyo; after that I will come back to you, Venerable Sir!" In fact, he unexpectedly left this life when still youthful!

Pleasure and Sorrow

To say the truth when I heard that Ko Hla Shwe had died I felt so sorry for him that I did not want to talk. Whenever I saw the things in my monastery which he himself had done, I remembered him and sometimes tears welled up in my eyes. It reminded me of my weak point to be improved, although I was living in peace of Dhamma; this remorseful thought forced me to endeavour in higher mindfulness, perseverance and enlightenment coming to be a benefit out of loss. I was glad to know that he followed my instructions with firm belief and achieved his success.

Being a Deva, by a Fair Death

I arrived at Kalaymyo on Saturday 1st Wanning day or Tabaung, 1345 M.E, U Than Tun's family and Ko Hla Shwe were intimate friends. The eldest son of U Than Tun supplicated, "Ko Hla Shwe is a man of good nature; he said that he would return to Gan-Gaw and enter the life of bhikkhu if he recovered from his illness and he would give all of his tools to me; he can admonish all of our brothers and we all love him as if he were a blood-relative; indeed he is the best friend of our family." He looked after Ko Hla Shwe through his illness and thus knew about his death. He continued to supplicate, "Your Venerable Sir, I lived with him when he was healthy; when he was unwell, too, I accompanied him to the hospital. As his fever was very severe, he was unconscious in hospital almost all the

time; when regained consciousness, he never talked but was always making a low recitation. As I wanted to know about what he was whispering, I listened to him and heard these words:-

1. **Buddho mayhaṃ Sukhaṃ detu,
Saṃsāra Vaṭṭadukkhato mocanathāya
Buddhaṃ Saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.**
2. **Dhammo mayhaṃ Sukkaṃ detu.
Saṃsāra vaṭṭadukkhato mocanathāya
Dhammaṃ Saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.**
3. **Samgho mayhaṃ sukkaṃ detu.
Saṃsāra vaṭṭadukkhato mocanathāya
Samghaṃ Saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.**

"The sclera of his eyes turned upwards occasionally while reciting but when he was conscious of the words, he whispered again. Sometimes he would do it in a very very low tone. I recognized the verse as he had taught it to me. On the day he died, I was not there."

It was very gratifying to know the detailed facts and I was also proud of his noble activities even when he was battling against death.

While living together with me on Chin Hills I taught him how to face death repeatedly. I often said to him, "If a person recites the three refuges at the time of death he can reach to the spiritual world of Catumahārājika devas at least."

I gave him a booklet - the Benefits of the three Refuges, preached by Taungpula Kaba-Aye tawya syadawgyi and taught him how to read it. "The Benefits

of the Three Gems" written by Dhammacariya U Htay Hlaing was his manual, too. Maung Ne Lin, the younger son of U Than Tun gave more facts about Ko Hla Shwe and I was more glad to hear them. The time he lived together with me seemed to be a training course in how to die. It may be said that he achieved a perfection during the rare chance to be a human being. Note that you can attain a perfection of human life if you died with the noble three refuges. Maung Ne Lin said, "Your Venerable Sir, not long after U Hla Shwe's death, I had a wonderful dream: U Hla Shwe recovered from his ailment and was happily playing with children; he wore the crest of deva on his head and was very handsome and glorious to behold; his appearance was totally different from that in human's life; he disappeared while I was looking at him."

How beneficial and fruitful it is to live by the teachings of Buddhas and to associate with the noble ones!

Attaining Arahatsip

With the Help of the three Refuges

In the life-time of the Buddha, devotees knew the benefits of the three refuges and some women would recite the three Gems in pregnancy not only for themselves, but also for the embryo in their wombs.

During the life time of the Buddha, a person called, "Saraṇagamaṇa Mahā Thera attained Arahatsip by means of firm belief in the Three Refuges. Throughout

the lives of the sixteen Buddhas, starting from that of Padumuttara Buddha, he never heard of the four worlds of hell and lived in higher abodes such as human and deva abodes.

Everyone Having Respective Past Causes:

There was a boy of seven ages in Savāthi. The boy while playing with his friends went into the compound of the monastery. An Arahanta residing there warmly welcomed them. He taught them to three Refuges and preached suitable teachings to them.

As soon as he recited the word, "Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi", the boy was overwhelmed by ecstatic delight and it was for him like an abrupt awakening from a sound sleep; his intellectual quality, like alive coal covered with ashes, immediately achieved enlightenment. Due to this observance of the three refuges, he developed insight-meditation and attained an Arahantship there at once.

Every being has their own respective past causes; repeated performance in certain intellectual life can be conducive to certain benefits in the whole rounds of Saṃsāra. Therefore, you should not think it of a little value.

The One Who Served Blind Parents

That boy was the one who served his blind parents in Bandhumatī, in the life-time of Vipassī buddha. He envied the life of Bhikkhu whenever he saw them. He often thought to himself, "I have duty to serve my

blind parents; but how excellent my life would be if I were and free of duty like others." Finally he gave up his wish and decided to take firm refuge in the three Saraṇa-gamaṇas, "It is fruitless to long for what cannot be obtained; to die with the three refuges I may release from all of these sufferings." He approached an Aggasāvaka, Nisabha Mahāthera and took refuge in them in his presence. After his death, he was reborn in Tāvatisa abode.

Easy to Attain Spiritual Life

Through the lives of the Seven Buddhas, Vipassī, Sikhī, Vessabhū, Kakusandha, Koṇāgamaṇa, Kassapa, Gotama, he wandered in higher abodes due to his unwavering observance of the three refuges. As I said earlier, he was reborn in the richest family of Mahāsāla clan in the life time of Gotama Buddha and immediately attained Arahatsip even at the age of seven. How emulous of his life it is!

Therefore, live and die with the three refuges! You may be guaranteed not to fall into the hellish worlds. There is no more excellent stanza than that simple one. Don't follow the strange (modernized) stanzas which are not the Buddha's teachings, with the hope of being released from dangers and gaining specific goals. Indeed, the stanza, **Buddhaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi** is called **Sabbamaṅgala Gāthā** meaning the stanza which is replete with all sort of auspicious glories.

Saraṇagamaṇa, Protecting Immediate Death

Concerning the Saraṇagamaṇa, there are so many things to be talked about. Just as dying with the Saraṇagamaṇa is a sure way to the higher spiritual Worlds so also a person who has resolutely observed Saraṇagamaṇa will not meet any sort of untimely death. I will tell you an example from my own experience.

U Vāyama

It was during the days of World War II, the Japanese rule in Myanmar. There was a village called Kyun-yin, Depayin township, Shwebo district. The presiding Sayadaw in the village monastery was U Vāyama. It is difficult to be a good bhikkhu, to be simple and honest, and show the right way of living to the lay-men. U Vāyama was replete with these qualities and his monastery was prosperous.

In those days, as chaos reigned in the country robberies and thefts were numerous everywhere; evil-doers even robbed from holy persons without remorse.

One night by the light of the moon, a group of armed robbers entered the monastery of U Vāyama. As soon as they got inside, they tied the bhikkhu tightly with ropes and took him to a forest.

Obervance of Saraṇagamaṇa at a rim of pit

Arriving at a clearing, he found that he was near the rim of deep pit which had been dug. The bhikkhu asked, "What will you do me?"

"We'll kill you and burry you in this pit", promptly replied the robbers.

"Ah! you may kill me; if I have a bad kamma I have to accept such death, but wait for a moment; let me worship the buddha", replied the bhikkhu courageously.

