





THE FOUR BUDDHIST  
BOOKS IN MAHAYANA

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Bodhisattva in Precepts.

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## INTRODUCTION

The above title is an abridgement of the original, which in its entirety reads: "On Entering into the Inconceivable States of Emancipation, by the Practice and Vows of the Bodhisattva<sup>1</sup> Samantabhadra<sup>2</sup> of the Mahavaipulya Buddha Avatamsaka Sutra<sup>3</sup>".

This is the third part of the thirty-ninth chapter, (This chapter alone has forty volumes, and this is its fortieth volume), and is the supplement to the eighty volumes of the version of the T'ang Dynasty, known as the extra one, or rather the last volume of this Sutra. The original text of the supplement was presented to the Emperor Teh-Tsung of the T'ang Dynasty, by the King of Odra in Southern India.

The Emperor Teh-Tsung directed an Indian samana<sup>4</sup> named Prajna, to translate it from the Sanskrit<sup>5</sup> into Chinese. The work of translation was begun in the 12th year of the Era "Chen-Yuan" in the reign of the said Emperor (796 C.E.)

The Avatamsaka Sutra is recognized by all Buddhists as the King of all sutras by its vast and comprehensive synthesizing of all the threads in the web of the Dharma<sup>6</sup> (Law of the universe). Its thirty-ninth chapter, narrating the Vows of Samantabhadra, is the essence of the Mahayana<sup>7</sup> teaching of the whole sutra. At first sight its narration appears easily understandable, but if one reads the numerous commentaries on this sutra, written by various Buddhist savants, one finds that it has a profundity of meaning wholly unrealized by the literal-minded. Moreover, this chapter is divided into three sections, the first and the second parts

containing more subtle meanings that are not easily to be understood. Also there is the holy scene of striking beauty, wherein is portrayed in a most inconceivable manner, how the Kumara Sudhana<sup>8</sup> entered into the state of Samadhi,<sup>9</sup> and saw the innumerable shining Buddha-lands as well as the glorious figure of the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra. In Chinese Buddhist circles, only the final part (the present version) is used for practising and reciting.

The metaphysical conception is certainly quite impossible to express in a completely satisfactory manner, either in speech or writing and is especially so in translation, its profound meaning can be entirely lost by even the slightest misinterpretation. I fully realized my incompetence in undertaking this work, for neither my learning of Buddhism<sup>10</sup> nor my linguistic knowledge entitle me to meet such a difficult task. However, having thoroughly impressed this chapter upon my mind by daily recitation over a considerable period of time, I am intuitively inspired to attempt a translation of it. I hope that later on if time permits, I may re-write this version, giving a more accurate translation of it when my studies are more advanced.

Among the many wondrous and beautiful things of this universe, Buddhist literature stands supreme; but the very short and simple phrases of its translations, typical of Chinese classical literature, has made the meaning rather incomplete to a foreign reader; and even to a native of China, if he is not conversant with the ancient classical Chinese literature, may fail to grasp their profound significance. I therefore have taken the liberty of adding words to certain sentences which perhaps not be entirely clear in meaning to my readers. These additional words are inserted in parenthesis.

The Sanskrit terms are now quite popular amongst



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many European Buddhists, who perhaps possess a deeper knowledge of them than I have. In order however to aid beginners, I append some notes on the Sanskrit terms appearing in this version; and also some explanations on certain knotty-points which may perplex the readers, are to be found at the end of this book. These notes, are chiefly based on the Chinese Buddhist Dictionary, (Edited by Dr. F. P. Ting), and partly taken from traditional teachings, (Both European and Chinese), may not be technically accurate, but they are popular explanations among Buddhists.

It is inevitable that Buddhist nomenclature should be different from the typical form of English writing. Even when a new science is formulated, there must be some new terms introduced to meet its requirements. This is particularly true of Buddhism, because it tells of Buddha-states, the very nature of which is well-nigh inconceivable and certainly is beyond the mental power of ordinary minds and which, therefore, no already-formed language can adequately describe. For this reason, it is necessary, if Buddhist truth be represented with accuracy, or nearly, that some new terms must be introduced, and which should not be bound by the typical form of English writing. It is my hope that this suggestion may be adopted by the European Buddhists in the near future.

