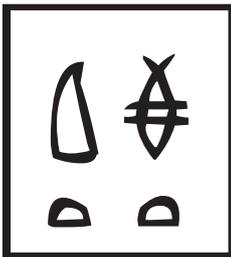


DEVOTION  
IN  
BUDDHISM

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There are few circumstances more surprising to the student of comparative religion than the fact that, in the pure Buddhism of the *Theravāda*, which constitutes the national religion of Burma, he finds exhibited, both in the scriptural sources of the religion, and in the lives of the people who follow it, an all pervading spirit of intense devotion -a spirit of loving adoration, directed to The Buddha, His Teaching and His Brotherhood of Monks, such as is hardly to be equaled, and certainly not to be excelled, in any of the world's theistic creeds.

To one, especially, who has been brought up in the modern western environment, this earnest devotion, this spirit of adoration, seems almost the last feature he would expect to find in a religion so intellectually and so logically sound as this our Buddhist faith. He has been accustomed to regard this deep emotion of adoration, as the peculiar prerogative of the Godhead of whatever forms of religion he has studied. So to find it in so marked a degree, in so predominant a measure, in a creed from which all concept of an animistic Deity is absent, appears as well-nigh the most remarkable, as it was the most unexpected feature, of the many strange and novel characteristics of this altogether unique form of religious teaching. That trusting worship, that self abnegating spirit of devotion in which, in the rest of the great world-religions, the devotee loses himself in thoughts of the glory, power and love of the Supreme Being of whom they teach, so far from being absent here, whence all thought of such a Being is banished, actually exists in a most superlative degree. It is lavished, indeed, on no hypothesis, on no Being whom none has ever known or seen, but on the thought of a man, not altogether different from ourselves, who once lived without a doubt on this our earth, and on the Truth He taught, and on the Brotherhood He founded, for the continuance of that Dhamma, and for the finding of that Peace whereto He showed the Way.

Wherever else you find that spirit of devotion, it will always be associated with blind faith; with that trusting mental attitude which is characteristic of the earlier stages of our mind's development, the unquestioning faith and love a little child exhibits towards those elders who constitute its small restricted world. To the dawning infantile intelligence,

the chief feature of the life, in which it so far can scarcely distinguish betwixt self and not-self, is its own absolute dependence on mother or nurse for the food that constitutes almost its sole desire; to that central all-bestowing figure of its narrow horizon it looks for everything; it deems nurse or mother the omnipotent dispenser of all human blessings, so far as it can come to aught approaching abstract generalised thought. Then, later, as the ever recurring marvel of the growth of Mind out of this mere mass of sentiency is enacted, as these early days pass on to childhood, and thought, marshalled to the tune of speech, begins to raise the budding life above the purely animal horizon, the same depending, trusting, all-relying attitude supervenes, directed now to all those elders who form the environment of the dawning mental life. If the moon seem a bright and glorious plaything, the child will ask it for his own, never doubting but that the omnipotent elder could grant the boon if he or she were so disposed. All the child learns is thus assimilated by faith and faith alone; and that indeed is well for us, seeing that without that blind dependence we at that age, lacking the power of spontaneous thinking, could assimilate no thought at all.

This faith or blind devotion, then, constitutes an essential feature of mind-growth; by it, and not by reasoning, by judgment, or discernment, are our earlier concepts moulded. By it do we acquire all our earlier ideas of life, of right and wrong action, of the nature of the world in which we live; by it alone we lay the foundation-stones of the future structure of our mental life. This structure, indeed, is likely to become either a temple, a great and glorious palace, or a sordid hovel, the abode and haunt of ignorance and crime, according as these faith-moulded corner-stones accord the more with truth and understanding, or with false views and the dictates of our elders ignorance. In that early stage, all that comes must be accepted without thought of questioning; and the mere attestation of an elder suffices to assure the childish mind of the truth of any folly or superstition, howsoever great it may be.