As Ven. U Vāyama had already observed the three refuges resolutely, he was not afraid of death and dared to face it. As soon as he got permission from the robbers, he squated at the rim of the pit, put his hands on his forehead and concentrated on the Buddha, saying in his mind:-

**"Ahaṃ Buddhaṃ Saraṇaṃ gacchāmi,
Ahaṃ Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi,
Ahaṃ Saṃghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi."**

Another Wonderful Event

The robbers were watching the Bhikkhu pray in the bright moon light. Suddenly a heavy rain storm fell unexpectedly and it became so dark that nothing could be seen and the robbers fled in terror. U Vāyama himself was astonished to experience such a marvellous event and realized that all the ropes tied around his body had automatically loosened. Thinking deeply of the benefit of the three refuges, he went back his monastery safe and sound.

Had U Vāyama been killed in that situation, he would have reached to the higher realm of Deva Loka-spiritual World.

Property is Enemy

U Vāyama thought it over again and again he had no enemy; he did not argue, nor fight with anyone; finally he found the solution to the present question. Indeed, the properties in his monastery were the true enemies- the prime cause. In such a time of collapse, these properties he owned were harmful to him. He was able to differentiate friend from foe.

Therefore, he took only his requisites and went to reside in Vaso Monastery of Ye-U, Shwebo district. Two years later he moved to the monastery in Thayetpinsu Village by invitation of the village devotees. He died there recently.

In brief, do not look down the three refuges; even the bhikkhu have to rely on them; notice that Tungpulutawya Sayadawgyi himself emphasized the THREE REFUGES.

Transferring of Life with Bhāvanā

Let's continue to talk about the transferring of life with the help of meditation-Bhāvanā. Some think that it may not be possible; it may be out of their reach. Some also presume that meditation should be done only in old age. Neither is true. It is not difficult to meditate. Indeed, it is only too easy to perform it.

You need to repeatedly practise any sort of meditation you like in preparation. Your repeated practice may become Āciṅṅakamma. For instance, when dying, you must be able to practise the meditation

you have engaged in beforehand, breath-in and breath-out meditation (**Ānāpāna**), repeated recollection of the virtues of Buddha (**Buddhānussati**), the meditation on Loving-Kindness or whatever you like to practise.

You'd better perform meditation daily and if it is done so, you'll easily get control of yourself when the occasion arises.

To Practise Overwhelming Feeling

'Old-age, disease and death' is a serial order. Death arises due to painful sensation of a certain disease. So, you have to prepare diligently for a painful disease which will bring you to death. In order to overwhelm such a painful sensation of death you must be well practised in your meditation beforehand. Even when you are healthy you may have painful diseases. You need to overcome the pain of the disease whatever it is. There is a Myanmar Saying, "Before you enter the competition area, you have to practise outside strength." it is a custom of meditation teachers these days to urge their followers to overcome painful sensations.

Vedanā

To overcome painful sensations means to fix the concentration on the meditated object without being distracted towards the pain which arises. For example, if a person meditates on breath-in and breath-out, he should not incline his mind towards his pains, but only to the tip of his nose. This is the method of evading

the painful sensation.

Attitude towards Meditating on Feeling

According to the method of **Vedanānupassanā Kammaṭṭhāna** -repeated insight-meditation on feeling- a person who meditates on the feeling, should be careful to direct his concentration towards it. Note this fact carefully. It is very important for a devotee who meditates on feeling to get it under control, with the hope of over-whelming it. But over-whelming it is not a main factor. You have to note it with detachment. Why?

Longing to overwhelm the feeling may result irresistible state of mind, dosa-anger, lobha-longing, or māna-conceit arising out of the thought:- "how easy it is! I can do it however it is!" Therefore it is more important to meditate on the arising of feeling in a clear state of mind than to overwhelm it.

Fruitless it is to never engage in Meditation

Here a brief outline is to have a regular repeated performanee. (**Āciṇṇakamma**) in your respective meditation objects. In this golden age there are many meditation instructors and experienced meditators in Myanmar. This is the improvement to the Myanmar **Sāsanā**. I would like to urge those who have-never practised meditation in such a golden time, that not to do so would make being a human fruitless.

In truth, the instruction to die with the recollection of **Dāna**, or **Sīla**, or **Saraṇagamaṇa** is only

for those who have never practised meditation. In fact, the recollection of dāna, etc. is a sort of Bhavana-meditation but it will not be performed as proficient as an experienced meditator; the less concentrative power of the meditation, the less beneficial to the meditator.

Therefore, do not waste your time. Engage in any sort of meditation, following the proper methods.

Devas in Myanmar

As experienced meditators become numerous in Myanmar there are signs and stories of devas existing. Indeed, there are so many Myanmar Devas in higher abodes of spirits.

Undesiring Gifts out of two kinds of Concentration

We are glad to hear that meditation is widespread in the whole of Myanmar. It is certain that a regular meditator will go to higher abodes. According to the Abhidhammic philosophy we know it clearly. If a meditator attains **Upacāra Samādhi** the concentration near to the gate of the first Enlightenment (Sotāpatti Magga \tilde{N} āṇa), he may sure to reach higher deva realms. If the concentration become more powerful upto the stage of **Appānā Samādhi**- the concentration at the very gate of the Magga \tilde{N} āṇa, it can be definitely said that he would go to the brahma Abodes. The Appanā Samādhi is a very steadfast one-pointedness of concentration like a stone-pillar or a big stone rock.

Upacāra Samādhi may be attained by the most meditators.

Therefore, the meditators, if they die with the object of meditation, they need not incline their mind towards a wholesome state, for it will automatically arise. Do not forget the word, "to die with the object of meditation." In this age, there are so many true stories to be told about meditators who have already gone to the higher celestial abodes.

Those who have diligently practised meditation possess a clear knowledge of existence. Really, they do not want to reach higher abodes, whether deva realms or brahma abodes. It is not a hyperbol. They do not want to wander anywhere in the thirty-one planes of the universe. Their ultimate goal is to become a Ariya Individual, outside of the 31 planes of existence. If they cannot eradicate the fellers of longing for pleasure and longing for existence (Kāmarāga and byāpāda), they will wander unwillingly in those 31 planes. If they cannot do it practically, they may even go down to the Hellish planes.

Deva Bhikkhu in Tāvatiṃsa

Here I would like to tell you a story. A real meditator does not want to reach a celestial abode; if he dies with the object of meditation, though he cannot complete his meditation task, he will surely go to the celestial abode.

In the life time of the Buddha, a man was ordained

a bhikkhu. Five years after, he studied ways of living in accordance with Vinaya disciplinary rules. And then, he learned meditation method from the Buddha and went forth to the forest in order to meditate in seclusion of life. As he wanted to meditate diligently through day and night, he kept his bed and beddings in a place.

Since he lived in the forest, he was diligently engaged in meditation work without sleeping even at night and did not remember food and drinks. One day after another he became thinner with the body like a skeleton. One day while he was meditating in walking posture, he immediately fell down to the ground and died of **aneamia**. It is praised in the commentary that an honourable person who died only in worksite: '**So dhurasamiṃ yeva Kālamakāsi.**'

Bhikkhu deva Among Female Deities

Due to the power of his intensive meditation he was reborn in the Tāvātmsa celestial abode, like a person who has just been awakened from sound sleep. He was very handsome in glittering of gold like a gold-pillar at the gate of the great grand mansion in which one thousand female deities lived. They were very idle and longed for a new born male deity. When the bhikkhu-deva arrived there, they all came to him with musical instruments in their hands.