The stanzas in the text are originally sixty-two verses, each verse consisting of four sentences, and each sentence composed of seven words, which should be rendered into poetical form, and in rhyme. Owing to the difficulties in translating, and lest the meaning should be lost if the words were bound by rhythm, I have translated them literally. I truly regret my failure in reproducing the melodious beauty of the text.

## INTRODUCTION

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The "Vows of Samantabhadra" is also known as one of the "Four Sutras of the Pure Land School<sup>11</sup>". The other three being:

(1) The Larger Sukhavati-Vyuha, translated from the Sanscrit into English by F. Max Müller.

(2) The Smaller Sukhavati-Vyuha, also translated by Max Müller.

(3) The Amitayur-Dhyana-Sutra, Translated into English By J. Takakusa.

These are all contained in volume 49 of the "Sacred Books of the East" published by the Oxford University Press, London.

The chapter of the Vows of Samantabhadra has stood alone without an English version during such a long interval since it was translated from Sanscrit into Chinese about eleven hundred years ago. Now the attempt of the present work has been made, and thereby the English translations of these "Four Sutras of the Pure Land School" are completed.

ON ENTERING INTO THE INCONCEIVABLE  
STATE OF EMANCIPATION BY THE PRACTICE AND  
VOWS OF THE BODHISATTVA SAMANTABHADRA  
OF THE MAHAVAIPULYA BUDDHA AVATAMSAKA  
SUTRA.

Chapter XXXIV

When the Bodhisattva<sup>12</sup> Mahasattva<sup>13</sup> Samantabhadra<sup>14</sup> having discoursed upon and eulogized the exalted merits and virtues of the Tathagata,<sup>15</sup> he addressed the Kumara Sudhana<sup>16</sup> and a great company of Bodhisattvas as follows: O Noble-Minded Man, the (infinite) merits and virtues of the Tathagata are ineffable. If such were preached by all the Buddhas<sup>17</sup> of the ten quarters<sup>18</sup> who consecutively enumerated them during unspeakable and incalculable aeons<sup>19</sup> in Buddha-domains equal to the smallest dustmotes<sup>20</sup> (in the atmosphere) in number, they could not thereby be exhausted. If (there be any who) aspire to attain this high state of merit, (let them understand that) its realization depends upon the attainment of the Tenfold Paramita<sup>21</sup>: the vows of widest and highest aspiration and the actual practice of them.

But what are the Tenfold Paramita? (you may ask) They are: Firstly, to pay the highest homage and veneration to all Buddhas. Secondly, to preach (the virtues of) and to praise (the glories of) the Tathagatas. Thirdly, to make abundant offerings for the veneration to the Buddhas.

Fourthly, to be penitent and confess one's evil deeds and hindrances.<sup>22</sup> Fifthly, to approve of and rejoice at the merits and virtues of others.<sup>23</sup> Sixthly, to request Buddhas to set in motion "The Wheel of Dharma"<sup>24</sup>. Seventhly to beseech Buddhas to remain in the world.<sup>25</sup> Eighthly, to be a zealous follower of the "Way of Buddhas" for ever. Ninthly, to be always in harmony with all beings (bestowing on them gifts according to their needs). Tenthly, to turn over all one's merits to (benefit) all beings.<sup>26</sup>

The Kumara Sudhana said to the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra: What course shall we follow, O Holy One, to fulfil all these virtues, from "rendering homage to Buddhas" to "turning over one's own merits" to all beings"?

The Bodhisattva Samantabhadra replied to the Kumara Sudhana: O Noble-minded Man, as to what is said regarding the homage and worship of the Buddhas, it means that by the power of the virtues and vows of Samantabhadra, I (note "I" means any person) have profound faith and deep understanding, as though I were face to face simultaneously with all the Buddhas of all the Buddha-worlds, (such Buddhas) are equal to the (flying) smallest dust-motes in number, throughout the worlds of Dharma and the cosmic void of the ten quarters and the three ages.<sup>27</sup> I worship and adore them constantly with my pure deeds viz the bodily,<sup>28</sup> oral,<sup>29</sup> and mental<sup>30</sup> deeds.