Now the growth of all mankind, of races and of nations, only repeats, on the wider platform of human, racial, or national life, the microcosmic play of the individual development. Rather, perhaps, the truth might better be approximated by exactly the inversion of this statement, that the individual life follows the universal, since our Dhamma teaches us that in

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reality all life is one, and therefore the true prototype, the real unit, lies not in the individual, but the whole of life at large. However that may be, certain it is that individual and racial life both pass through stages so similar as to be obviously in some way connected; and, just as some human children are more backward than others, and thus much later pass out of this early era of faith-founded knowledge, so is it also with the nations and races of mankind. The further you go back in the history of human civilisation, the more clearly do you see on every hand how, in those days, what we now term reasoned knowledge was simply unknown, undreamed of by the great masses of mankind; it was achieved only by such few individuals as were wiser and far-more developed than their fellows. It is as though our forefathers never passed at all out of this early age of simple-hearted faith, knew naught of questionings, comparisons, decisions, as to right and wrong, truth or falsehood, save: what they learned by national and racial tradition. For them, blind faith took that position which now, for us who are grown nearer to human adolescence, is occupied by Wisdom, Knowledge, Understanding, the fruit and heritage of years of questioning search and of earnest investigation of the facts of life.

For that, of course, is the special feature of the next stage of mental growth which follows mental childhood, the period of adolescence, when, if we rightly win to its attainment, all those earlier faith-laid corner stones of our mental fabric are subjected to keenest scrutiny, to most careful testing of their soundness and their strength. Still the great mass of our humanity, of course, never reaches even to this, which is but the second stage of mental growth; most men are still content to take life as they find it, its philosophies and faiths just as their fathers held. But, in our modern age, in our new civilisation of but a hundred years, swiftly indeed those old conditions vanish; year after year more and more men pass from the ranks of human childhood, of the Age of Faith, into those of human adolescence, of the Age of Investigation. Some few, perhaps, already, are passing yet beyond this limit, here and there; in this or that department of our mental life are drawing nearer to full Understanding; to that goal of full mental development, which our Buddhism sets before us as the ultimate ideal of life.

This, then, is the reason why the occidental student in particular, one born and bred at the very heart of this new era of transition –which even in Burma is already so swiftly changing all the old sanctions and the ways of life –finds with surprise this strong element of devotion in the Buddhist Teaching; and he finds it, still more vivid and manifest in Burma's daily life. For him, at first sight, it seems almost a token of degeneration, an instance of atavism, of throwing backwards to an earlier stage of religious development than that most modern, most advanced position to which it is so clearly, so uniquely entitled, by virtue of the logical, the reasoned basis of all its prominent, and fundamental Teachings.

If the student has really gained a grasp of the true significance of Buddhism in human thought and development, as also of its place in human history, he will have understood that here in very truth exists a body of religious teaching not at all like the theistic creeds. For, unlike them, it is suited not only to the Age of Faith, the era of human mental childhood, but also to this new Age of questioning, of Investigation, of mental adolescence, into which at the present day the more cultured members of modern civilisation are entering and have entered. Studying -to gain a right perspective and a correct appreciation of the significance of Buddhism, he must needs have studied the conditions amidst which Buddhism had its birth in India twenty-five centuries ago, he will have grasped the fact that Buddhism, alike in its internal evidence and structure, and in the history of its origin, takes a place amongst the great world-religions, not unlike that which is held by the whole body of modern science as compared with the logomachies of the Middle Ages in Europe. Historically it takes this unique position, inasmuch as we find in it the admitted ultimate of Aryan religious thought. For that Eastern branch of the great Aryan Race which gave it birth, had reached, even before the days of The Buddha, to heights of religious experience, to depths of religious philosophy and world-view, such as even now is far from being attained by any race amongst the several nations into which the western branch has differentiated. For this fact the reason is not far to seek, for true religion, and most of all the deeper, subtler levels of religious philosophy, is the fruit and outcome only of a life set free from worldly cares; it can only arrive at such great heights, as it had then attained in India, under conditions in which great opportunity for protracted thought and meditation is present; in brief, like all true