Nevertheless, the bhikkhu-deva did not realize that he had left the human world and was reborn. When the female deities were gathering around him, he

thought they were all women-devotees wandering about in the campus of his monastery. So, he raised his right hand to his left shoulder to pull up his outer garment as if he robed, and bowed his head humbly.

Noticing his strange behaviour, the female deities realized that he was reborn there from the life of a bhikkhu. With gentle smiles, they said, "Oh Deity! This is a celestial world, not the place where bhikkhus perform meditations. Indeed, this is the place to be overwhelmed by sensual pleasures." But the bhikkhu deva did not move. Therefore, the group of female deities played their musical instruments so noisily that he would pay attention to them. Nay! he did not move.

They got an idea and put a big mirror before him. When he saw his form in it, he noticed that his body was adorned with celestial ornaments. Seeing this, he was greatly disappointed.

Supplicating to the Buddha

Then he thought to himself; "I did not observe the morality of a bhikkhu in order to gain such sensual pleasures, but practised meditation to attain the noble Arahatsip. It is not difficult to attain the celestial pleasures, but it is very difficult to abide by the teachings of the Buddha. "With this noble thought, he did not enter the celestial grand mansion, but went forth to the Buddha, together with his female deities. He supplicated to the Buddha.

"Your Venerable Sir, these female deities, I think,

are ugly ogresses; the pleasant Nandana garden is, indeed, a place filled with the smoke of sensual pleasures. How can I seek a release from this place; please, teach me only how to meditate."

The Buddha seeing the past lives of the deity, taught the Noble Eight-fold Path, so that it became like a chariot, and he attained the Sotapanna Ariyahood at one sitting. This is a brief story taught in Acchara Sutta, Devatā Saṃyutta Pāli.

Here I would like to draw a conclusion that a person who has regular practice of meditation may surely reach to the celestial abodes. Therefore if a person cannot put his effort to attain Arahathship in this existence, he should repeatedly develop his strenuous exertion to establish a reliable bridge to another wholesome location.

Of the aforesaid four categories: dāna, sīla, saraṇa-gamaṇa and bhāvanā, you have to choose whatever you like and develop it diligently.

May you all reach to a certain wholesome abode at least!

SAMATHA AND VIPASSANA

CONCENTRATION AND ENLIGHTENMENT

Most Myanmar people are Buddhists and understand charity (dāna), morality (sīla) and meditation (bhāvanā).

Every one knows charity and performs it traditionally; dāna is a traditional custom in every part of Myanmar.

Morality is also popularly performed by Myanmar Buddhists; taking five-fold precept and eight-fold precept are traditional practices and even young boys and girls understand them. Some are even in the habit of observing the nine-fold precept.

Meditation (bhāvanā) is also known by people and practised in rural and urban areas; there are many meditators in Myanmar.

What Bhāvanā is

Bhāvanā means developing, scrutinizing, meditating or the task of repeated contemplation. It is a sort of mental task by means of repeated recitation, repeated contemplation and repeated scrutinization.

There are two kinds, **Samatha Bhāvanā** and **Vipassana Bhāvanā**. (Bhāvetabbāti bhāvanā).

Samatha Bhāvanā is sometimes called Samatha Kammatthāna because it is directed towards one-pointedness of concentration (samādhi) on one specific object only; Vipassanā Bhāvanā is also called Vipassanā Kammatthāna because it aims at the achievement of enlightenment after having contemplated on the objects.

There often arises a question; "What should be started first?"

The answer is, "You can start with whatever you like. If you have chance of meeting with a well-experienced meditation - teacher, you may start with whatever you like."

The Venerable Sayadaws in days of yore taught their disciples to practise the Samatha first; only when the disciples had been well-equipped with forceful one-pointedness of concentration, were they taught the Vipassanā.

In the present, there are many who are experienced in the task of meditation, but they can not differentiate between Samatha and Vipassanā. They came to me to find the solution and I have often helped them.

So, here I will explain what the difference between Samatha and Vipassana is.

Three Types of Vipassanā

Vipassanā denotes, Vi = by different ways and means; passanā = looking at, scrutinizing, examining, i.e, scrutinizing and realizing natural phenomena as they really are.

(1) **Anicca Vipassanā**:- You have to scrutinize impermanence; you should realize that all is impermanent; if you realize it, you really penetrate the characteristics of impermanence. "What is impermanent?" You may ask. The answer is, "Everything is impermanent; there is no permanent thing at all." Note that the world is impermanent; every being is impermanent; everything is impermanent; there is nothing permanent; therefore, the world of being, the world of form and world of location (satta loka, saṅkhāra loka and okāsa loka) are all impermanent.

Human beings and animals are impermanent; buildings and plants are impermanent; everything animate or inanimate is impermanent; it should be noted that once you have come to realize how impermanent they are, Anicca Vipassanā can be clearly realized!

(2) **Dukkha Vipassanā**:- It is the way to see the truth of suffering; you have to examine it so as to know about the manner of suffering; if you see it, it may be said that you can clearly realize the characteristics

of Dukkha Vipassanā. What is suffering? There is no real peace and happiness in the whole human world. Search for what is really happy and peaceful; you will not find anything.

Does it make you happy to eat? You have to eat something because it is impossible for you to live without eating. Just like people drive mortorcars by using fuel, so they feed themselves in order to live long one day after another. Really, it is not peace and happiness.

Does it make you happy to sleep? Occasionally, you may seem to be happy when you take rest after a long journey and fall asleep with fatigue. But you can see how insufferable and painful it is to stay in bed a long time when you are sick. You will be more weary of sleeping if you stay on the bed of hospital for long. Therefore, you should realize that sleeping is not enjoyable and pleasurable.

In the same way, be watchful of every movement of your body-walking, standing, sitting, working, etc. It is not enjoyable or pleasurable. The more you endeavour to be watchful, the more you will realize how sufferable and painful it is. When you see it as it really is-, you have to understand that you penetrate and fully realize the true nature of Dukkha Vipassanā.

(3) Anatta Vipassanā:- It means penetrating and realizing the true nature of 'no-self' or 'no-soul'. When you have penetrated and fully realized this true nature, you can see the characteristics of Anatta Vipassanā.

What is without 'self' ? Everything is without self and therefore uncontrollable. There is nothing controllable in this world; we cannot control even ourselves, i.e, we are unable to master the existence of our body and mind; they are always subject to change.

Invaluable Speech of Ven. U Sīla

In olden days, Ven. U Sīla was well-known to lay-devotees in lower Myanmar, for his flawless moral conduct; he was born in Pegu district and led a secluded life being happy to live in a forest. As an Arahāt, he attained Parinibbāna in Zalun Township.

On one occasion, the Divisional Commissioner U Thi Han (later, he became a Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Government of Pa-Sa-Pa-La Party) arrived at a town, during a tour, near the hermitage of Ven. U Sīla, and went to pay homage to the Ven. Sayadaw together with his official personnel. They donated offertories to the sayadaw and were sitting in front of him.

"What sort of job do you do?" asked the Ven. U Sīla.

U Thi Han did not answer that he was a Divisional Commissioner; he lowered his rank and replied to the sayadaw; "Your Venerable Sir, I am a Myo-baing* (Township Officer)."