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science, it is rather the offspring of human *leisure* than of a life of human toil. The climatic environment in which the eastern Aryans found themselves, once they had fairly established their colonies in the fair and fertile plains of middle India, offered opportunities for leisured thought, such as were utterly denied to their northward –and westward- tending kinsmen of the European branch, in their harsher climate and wolf haunted forests. And this circumstance, combined doubtless with the fact that the eastern Aryans, in their genial climate, grew far more quickly to maturity in the mental sphere, even as they earlier attained to physical fullness of growth, had already, even before Buddha's time, resulted in a stage of religious development such as far transcended aught that any western race as yet can show. In matters of *material* development, indeed, the Indian Aryans were little more advanced than are their descendants now; but in the deeper things of life, which go together to make up religion, they had travelled further than any race of which our human history tells.

We have seen, in the incomparable achievements of western science and its applications during the past hundred years, what marvelous heights can be attained by the Aryan mind, when once it emerges from the Age of Faith, of mental childhood, and grows to mental youth in an Age of Investigation. In all our records there is nothing like it, the achievement in so short a period of a body of knowledge and power so great. What that wonderful instrument of the keen, clear Aryan mind, thus lately grown to the stature of the manhood in the West, has of late years accomplished in the sphere of the material sciences, all that, and more indeed, had the Aryans of the Gangetic valley accomplished in the vaster, wider empire of religious experience and life.

To all that long era of immense religious activity, to all the long glorious line of Indian sage and saint, The Buddha came as the crown and greatest glory; His Teaching, as the last achievement of Aryan religious thought and life. Thus it happened, as has been said above, that the student of Buddhist origins finds how the very historical circumstances of the birth of Buddhism mark it at once as the one religion, so far known on earth, which is the offspring, not of the Age of Faith, but of the Age of Understanding; the sole religion known so far, which is stated in the terminology of mental and intellectual, rather than emotional life. What this

external evidence of history teaches us concerning it, that also is no less manifest from the internal witness of the Teachings set forth in its sacred sources, the wonderful philosophy, so true and obvious when once we know it, which we find The Master's word expounds. Here is no teaching of blind faith, no shutting of our eyes to the pain, the cruelty, the changefulness of life; no setting aside of the great problem of suffering as a mystery into which we must not seek to penetrate; no fond and fair belief that all of it is somehow for the best, in that it all was made and still is guided by some great mystic Being whom none has ever known or seen.

In the place of all that fare for human mental infancy, we have the harder and yet strength-building food of adult man; the problem of evil nobly faced and met, with the one Wisdom that can avail to end it. Sorrow exists: is very shadow to all life en-selfed; its Cause lies in not-understanding; whence springs Desire; its Cure lies in the undermining of desire, in letting go the love of self for the nobler, greater love of all. What made it? That is in the dark; we do not know, we cannot understand. Why is it so? That question must be met by noble silence only. We do not know, we cannot understand; and when men try to put in words that which transcends our human knowledge, such words are in reality all meaningless, they bring no help to us; over such mere views men ever are at war. What then avails? To realise the Truth; to see how Sorrow reigns, in that our hearts are slave to self; to put an end to all this suffering; to seek the Peace which reigns where Sorrow cannot come. How can this be? How, bound in self-wrought pain, in the transition and illusion of our life, can we in Ignorance enmeshed, hope to find the Peace Beyond? Because the processes which we describe as "Life," occur in conformity with the Law of Cause-Effect; and so, by ceasing to do evil, to inflict pain on life; by doing good, helping to relieve life's pain; by purifying heart and life, learning the great lesson of its Oneness and our part in it, surely must we presently find Peace, find Sorrow's End even in this sad world most surely, since Causation obtains everywhere throughout its entire realm.

That is the Truth which The Master taught us: so simple and yet so profound; so cutting at the very roots of pain, and wrath, and ignorance; so clear when we have learned it, yet it was so hidden from the searching thought of all the world's great Holy Ones save One. Because Causation

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reigns; because the Sequence is inevitable; because Good grows to Better, the good seed to further golden crop; because Causation reigns, so must there be that Way of Peace within our very hearts; sure as Causation itself, shines this clear lamp of Hope through Ignorance's night.