"Oh, you are Myo-baing, are you? Marvellous! You're very bright; do you possess a town? I do not

* *Myo baing*: Myanmar official Term, meaning the one who possesses a town. (Town-owner).

possess even my body", replied Ven. U Sīla.

All were smiling, and understood the profound meaning of the Anatta Vipassanā.

In truth, we do not possess even our own body; so, we are subject to the nature of old-age, disease and death without wanting to be. You have to understand that all these are the characteristics of Anatta Vipassanā.

This is the brief explanation of all the characteristics of Anicca Vipassanā, Dukkha Vipassanā and Anatta Vipassanā.

Forty Samatha Kammatthānas

Samatha means calmness; so, the Dhammas which are the rootcauses of calmness may be called samatha. There are forty types of Samatha. Ten kinds of whole (kasiṇas), Ten kinds of recollection (Anussati), Ten kinds of loathsomeness (asubha), Four Sublime States (brahmavihāra); Four kinds of Non-Materiality (Āruppa); One perception of the loathsomeness of nutrition (Āharepaṭikūlasaññā) and One Analysis of Four Elements (Catudhātuvavatthāna). All these forty kinds are called Samatha Kammatthāna. In order to fulfil the wishes of different kinds of people (Puggalijjhāsaya), the Buddha taught the ways of meditation in different kinds.

I have heard some criticize its value contemptuously. The Buddhas-to-be have fulfilled ten kinds of Pārami (perfections) by means of practising Samatha

Kammaṭṭhānas in their past rebirths through their Saṃsāric Circle. Passing through the earth and flying in space, and some different kinds of miraculous powers are the outcomes of practising Samatha Kammaṭṭhāna. Therefore, you should regard it as a vitally important one, and should not look down it.

Meditation on Breath-in and Breath-out (Ānāpāna)

Today most meditation centres in Myanmar use the method of Breath-in and Breath-out; they specialize this method.

Ānāpānānussati, one of the ten kinds of Recollection, is a task of concentrating on breath-in and breath-out through the tip of nose; it is a means of concentration and is easy to do. If you maintain the object in your one-pointed concentration, it means that you possess concentration; you have to see it in your mind with closed eyes; this is the true method.

If you know the method, you can do the work easily; you may gradually become interested in your work when you have repeatedly practised it. You will be happy to concentrate on the breath-in and breath-out with mindfulness.

Ānāpāna in simple meaning is a sort of contemplation on the concentration of breath-in and breath-out, with stable mind, not letting it go towards any other object. In Pāli it is called, "Assāsa-passāsa Kammaṭṭhāna".

It Produces Jhānic-Trance and Miraculous Power

The Gotama Buddha-to-be sitting cross-legged on the golden throne under a Bo-tree, while practising this Breath-in and Breath-out Meditation, attained All-Knowing Enlightenment (Sabbaññutañña) and reached the highest status of Buddhahood. Therefore you have to understand that Ānāpāna plays the vital role in attainment of Enlightenment.

Moderate your breath-in and breath-out and be mindful of the movement at the tip of the nose; please make it clear in your minds' eye, not in your own eyes.

When the seeing is repeated, the object of mind becomes more clear. At that moment you will clearly see the process of breath-in and breath-out at the tip in your nose like turner turning the band of a lathe; knowing or seeing the natural breath-in and breath-out at the tip of the nose is called Parikammanimitta.

Without concentrating Parikammanimitta at the tip of the nose, if you can know or see the object of meditation, i.e, the process of breath-in and breath-out, like the band of a lathe, it is called **Uggahanimitta** - the object of meditation which can be maintained in mind without concentration.

Develop it repeatedly till you can master this Uggahanimitta of Ānāpānabhāvanā; the more powerful one - pointedness of concentration, the clearer the object of meditation; the clearer the object of meditation, the more ecstatic you are. At that very

moment rapture \bar{s} preads through the whole body and mind, and note that you are nearer to attain Jhāna.

The Light Produced by Ānāpāna

It is usual that the objects of meditation arise while meditating, whether he contemplates on Ten kasīnas or Ten Asubhas or Four Brāhmavihāras. Whichever it is, the very first object of meditation in mind is called Parikammanimitta.

Note that you reach at the stage of Uggahanimitta when you can release the very first object of meditation (Parikammanimitta) from your mind's eye and easily take another object of meditation and retain it again in your mind; the attainment of Jhāna completely depending on the Uggahanimitta.

While you are contemplating on the process of breath-in and breath-out with stable one-pointedness of concentration, you may be mindful of it like a small strand of smoke through your nose.

Moreover, when you can master your object of meditation, light may appear around your body; the colour of the light is white and it will be as bright as the power of your concentration; and sometimes the light may fill the room or even pass through the roof of monastery into the sky.

The predecessor-Sayadaws who were expert in the Piṭaka Texts and the meditation tasks as well, urged devotees to maintain the object of meditation. They said that by doing so they had been able to make it

clearer and clearer according to their will and obtained Jhānic trance. Therefore, these learned and well-experienced Sayadaws never faltered in their study of the object of meditation arisen out of contemplation. But some meditation teachers of this age who do not encourage the attainment of Jhāna, but recognize only Vipassanā as the correct way prevent their devotees from following the path of Samatha meditation.

My own view is that if one can master and control the object of meditation and his concentration is very forceful, I don't want to hinder him from doing so because he can understand the root-cause of Jhāna and obtain miraculous powers. Therefore, I would like to instruct that it may be a right way toward Jhāna if the object of meditation, the light produced by Ānāpāna, is maintained.

The Popularity of the Light Produced by Ānāpāna

Here, I would like to tell you of my own experience. Three years ago, it was said that there arose rays of light on the Khantim mountain, the northern part of Chim Hills where my monastery is now located; the native Chin people said that they had seen them with their own eyes every night. The Chin Nationals who saw this incident live in Loneton village, north of Falam township, in Chunkyune Village of Hakah township south of Flam township, Yan-tho village and others in border area.

The people in that region took interest in that event and made inquiries.

At that time I was residing at my small monastery on the side of the Khantim mountain.

U Than Tun, a judicial Officer from Tidam township came and paid respects to me and supplicated that Chin nationals were interested in that event and wanted to know about it. Some Myanmar Government servants answered, "The Guardian Devas of the Khantim mountain come and pay homage to the Ven. Sayadawgyi at night, and they may be the light radiating from their bodies." They answered whatever they thought.

In the same way, Captain Eik Wong (Retd.), the Headman of dun-yan Gurakha village, came and questioned me about it many times, "I myself have seen the light radiating above the mountain where you live now; the Chin people from far away said that they have seen it with their own eyes every night; I can't understand what it is and why it arises."

I never answered the questions they asked, nor took interest in it, either. It was because I did not know where and why the light they had seen at night emerged and I too did not want to know about it.

The news of the light did not end! It was very interesting and popular news in Falam and townspeople there made different assessments of it.

One day, Chin State Education Officer U Maung Khant, an Upper Myanmar from Myingyan, came to

me in his car and told me about the light. I assumed that he purposely came to me to inquire about it and he wanted to know my opinion. As I was not interested in the news, I said nothing about the light but I said, "People do said that!"

U Aung Khant said,:

"Your Venerable Sir" At about 9 p. m, the whole sky was totally dark; above the place that the people often talk about, the luminosity of the light was seen wonderously just like a powerful searchlight. People knowing and seeing it for themselves are now discussing it with great interest; I heard in the Worker's Cafee in Falam that the light emerged from the roof of your monastery and it was seen by Gurakha people."

The Real Cause:

Let me speak frankly. I'll tell you of my daily routine. I am used to doing my works all day long. Everyone who lives with me knows that I am always doing my work except at the time of my morning meal.

In evening, I invite the guardian Devas of mountain and forest, and the Devas from countless Universes and preach the Buddha's Teaching to them. And I recite the Satasahassa Gāthā- the stanza worthy of one lakh- to the Devas and share the merites with them. Reciting of eleven Parittas follows after them. Then I worship the Buddha recollecting His virtues while candles are being lit on the shrine and wish for what I am inclined.

Afterwards, I sit in meditation or at my writing

table, depending on the seasonal situation. When the weather is too cold to work, I go to bed about 9:00 p. m. but when the weather is favourable, after 10:00 p. m. Occasionally, I have a lot of work and go to bed after 1:00 p. m. and get up 3:00 a. m. and write articles at my table.

While I am in bed I disseminate Mettā towards all living beings commencing from the guardian Devas of the forest and mountain. I cover all living beings with my net of Mettā and Karuṇā and my mind is stable and clear. At that time, I prepare my posture and lie on the right side of my body. Then contemplate on the meditation of breath-in and breath-out.

As my dwelling place is very cold, being situated in dense forest in the hill, I have to cover myself with thick blankets while I am in bed. In the middle of the winter I sleep under about nine layers of thick blanket. Due to the one-pointness of concentration arisen out of these regular practice of meditation light arises under my blanket.

While under my blanket, I take the three refuges and pay homage to the three gems and disseminate Mettā towards the whole living world and at that very moment the radiance of light emerges from my body; while I am contemplating on the breath-in and breath-out meditation, the white clear light is radiantly shining under my blanket so that it would be possible one can pass to thread a needle.

As the light become brighter and passes through

the nine layers of blanket the whole bed room lightens up. Then it also passes through the roof. Only when people asked me often, did really I notice and came to know about it. The light that Chin nationals and Gurakha devotees saw every night could be traced to the roof of my monastery. Perhaps, it may be the outcome of my regular practice of meditation. Be satisfied just with this!

The Power of Ānāpāna

Ānāpāna, as it is a task of concentration in connection with the breath-in and breath-out, has a particular power, though it is included in the same group of Forty Samatha Kammatthānas. By the power of Samatha Kammatthāna, a man cannot die though he is enclosed in an airless cave or though he stays in water without breathing for long. (i.e, a man who has fully practised Ānāpāna Meditation can stay without oxygen) There are many persons who stay in airless caves and drinks only water for 49 days whilst practising Ānāpāna Kammatthāna meditation.

If the persons, especially bhikkhus, who have completely practised Ānāpāna Kammatthāna for long, pass away, they do not purify or swell, though they are laid out for years.

Besides, the persons who have ardently practised Ānāpāna Meditation can proceed to endeavour for the attainment of miraculous powers - Abhiññānas, and Arahathship at least. This is the reason why many

bhikhus in Myanmar attained Arahatsip.

Ānāpāna in doubt effect

Ānāpāna is one of the forty Kammatthānas and some said it is Samatha Kammatthāna only, and some said it is Vipassanā Kammatthāna only. Some devotees who have practiced meditation in different kinds of meditation centre debated upon this matter with one another. Some devotees came and ask me to find a solution to this question.

The answer is short. If it is practised by way of Samatha, it is Samatha Kammatthāna: if it is practised by way of Vipassanā, it is Vipassanā Kammatthāna: indeed, Ānāpāna is in double effect.

For example, Being concentrating on the passing away of breath-out and the banishing of breath-in is called "Vipassanā Kammatthāna."

Ānāpāna Kammatthāna is similar to a tree falling towards its weighty side. If you want to practise Samatha, you have to contemplate it by means of Samatha: if you want to practise Vipassana, you have to contemplate it by means of Vipassana.

From Samatha to Vipassana

It is easy to apply the method of changing from Samatha to Vipassanā if meditation instructor can instruct the right way. Note that it is very easy to change the forty subjects of Kammatthāna to Vipassanā.

Here is the method of changing the meditation of samatha Kammatthāna to that of Vipassana Kammatthāna.

I have said the Vipassanā̄ is the contemplation on Anicca - Impermanency or transiency. If you contemplate on the breath-in only with mindfulness, it is samatha; if you contemplate on the breath-out only with mindfulness, it is Vipassanā̄; if you contemplate both of breath-in and breath-out with mindfulness it is Samatha.

Change the method of contemplation of this kind; Contemplate on the nature of impermanency-Anicca, meditating that the breath-in passes away in abdomen and it is impermanent; then, such a kind may be called, Anicca Vipassanā̄. So do the cases of the breath-out, and breath-in and breath-out.

Contemplate on the impermanency of the breath-out, meditating on the fact that when it comes out of the tip of nose, it passes away. And you can master the two cases: breath-in, breath-in and breath-out.

If you want to practise Dukkha Vipassanā̄, please meditate on the fact that the effort of breath-in and breath-out causes much suffering.

If you want to practise Anatta Vipassanā̄, please meditate on the fact that the effort of breath-in is beyond control, the effort of breath-out is beyond control and the effort of breath-in and breath-out is beyond control; and also meditate that all these movements are naturally arising and passing away.

Arahantas in Myanmar

The predecessor Syadaws of Myanmar who were far-sighted and experts on the texts of Buddhism remarked "There are always Arahantas in Myanmar." There have been Arahantas in Myanmar since the period of Tagung, Hanlin Dynasties till today. Even Sinhalese and Thais know this fact and Arahantas in Myanmar are very well-known to them.

Where are Arahantas ?

The foreigners who know about Arahantas of Myanmar asked me, "Where were Arahantas? Where are they living?"

It is true that Arhantas never disappeared through the ages but they never said that they were Arahantas. Thus we cannot show the places where Arahantas live.

There may arise a question : 'if so, aren't there Arahantas now ?'

The answer is :- They have really existed through the ages in Myanmar; at present, they really exist, too, but we know only after those Arahantas had passed away and left their relics after being cremated. These rare occasions arise often in Myanmar.

Ven. Sayadaw U Sīla, Moe-goke Sayadaw, Ok-Aing Kyaung Sayadaw-U Kavinda (U Tharshun) are recent examples in this age. Recently we read a piece of news in the papers that a Sayadaw in Tadar-U Township passed away and was cremated in ceremony; After having cremated, the devotees astonishingly saw

his relics in pile of ash.

In the golden eras of Ta-gaung and Han Lin Dynasties there were many Arahantas. We have seen the Arahanta's Relics of those ages with our own eyes; they are indeed, believable evidences and they can be measured by baskets.

There are many Arahantas in Myanmar but they do not want to be known, simply because they are tired of meeting devotees. Say for instance, if I were as Arahantas, I would not care to be known. Therefore, try to understand the reason why Arahantas cannot be found anywhere though there are many in Myanmar.

Threefold Mode of Training

I will tell you in brief of the way to be free from the suffering of the Saṃsāric Circle. It is not difficult to follow.

Sāsanā means Adhisīla, Adhicitta, and Adhipāṇṇa. This threefold mode of Training is also called the Noble Eightfold path leading to the Nibanic Peace.

First of all, you have to observe Precepts- Sīla Sikkhā and you should be heedful to abstain from the threefold bodily immoral deeds and four-fold verbal immoral speech. Now, understand that you are equipped with the virtue of Adhisīla. You will become happy and peaceful. Note that you have passed the first stage.