That is our Truth. No dream of poet; no imaginary Power that made this aching world of life and yet is merciful; demand for faith we cannot have when once our minds have outgrown infancy. *Wisdom* for *Faith* our Dhamma offers us, the knowledge of the incomparable surety of Nibbana's Peace, if we can turn our hearts from love of self to love for all. That is our Dhamma, nobly facing all life's facts, and never hiding in a veil of transcendent mystery; certain, sequent, stable, sure; surer its truth than our own life is, for we have dreamed before, and even this our life may be in truth another dream. But that is true and sure, that Dhamma of our Master; truer and surer the more rightly do we comprehend it; our Hope therein is sure, seeing Causation reigns.

Surer than Life It is, since life is but a seeming and becoming; surer than Death It is, for the seed, cabined in earth's close darkness, dies but to live again in greater, sweeter life of leaf, and bud, and bloom, unfolding in the wide, free air and glorious sunlight; and is the life that now is, thrilling in our hearts as this transcendent miracle of thought the *less* of life, that *it* should perish where that seed-spark of life endures? Deeper and yet deeper, as our minds can attain to measure It, we find the surety of It grow for us and in us; the deeper our understanding of It, still the surer grows Its Very Truth; and, even then, when with our thought grown deepest, we essay to plumb sheer to Its utter depths, to learn the fullness of It, to attain Its final Truth, even then ever open new gulfs of depth and width past all our fathoming, past all our reach of It, so great is It, so deep, so wide.

The student knows that Buddhism is first and above all else a Gnosis, a Wisdom, a Religion of Understanding, showing the Way of Peace, the Path of Liberation and Salvation, as lying through selfless Love and Knowledge, twin aspects of the same great, final Truth of Life. So, at the first sight of it, that attitude of Faith and of Devotion, which we have seen to be the characteristic of the earlier stages of mental growth, seems to the student to be out of place; and its undoubted presence, both in the Teaching of The

Master and in the modern practice, to approach at least to a reversion to the methods and weaknesses of an earlier mental stage. He reads, perchance, the beautiful, ancient Pali hymn:

Ye ca Buddhā at itā ca,  
Ye ca Buddhā anāgatā,  
Paccuppanā ca ye Buddhā  
Amaṃ vandāmi sabbadā!  
N'atthi me Saraṇaṃ aññaṃ;  
Buddho me Saraṇaṃ varaṃ  
Etena saccavajjena  
Hotu me Jāyamangalaṃ!

"To all the Buddhas of the ancient days; To all the Buddhas of all future time; To all the Buddhas of the present age, I offer adoration evermore.

"For me there is no other Refuge; the Buddha is my Refuge-He, the Best! By power of the Truth in these my words, may I attain the Glorious Victory!"

And if, further, he has the priceless opportunity of prosecuting his studies of the Dhamma not in those western lands where he can learn but from books alone, and where, accordingly, its Teachings seem far off, remote alike in space and time, but in a Buddhist land like Burma, where it becomes, for one who has the wit to understand it, a living power, a supreme reality that sways the lives and ways of multitudes of men -then once again, perhaps, the same feature stands out most prominently, is manifested in the very life of the people before his eyes. He sees how the religious life of the nation centres around the Monastery and round such great religious shrines as the Shwè Dagon Pagoda; he sees, at some great Pagoda Festival, the worshipping crowds kneeling at the feet of The Master's Image, offering their incense and lights, heaping great piles of tropic flowers before His shrine, and each and all prefacing every act of meditation and of worship with the Formula of the Salutation: *Namo Tassa Bhagacato, Arahato, Sammāsambuddhassa!*

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"Glory unto Him, The Exalted Lord, The Holy One, The Utterly Awakened! "

"What, then," he asks himself, "is the meaning of this so obviously fervent and true hearted Buddhist devotion, whether as found in salutation or in hymn; or, more manifestly yet, in this adoring praise and worship of what is without doubt the truest Buddhist nation in the world? Is it indeed an instance of reversion to an earlier type of religious development, a thing adopted bodily from earlier Indian religious thought-adopted as it stood without that changed significance which The Buddha stamped on so many of the old beliefs and thoughts? Or is it, again, a recrudescence growth of later introduction into Buddhism, an instance of that slow but sure decay of the pristine purity of the religion, such as we find so common in all the long-lived religions, but from which, so far, the *Theravāda* seems so wonderfully to have escaped?"

The answer to these questions, as further study of the Dhamma teaches him, pursues, as is ever the case with Buddhist thought, the Middle Way between the two extremes. Devotion has in very fact a definite and indeed a prominent place in Buddhist life; and it consists of two widely different emotions, a lower and a higher, of which the latter alone may be regarded as the exclusively and characteristically Buddhist type. The first, and of necessity the most prevailing form of it, is just that same emotion of dependence and reliance, on an unseen Guide, of the heart that entertains it; and it finds a place, a very humble one indeed, but still a certain and defined position in the body of Buddhist Teaching as a whole. This is that same unquestioning faith in some being living, the blind belief in some great Power or Person able to hear and aid, which, as we have seen, is typical of the dawning intellectual growth of man. Seeing that this lower form of devotion constitutes, not only a stage, but an essential stage in a man's mental development; and seeing that the Dhamma was expounded, not only for the more advanced units of humanity who have transcended mental childhood, but for mankind at large, for every class of mind -this lower type of devotion is also to be found in it as well as in all the other great religions of the world. But in the Teaching of The Buddha we find that this devotion, instead of taking the foremost place amongst religious ideals and inculcated practices, instead of acting as the cloak of manifold

mysteries, as an excuse for the incompatibility of the facts of life with others of the Teachings of the religion, holds only that position to which it is entitled as an indispensable feature of the earlier stages of human mental growth. As such, we find it in the beautiful *Story of Mattakundali*, the traditional exposition at length of the Teaching summarised in brief in the second stanza of the *Dhammapada*. Recording the old traditional exposition of this stanza, current in his days in the then centre of all Buddhist learning, the monasteries of Ceylon, the great Commentator tells us how The Master was accustomed, on each morning of His life, to search with inner higher vision over the length and breadth of all the land, to see what human hearts were nigh to grace or insight, so that they needed for their helping only such aid as one who knows the Way can sometimes render to some humbler, lowlier fellow-man. And it thus befell that on a day, as the Commentator with oriental imagery finely puts it, casting the net of His Compassion over the waters of life's ocean, He found therein poor Mattakundali, son of a wealthy but miserly Brāhmana, nigh to the gates of death by reason of his Kamma, but, by that same reason, in the state to profit by a helping hand. The story we all well know, and here we are concerned in but the point of how, to the dying child, The Master made manifest a glorious apparitional image of Himself; and how the boy, dying there in solitude, turned to this Form with wondering, with unquestioning devotion, losing all sense of fear and suffering in the thought, that surely this Holy One could aid him and bring him peace. With that assurance in his heart, the potent life-determining dying thought grew calm, so that Mattakundali, dying on the earth, came to rebirth amidst the heavenly glories -was reborn in one of the bright Heavens of Form -although the immediate cause or such high happiness was but a single act of adoration, namely the child's reliance on the Master's power to help.

This little story is an excellent example of the place held by the lower, common form of devotion in Buddhism; excellent as indicating at the same time both the power ascribed to this type of devotion, and the close limitations Buddhist Teaching sets on its power to help us and to change our destinies. For, be it noted, that act of worship was, as it were, only the determining, the *immediate*, cause of that fortunate re-birth, in that the overwhelming flood of adoring thought could calm the usually trembling death-consciousness, and so, as it were, pave the immediate way for the

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operation of past meritorious Doing, the latter being the remoter, and yet more real cause.