Nibbāna within your reach

Now, you have to know about the third stage. Understand that your body is materiality and your mind is mentality, When your concentrative mind becomes more and more stable and powerful in due course, please be watchful of the arising and passing away of materiality and mentality. You will penetrate and realize the real nature of material and mental phenomena. This realization is called Adhipaññā. You will, automatically step by step, realize the true nature of material and mental phenomena in future. Such a kind of realization is called, "The process of Enlightenment." It cannot be compared with the worldly knowledges simply because it can only be attained by means of practising Vipassanā Bhāvanā. It is very noble and great. Note that the Nibbanic Peace is within your reach, now.

Self-refuge

In the Dhammapada, the Buddha taught that:-

"One indeed is one's own refuge; how could anyone else be one's refuge?- **Attā hi attāno nātho ko hi nātho paro siyā.** "It means that in order to be free from the suffering of the Samsāric Circle, one should rely on one's own effort.

Venerate the Buddha; believe the Buddha; take refuge in the Buddha; believe in the teaching of the Buddha; regard it with deep respect; make every effort to practise the Dhamma only; understand that only the

Dhamma is your refuge. This is the straight and right way towards the Nibbānic Bliss.

I can only point out the road; it is up to you to tread the road rightfully.

As to going on your Saṃsāric journey, you cannot rely on others; everyone has to tread on the way of Kamma, whether towards the Nibbanic bliss or the Worldly pleasure. You cannot rely on your kinsmen, such as sons, daughters, husbands, wives, etc. You have to fully understand that there is no one to help you apart from yourself.

The Best Way

Do this! I'll show you the best way. In order to be released from the Saṃsāric Circle quickly, aim to attain the reward of Noble disciple- Pakati-Sāvaka. In this age, you can have a golden chance to become an Arahanta. Observe the fivefold precepts at least. Abstain from committing five kinds of evil deeds. If you are replete with the virtues of the fivefold precept, you will have strong will-power and firm confidence; you will automatically know by your own sense, "I can fulfil whatever I wish." Such a view is right. Believe it yourself.

For those who would like to live in worldly pleasures in the Saṃsāric Circle, or those who are very eager to release from the pains of Saṃsāric Circle- whoever may be, I will show the best way in brief. Regard it deeply! Follow it happily!

As I said earlier, please contemplate on the breath-in and breath-out --- **Ānāpāna Kammaṭṭhāna**. Be mindful of every movement of breath-in and breath-out: note, 'knowing' at the very moment when the air of breath-in touches the tip of the nose and note, 'knowing' at the very moment when the air of breath-out touches the tip of the nose. If you note, 'knowing' at every touch of breath-in and breath-out, and your noting is stable and your concentration is fixed on what you are now meditating; know that you succeed in your task.

To Abolish Egoism

Go on 'noting' without any pause, not letting other objects come into your realm of concentration. Know that you are nearer to the way of release from Saṃsāric Sufferings if you can go on noting all through day and night. And you will understand that you do not want to be attached to other people but you really want to make an ardent effort in the task of meditation upto the attainment of fully Enlightenment, without expecting other's help. Therefore, you have to believe it firmly as it is a right way.

This kind of continuous 'knowing' at every touch of breath-in and breath-out is a sort of "Living in the very present moment." At that very moment, there is no, 'I', nor, 'you', nor, 'person', nor, 'being', nor, 'man', nor, 'woman'. You will practically know how true the teaching of the Buddha and, the process of natural

phenomena are. Understand that Egoism- sakkāyaditṭhi, automatically leaves you.

Try Hard Once

'Realizing the true nature of arising and passing away of mentality and materiality' is 'seeing clearly the Anicca Vipassanā - thorough penetrative understanding of Impermanency. If the Anicca Vipassanā is under your perfect control, Dukkha Vipassanā- thorough penetrative understanding of Suffering, will simultaneously arise. Continuing, you will automatically have the realization of Anatta Vipassanā - a thorough penetrative understanding of Egolessness.

Note that when you have tried hard once, and been effective, it is very easy to engage in this task again. Do not put it aside, please. Continue to try hard until you have fully realized the recurrent process of natural phenomena, i.e, repeated arising and passing away of conditioned things- mentality and materiality. Note that the right way to release from the Samsāric suffering will come into your sight, automatically. That is the key-point I would like you to grasp.

Attitude of Noble Ones

To conclude the Chapter of Samatha and Vipassanā, here I would like to tell you of how to become a Noble One and what the Nibbānic Peace is.

There are four Noble Ones in brief. They are:-

- (a) Sotāpannapuggala - Stream-winner;
- (b) Sagadāgamipuggala - Once - returner ;

- (c) Anāgāṃipuggla - Non -returner, and
- (d) Arahatta - Arahāt Individual.

Each one has two different kinds of puggla-Magga-Individual and Phala-Individual, such as, Sotāpanna Maggapuggala and Sotāpanna Phalapuggla, etc. Thus, we have eight Noble Ones.

If puthujjana (worlding) wants to become a Sotāpanna, he needs to exercise the above-mentioned instructions. There is no change of instruction to become Sagadāgāmi. You must follow the same instruction. But you need put more effort and confidence in your task. It is easy to walk on the same path that you have before.

An Ariya Individual has the chance to be completely free from the danger of the four types of Hellish Suffering and cannot be reborn in the Lower Abodes. He becomes replete with the virtues of Five Precepts, at least. In this way, he can be free from the menace of immorality.

Inner-attitude of the Sotāpanna is totally different from that of the Worldings ; so is his knowledge and idea. He needs not to purposely refrain from committing immoral actions. Indeed, he is automatically raised to a sort of higher status of morality. He is called Sotāpanna-Stream-winner, simply because he triumphs over the stream of Path (Maggo) towards the Nibbānic Bliss.

What Sotapanna is

Sotāpannapuggala has no notion of 'I' 'mine' and 'self' of mentality and materiality (sakkāyaditthi); he has no sceptical view on the true teachings of the Buddha (vicikicchā); he has no wrong belief in rites and rituals (silabbatapparamāsa); and he is not jealous nor covetous (Issā and micchariya). This is the inner-attitude of Sotāpannapuggala; you can guess how happy and peaceful he is, as he is detached from the evil mindedness. Thus, he becomes a noble person who takes refuge in the Threefold Gem- Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha. He will never commit evil deeds- stealing, killing, lying etc., in this present existence, nor even in further lives. He reaches the stage that he never transgress the fivefold precept.

This is the good time to make every endeavour to attain the reward of Noble Disciple (Sāvakabodhi) at least.

The higher the status of the Ariyapuggalas, the happier and more peaceful they are; they have no anger and disappointment; they are not attached to worldly pleasures; they have no pride and conceit; as they have no evil attitude they are completely happy and peaceful. They never return to the lower abodes but they have the great expectation of higher abodes only.

The Meaning of Nibbāna in Brief

The greatly pure attitude of these Noble Ones can never be understood by the sense of ordinary

worldlings. They are very peaceful and noble so that no one can believe in their mental attitude. This is the true attainment of Blissful Nibbānic Peace in this present existence.

If the final stage, Arahatsip, is attained and the existence of his life terminates, there will be no next existence to go on any further.