But, as we all know, the aim and goal that Buddhist Teaching lays before us is by no means the gaining of such heavenly birth as Mattakundali attained. Such birth may be regarded -and in the case in hand the view applies -as a *nursery* for the child-intelligence; a life of peace and happiness, in the midst of which the dawning mind grows to greater heights of spiritual strength which enables it, in later lives on earth, better to face the pain and suffering which are at once so characteristic of our human life, and as such, sure guides or rather goads, to bring us to seek out the Path of Peace. But so rich in joy those heavenly mortal realms are, and so great the length of life therein, that few amongst their denizens ever can win the comprehension of the Sorrow, or yet the Changefulness or Illusion dominant in life. So that in them is little opportunity for realising the truly Buddhist aim, the finding of the Path of Selflessness, whereof the first step lies in abnegation of all such personal desire, as the heavenly birth promotes.

Thus we may define this lower species of devotion, this mere blind faith in what is high and holy, as able, indeed, when it finds support in Meritorious Doing (but not otherwise), to conduce to lives of heavenly or earthly happiness, to afford, as it were, a period of rest and leisure for the growing but still undeveloped mind. Why this should be the case we well can see, who understand the teaching of Causation, as that second stanza of the *Dhammapada* calls to mind. In the devoted heart as in the mental child-life, there is firm and never-wavering assurance of the power of that devotion's object to give aid to us, to render grace and help. "All that we are," to quote our *Dhammapada* stanza, "*All that we are is the result of what we have thought; it is founded on our thought, made up of our thought: If a man speaks or acts with holy thought, then Joy shall follow him.*" The world in which we find ourselves, that is, our world is but the wrought and moulded outcome of our thought in bygone lives. Given the moving power of Meritorious Act behind it, it will build for us lives filled with joy and happiness, but shaped and moulded just as our thought dictated. The dream, the ideal of heaven, creates for us the very heaven whereof we dreamed, if

behind the thought there be sufficient *Pañña*, the life-giving Doing, the Good Kamma, which alone can thrill the dream to vivid life.

Such is the power, and such the limitation, of devotion of this lower type. It can, in brief, bring happiness if vitalised by Righteous Doing, but it is impotent to help us to enter and walk upon the Way of Peace. And if, because the Dhamma was enounced for the benefit of all humanity, of whom the majority are still in the childhood of mental growth, if in its lower, earlier Teaching we find that devotion still holds a place, we still can see how even that very usage of it is designed to pave the way for greater, nobler thought. Throughout The Master's Teaching, we find everywhere the same idea presented; the idea, namely, that only our own Right Act can serve to help us in the end; the constant attempt to wean the growing mind, from the dependence of that earlier stage of childhood, to the realization that our Hope, our Light, our Way, lies in reality *within ourself*. We may hear, indeed, the words of the Teaching of a Very Buddha; but they can avail us only to the extent to which we follow their advice."Be ye Lamps unto yourselves; look for Refuge to yourselves, seeking no other Refuge." The thought that Refuge lies in Truth alone, is the fundamental dictum of the Master to whomsoever seeks to put an end to all this Cycle of Becoming and of Suffering and to find the Way of Peace.

And thus we come to the second, the higher and peculiarly Buddhist thought and attitude, to which the name Devotion can be applied. As the child grows older, Thought begins to take the place of Faith. No longer accepting with perfect trustfulness, all that the elders or parents tell it, it begins to *question* things, to endeavor to investigate; it begins, in short, to think its own thoughts, rather than, as heretofore, to take all its concepts ready-made. With the dawning comprehension of life resulting from this changed attitude, it ceases to be naught but a mental mirror wherein the thoughts of its environment are reflected. Beginning to think for itself, it passes into the period of mental adolescence; and with this awakening of independent thought the old blind faith soon disappears, at least with those more progressed individuals who in past lives have already gone through the childhood stage.

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Here, for our present human development, the parallelism which so far has obtained between the individual and the racial development appears to cease; for there always exist some few rare minds already far ahead of the general development. Such pass onwards, individually, from this stage of mental youth, this Age of Questioning, to the final stage of full maturity, the Age of Wisdom, of full Understanding. But as yet the mass of even the most civilized of races can scarcely be said to have advanced even to adolescence.

To that full stage of mental growth, in matters of worldly knowledge, we may regard the greatest of mankind as having more or less completely attained. In the world of literature a Shakespeare, in the sphere of science a Newton, a Spencer, and a Maxwell, have reached so far in one or more of the departments of mental life. Of such are the master-minds of all humanity, the leaders of civilisation; and in our present era of transition the number of these great thinking ones is being added to each day. Such progress at present is abnormal, is indeed far beyond the growth and the attainment of the body of mankind, who, as we have seen, are lagging still, even in the most progressed of races, on the verge of mental infancy, are but slowly passing from the Age of Faith. So, such attainments as a Newton or a Spencer have reached can, in our present age, be won only by the hardest work and the intensest application; and, even then, such mental manhood, such maturity as these may have reached are found, as has been said, only in one, or in a few departments of mental action.

But, from our Buddhist point of view, we may regard all these attainments, in respect of merely worldly art and science, as being simply *side-shows*, specialised realms of knowledge only collaterally connected with the real advancement, the *true* maturity, that is, maturity of *general* development; maturity in respect of those deeper things of life which we sum up in the one word Religion. *True* progress, basic to the whole field of mental life, is what we Buddhists term attainment of the Paths; and this because the more worldly knowledge, the specialised attainment in respect of some one, or some few mental kingdoms only, dies with the death of the individual who has attained to it, so far, at least, as he himself is concerned therewith. Truly, its results, especially in this age when the general wisdom has so far advanced that the wise publish their discoveries broadcast

throughout the world, remain for the benefit of mankind at large; this is the special virtue and the boon such sort of mental achievement wins. None of us are Newtons, even in process of becoming, of that we may be sure, at least so far as this life is concerned. None of us, therefore -to touch but one department of the many that that mastermind was master in -could of our own intelligence infer from an apple's fall the Law of Gravitation. But, since the actual Newton not only made that great inference and the consequent application, but published his discovery for the benefit of all, the merest tyro amongst us can apply, can use the principle he discovered; thus, if lost for Newton as a being, the knowledge still remains to benefit mankind.

But the deeper, the more spiritual attainment summed up in the word Religion, the attainment of growth upon the holy Path leading to Insight, Understanding, to the Peace, to Sorrow's End, or that Higher Wisdom, is no mere side-show; it is basic to the whole great field of life itself, of that no smallest gain is ever lost to the being that wins it, or, for that matter, is ever lost to life at large. Such growth is fundamental, basic, it implies the fulfillment of the very Hope, the meaning of our life. In respect of that deep wisdom, we today may fairly place ourselves as having passed out of the Age of Faith; as standing now somewhere within the limits of the Age of Investigation; and our great hope now lies in being able a little to move forwards in our present life; to attain, in the life that lies before us, a little nearer to the full maturity of life. We in the Buddhist term are *Sekha*, students or learners, trying so to understand and to apply to our own lives the greatest body of the deeper wisdom ever given to the world, that the life of which we form an integral part may come a little nearer to the Peace.

What, then, is the manner of devotion that, for us thus situated in respect of the deeper growth, can serve to help us further on the Path? This is the specifically Buddhist form of it. We have seen how the earlier form consists in blind faith only; we have seen how necessary that is to the undeveloped mind; but, since today we are endeavoring to *investigate*, to think for ourselves and to apply our thought to life, we obviously have passed beyond the age when mere blind faith could help us; such, for us, who have reached adolescence, would be a retrogression, not an advance.

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We are here concerned with finding, with progressing on, the Inward Path; and, as we all know, that sort of progress has been well summed up as "making pure the Mind ". How can devotion help in that direction? and, if not the old type, mere blind devoted Faith, what fashion of it here can help us as we stand ?

To take the latter question first, the Buddhist answer is that it is not Faith indeed, so far as faith is blind, unreasoning, based on no principle or fact in life, but only on our hope and our desire. Rather it is the maturer Love, the devotion that comes in the train of Understanding; the true heart's adoration that springs from within us when we have gained a little self-mastery; when, this delusion of the self seeming no longer all our hope in being, we begin to understand the value of self-sacrifice, when we attain some glimpse of the tremendous meaning of the Love that has for us resulted in the knowledge of the Law we have.