For example, when a flame of a candle is extinguished, it does not exist in air, nor on the candle, nor in any other place. In the similar way, the burden of suffering, i.e, the aggregate of mentality and materiality which has been wandering about in several ways due to the Kammic powers created oneself, totally terminates and the regeneration of kammic force completely ceases too. When there is no cause, no effects arise. Therefore, the passing away of Arahantas is called, Parinibbāna-Noble Demise. In fact, it is a final release from all suffering. This is Nibbāna, the final Goal which every Buddhist longs for. It is very profound and subtle. The mechanism of the Samsāric Circle, wandering about and being born and reborn in one existence after another in different abodes, ceases at the gate of Nibbānic Realm. The meaning of Nibbāna can never be understood by mere knowledge, but it can only be fully realized by practical endeavour.

Exhortation

Here I would like to exhort you to try hard now. The Buddha proclaimed the six supreme Virtues of

the Dhamma and openly invite you to try for the Final Goal in the following ways-

Sandiṭṭhiko - being practically known by oneself;

Akāliko - being immediately effective;

Ehi passiko - inviting you all to come and see.

Choose whatever you like; the Buddha showed forty kinds of Kammatthāna (forty subjects of meditation), three modes of training and the Eightfold Noble Path.

In the Magga Vagga of Dhammapada Pāli, the Buddha also taught in the following manner:-

Eseva maggo natthañño Dassanassa visuddhiyā.

Only the threefold mode of training or the Eightfold Noble Path, the root-cause of enlightenment, is the straight and right way towards Nibbāna; there cannot be anything else other than this way.

The Buddha exhorted to follow the right way, which is the root-cause of release from all suffering and which can be known only when the Buddha appears, not to forget to practise it, to make use of this golden opportunity in favour of a good time, and not to feel remorse in future.

Not to Feel Remorse in Future

Jhayātha bhikkhave mā pamādattha,

Pacchā vippaṭisārino mā ahuvattha,

Ayaṃ vo amhākaṃ anusāsanī.

Oh, Bhikkhus! Contemplate on the specific object

of meditation by means of Samatha Bhāvaṇā or contemplate on the characteristics of arising and passing away of the aggregates of mentality and materiality by means of Vipassanā Bhāvaṇā. Don't be forgetful. Don't be filled with remorse for your failure when you are getting old, feeling sick and dying.

This is, indeed, all the Buddha's admonition with great compassion and pure loving-kindness for you all!

Sādhu, Sādhu, Sādhu.

Sayadaw U Uttamasāra



A Brief Biography of the Translator , Aung Thein Nyunt

U AUNG THEIN NYUNT was born on Sunday, 17th December 1952. His native place is Ywathanyunt village, Nyaungdon Township, Ayeyarwaddy Division. His parents were U Ba Hlaing and Daw Hmyin. He is the youngest son of four elder sisters and two elder brothers. He as a novice, got "the Pathamagyaw title" in 1969 as he stood first in the Pathamagyi Pāli Examination held by the Government and also got "The title of Sāsanadhaja Dhammācariya" - Dhamma-lecturership examination in 1970. He studied Buddhist canonical texts under his first teacher, Ven, U Sujāta of Sīridhammikārāma Monastery of Ywathanyunt village and also under the lecture-sayadaws of Shwehinhartawya Pāli University of Nyaungdon Town.

The Buddhist Way of Daily Life

In 1978 he got B.A (English) Degree from Institute of Education, Yangon. He joined the government service in 1979, as an Assistant Compiler in the department of Religious Affairs, Ministry of Home and Religious Affairs,

In 1981, he became the editor of "The Light of the Dhamma". He wrote many articles in this English Dhamma Journal and many Myanmar articles in Myanmar Dhamma Journal, "Sāsana-Yaung-Chee". In 1986, he went to the United States of America to attend the Global Seminar on Museological Research and Museum Preservation sponsored by Smithsonian foundation. In 1988, he was a Research Officer in the same Department and then he had to take the responsibility of Research Library as an Assistant Librarian.

In 1991, he took part in the strenuous task of opening the new establishment of the Department for the Promotion and Propagation of Sāsana under the Ministry of Religious Affairs. While he was engaging in the administrative affairs of the new Department as an Assistant Director, he also translated such books into English as :-

- (1) **Ovādakathās** given by the Patron Sayadaws of Myanmar ;
- (2) **The Practice of Vipassanā** delivered by Ven. Tikka of Taungsalin Taik , Mandalay ;
- (3) **Myingyan Relics and Ven. Kondañña** written by Myat Pwint Pyu ;

Sayadaw U Uttamasāra

- (4) **Basic Principles of Buddhism** delivered especially for Karen Nationals by Nyaunglaybin Tawya Sayadawgyi.

The following books were translated into English for research only : -

- (1) **Special Bodily Marks of the Buddha** written by Ven. Odātasiribhivaṃsa.
(2) **The Right Way to Nibbānic Peace** by Ashin Nandasāra

His pen-names are **Maung Han Tha**, **Maung Nyan Nyunt** and **Saya Ba Kyaw**. Since 1993, he has been teaching canonical English to the First Year and Second Year M.A Bhikkhu students of the State Pariyatti Sāsana University, Yangon, as an Associate Lecturer, upto the present. From 1995 to 1998, he served as Editor-in-chief for "Thar -Htun -Pyant Dhamma Journal" published by the DPPS, and wrote many Myanmar and English articles in this monthly periodical.

In 1998, he was transferred to initiate the tasks of opening new establishment of the International Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University, Yangon, Myanmar. At present, he is a Head of the department (Admin and Finance) in this newly established University and also takes part in the academic affairs of the University as he is an office-administrator as well as the Pāli scholar .

The Buddhist Way of Daily Life

Translator's Acknowledgement

It has been long for about twelve years that we have firstly printed this book, "**The Buddhist Way of Daily Life**" written by Abhidhajaaggamahāsaddhammajotika Bhaddanta Uttamasāra of Khantim forest Monastery, Falam Township, Chin Hills, with the benevolent support of the author, Dhammācariya U Htay Hlaing who put arduous effort to publish Myanmar version, "**Chan-myei-swa-bha-wa-nei-nee**" which was repeatedly printed for its great demand in Myanmar.

In those days, The Ven. Sayadawgyi, before he toured to Europe on missionary purpose, wanted to fetch the English Version of Chan-myei-swa-bha-wa-nei-nee along through with him and freely distribute the copies among devotees in Europe, especially in Switzarland.

On an early morning of the month of February

Sayadaw U Uttamasāra

1988, on the invitation of the author, Dhammācariya U Htay Hlaing, I had a golden chance to meet the Ven. Sayadawgyi at his residence and paid deep homage to the Ven. Sayadawgyi. While sitting before him, Dhammācariya U Htay Hlaing introduced me to him, "Your Venerable Sayadaw ! This young man is U Aung Thein Nyunt ; I think he can translate your book into English and you can also fetch the translated copies to Europe".

The Ven. Sayadawgyi astonishingly remarked, in a soft smile "Oh ! the translator is too young ; It is not enough to know about the English Language but it is important to be fair-versed in Dhamma knowledge and Pāli Language."

"You need not worry about this, Your Venerable Sir ; he is a holder of the Dhamma titles, Pathamagyaw and Dhammācariya and also a B.A (English) Degree holder" obtained from Institute of Education, Yangon in 1978. Now, he is one of the editors of "The Light of the Dhamma" published by the Religious Affairs Department and he is also an author as well as translator in this periodical" seconded Dhammācariya U Htay Hlaing.