So long as self alone seems of importance, it appears to us of little value that another should have given all His life, even the all of many lives, for the sake of helping life at large to find the Peace. Then, when self rules supreme, it seems derogatory to its glory that we should kneel in adoration of whatever greatest being has existed, whether on earth or in the heavens beyond. But, with the progress of our heart's cleansing, understanding how in that thought of self lies the root-cause of all the pain of life which now we seek to help to end, with that progression comes the understanding of the utter worthlessness, nay, more, the very evil of the self-thought; and yet, to each of us, how difficult the least poor act of self-renunciation seems! Knowing that, and setting beside our knowledge of the sacrifice which this discovery of the Path involved for One, the holiest and greatest of our human kind, *our* paltry efforts in that same direction, we turn with shame from the thought of it, so mean and poor do our greatest efforts seem when so compared.

Thus the devotion we should cultivate springs from no less significant a thought than that of our own true place in life's progression; as compared with the heights of selflessness won by the Holy and the Great of old. Seeing, by the clear logic of the Law, how self is the cause of all the pain of life; seeing how difficult for us is each poor feeblest act of sacrifice of self,

our hearts are filled with wonder and with love at the thought of one who could give *all* that men hold dear, not in the sure knowledge of success, but only in the Hope of finding a Way of Peace for all. That is the sort of Faith, of Love, of Devotion, that can help us on, and why? Because it means another conquest over self-hood; a further achievement of the deeper, vaster, universal Love.

Without it, without this reasoned sure devotion to the Hope that now is guiding our life's ship over the darkling water of the ocean of existence, we can never win the fire, the power, the earnestness which alone can forward our high aim. Brightly on our mental horizon, and more brightly yet, as one by one the mists of self-hood roll aside, shines the beacon light upon the Further Shore; the reasoned Understanding: "Once has One achieved, and still on earth His Light is shining, to guide the lives of all that lift up eyes to see." Athwart the darkling waters of life's ocean, marking the Path that each must travel to the Peace, gleams clear the Way that that beacon-fire shows. By Understanding of the Truth He left to us, by comprehension of Causation's Law, we may guide indeed our bark of life, straight and sure on the gleaming road way marked on the waves by that still distant beacon-fire. But all the guidance of our intellect applied, aided albeit by all our knowledge of that very Truth, the Law The Master found for us –it all were useless, unless we could find the motive power to drive our ship. That power, that fire within the furnace of our hearts, is Devotion which we must cultivate. We know how, if we wish for bodily strength, we must practice lifting heavy weights, or in some way using the set of muscles that we wish to strengthen. Just so with Thought. It is not enough once to have seen that "such-and-such thought is good, beneficent, tending to ease the bitter agony of life," and, having so seen, to set aside the potent thought, or never think of it again.

We must *use* it, practise thinking it, make, in respect of it, Sankharas more and more potent till it has become truly a living fire within us, certain, all-overcoming, sure. Therefore it is not alone those lowly hearts who, yet in mental childhood, find in blind faith new mental strength, that need to kneel before The Master's shrine, to offer humble gifts of light, and flower, and scent. We, too, need that, not less than those our humbler human brethren, but vastly more; for the power of self is still upon us, and

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only a right grasp of our ideal can antidote its poison in our hearts. We, too, need recitation of the Namaskara; but our adoration must be paid, not to a Person, for in truth all personality is but a dream, but to our Heart's Ideal. We, too, can find ever new strength in kneeling at The Master's shrine; but we must understand our worship rightly, and build a fitting shrine in our own lives, cleansing our hearts till they are worthy to bear that Image in their inmost sanctuary of love. And, lastly, we also need to offer gifts upon that altar daily; but gifts, not of these swiftly waning lights, these dying flowers of earth or evanescent incense-scents. Our gifts must be in deeds of love; of sacrifice and self-surrender to those about us must be our daily offerings in worship of the Exalted Lord. Making His life our pattern, our ideal, we must strive to be His followers not in name alone, but must so rule our hearts and lives that men may understand the meaning of that noblest holiest life that ever human being lived; how it has the power to call us and to conquer, until Love's Empire shall have spread through all the world.