Still, the Ven. Sayadawgyi did not recommend his words and said smilingly , "Young translator, may I ask some questions about the task ; it may also be presumed as test ; please, translate the Pāli text : -

"Kammaṃ satte vibajati"

After a little bit thinking, I recited the English

The Buddhist Way of Daily Life

translation of the above Pāli words in a careful manner. No sooner had I ceased my recitation than the Ven. Sayadawgyi remarked laughingly, "OK---OK---you're right ; you can translate my work".

Then the Ven. Sayadawgyi explained how uneasy it was to translate Pāli words and Dhamma texts into English language because some equivalent words could not be found in English language and some Dhamma texts were deep and profound in meaning so that the translator was unable to find their true meaning. He also encouraged me to do the translation work with the missionary spirit as it was mainly for the gifts and gains of the human society. In this way the very first publication of this book rushingly came out in 1990 and could be distributed as dhamma-gifts in Europe along through with the Ven. Sayadawgyi in 1990.

In 1996, the Ven. Sayadawgyi took a noble demise in Mandalay Airport, recently after having been brought in a helicopter, to his native place, Monywa.

It was widely said that about 45 minutes after having been carried in a helicopter by responsible personnel, Gurakha and Chin national devotees who lived around the Khantim mountain where the Ven. Sayadawgyi's forest monastery located came out of their residential places because they all heard the noisy and trembling sound of the helicopter engine, thinking that the helicopter which had already taken the sick Sayadawgyi returned to the monastery. Nay ! they did not see any flying vehicle over the mountain but they

Sayadaw U Uttamasāra

all witness a huge group of bees flying in the sky over it, making many huge groups of cloud and noisy and heavy sounds like helicopter engine. They all were astonished to see such a strange sight and some of them remarked, "A strange happening will occur sooner or later". At that very moment, the Ven. Sayadawgyi took a noble demise on a couch in the Mandalay Airport of the Upper Myanmar ! .

Though the Ven. Sayadawgyi personally disappeared from Myanmar, his noble instructions and examples still prevail everywhere in Myanmar so that the Myanmar Radio and Television has always to auspiciously commence the programme with his Paritta recitation and scared admonitory teachings on every morning. In this year of 2000, fire engines were frequently heard and fire sometimes broke out in some parts of Yangon. Therefore, some devotees said, "When Ven. Sayadawgyi U Uttamathāra is still alive and recites the Parittas in some parts of Yangon, we don't hear any sound of fire engines and fire rarely broke out."

No matter how it is, we have to be glad to abide by his exemplary instructions like - "**The Buddhist Way of Daily Life**" and other his teachings such as, "**Taungdan-ta-yar**-the Teachings on Hilly Regions", "**Nwar-Metta-Sar**-to be kind to Cows" etc- all have been published in Myanmar language.

It is also a great pleasure and honour to mention our gratitude towards, U HTUN MYA AUNG, Director

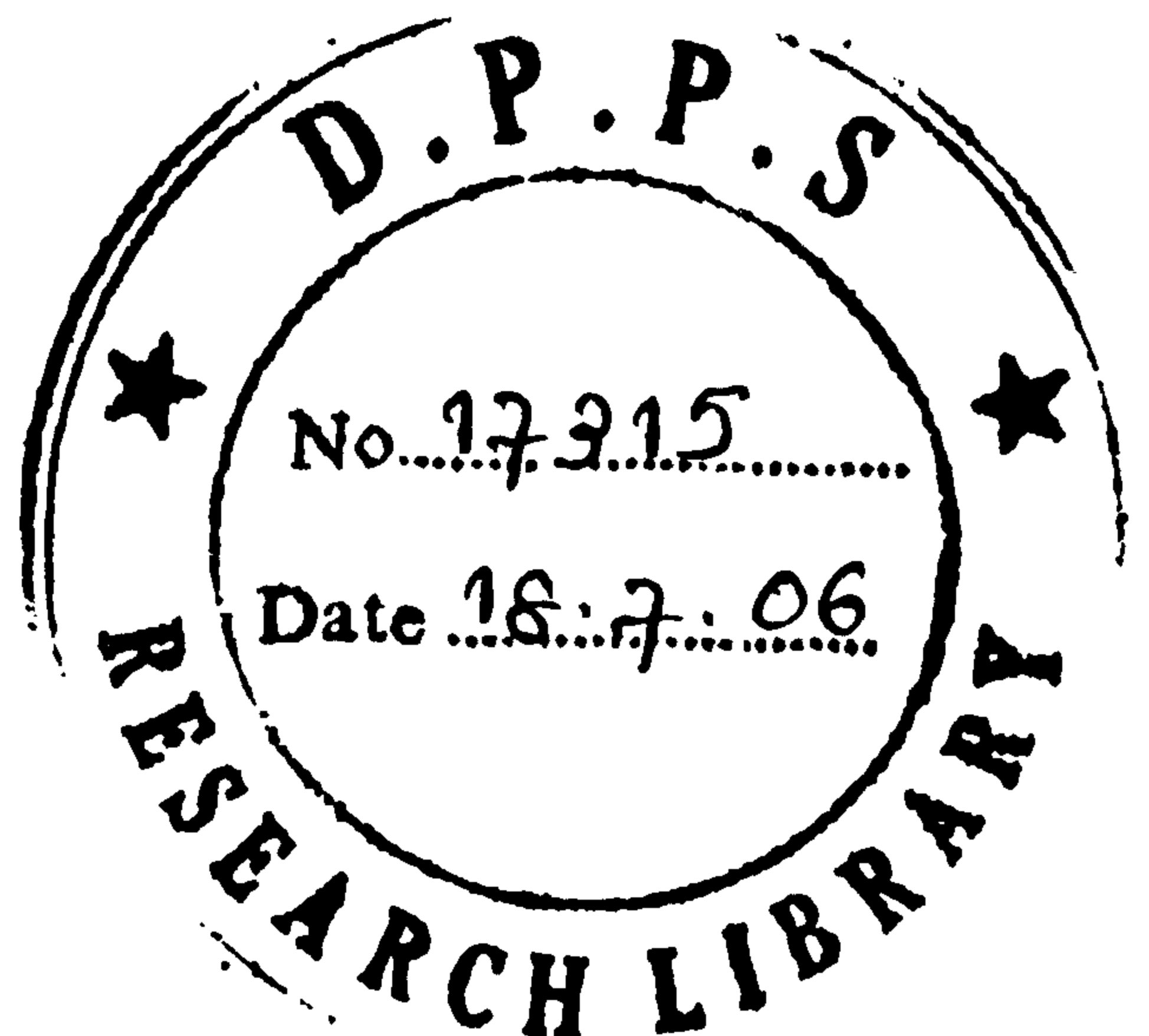
The Buddhist Way of Daily Life

of DPPS, who takes the responsibility of this second publication with noble missionary attitude for the good and the gain of all people who may follow and practise the practical way of living in peace and happiness. Whoever may be, Buddhist or Non-Buddhist, or those who would like to live in real peace and happiness may follow the practical examples of the Ven. Sayadawgyi and live in happy and peaceful society as the Ven. Sayadawgyi's teachings are only the nature of Dhamma, not restricted by any sort of sectarian religious approach.

In conclusion, we would like to mention our deep thanks to Dhammācariya U Htay Hlaing who earnestly encourage this second publication and literary workers of Ananta-Gone-Young Computer and Shwezinkyaw Press Workers.

(Aung Thein Nyunt)
Translator

Dated : 15 th April, 2000.





Printed for free distribution by:

The Penang Buddhist Association
168, Anson Road,
10400 Penang, Malaysia.

This book is for free distribution, it is not for sale.