Before every Buddha in Buddha-land, I present myself by (miraculous) transformation in unutterable and innumerable bodies like unto the smallest specks of dust in number. With every one of my manifestations I pay homage to all the Buddhas of every Buddha-domain and such Buddhas are equal to the smallest dust-motes in number.

My homage will be ended when the limitation of the

infinite space is ended, as the space is boundless, so also is my homage to the Buddhas without end. So is it, when the spheres of beings are ended, the Karmas<sup>31</sup> of beings are ended, the sorrows of beings (Klesa)<sup>32</sup> are ended, these too are endless: even so is my homage to all Buddhas endless. Thought following upon thought without interruption,<sup>33</sup> and in bodily, oral, and mental deeds without weariness.

Again, O Noble-mined Man, what signifies "to preach (the virtues of) and to praise (the glories of) the Tathagatas"? It means that in the smallest dust-motes of all the worlds of the ten quarters, and three ages throughout the Dharma-circles and the cosmic void, upon each speck of dust, there the Buddhas are dwelling equal in number to the smallest specks of dust of all the worlds.<sup>34</sup> And each Buddha is surrounded by an assembly of Bodhisattvas as wide as the ocean.

I shall apply my profound insight and my temporal knowledge to fathom them till I thoroughly understand. Then will I praise them with my oration, as though it were with the angelic and eloquent tongues of the Goddess (Sarasvati),<sup>35</sup> each tongue emitting a boundless ocean of sound, each voice emitting a boundless ocean of all forms of speech, proclaiming the ocean of the merits of all Tathagatas. Such praises shall continue without cessation through endless time and the limitless realms of the Dharma-worlds.

My praises will cease when the void of space is ended, (or) the spheres of beings are ended, (or) the Karmas of beings are ended, (or) the sorrows of beings are ended; but all the things from the space of void even to the sorrows of beings are endless: so also are my praises endless; thought succeeding thought without interruption; and in bodily, oral, and mental deeds without weariness.

Again, O Noble-minded Man, what is meant by abundant

offerings out of veneration to the Buddhas? It means that in the smallest dust-motes of the Buddha-domains of the Dharma-circles and of the cosmic void, and of the ten quarters and three yugas<sup>36</sup> in each speck of dust exist the Buddhas equal in number to the smallest dust-motes of all the worlds, and each Buddha is surrounded by an ocean-wide assembly of Bodhisattvas, in whom, I have profound faith and reverent understanding through the power of the Vows of Samantabhadra. I would offer them the most rare and wondrous gifts such as the flowery-clouds,<sup>37</sup> garland-clouds, heavenly music-clouds, celestial tapestry-clouds, angelicgarment clouds; all kinds of heavenly perfumes, scented balms, aromatic incenses, aromatic powders, each equal in quantity to Mount Sumeru<sup>38</sup> the King of mountains. I would present lighted lamps of various kinds, such as the cream lamps, the oil lamps, and the lamps of sweet perfumes, the wick of each lamp being in size as Mount Sumeru the King of mountains; and the burning oil of each as great as the waters of the ocean. Ceaselessly would I offer such gifts in veneration. O Noble-minded Man, among all gifts, the crown of them is the gifts of Dharma. Such gifts are called: the offering of "Following the instructions (of all the Buddhas), the offering of benefits for all beings, the offering of embracing and sustaining all beings, the offering of taking upon oneself the sufferings of others, the offering of fostering the root of merit diligently, the offering of swerving not, from the Bodhisattva-duty; and the offering of departing not, from the love of the Bodhi-heart."<sup>39</sup>

O Noble-minded Man, truly the merit to be derived from the offering of (material) gifts, such as those enumerated, are infinite; yet, in comparison with a single thought of Dharma (they are as nothing). Those merits

(derived from material offerings), would not be equal to a hundredth part (of the merit of a thought of Dharma); nay, not to a hundred thousandth part of koties, <sup>40</sup> of nayutas, of kalans, and of upannishads. And Why? Because the Dharma is held in the highest esteem by all Tathagatas. Moreover, all Buddhas are begotten from the Dharma, through the perfecting of their conduct in accordance with it. If the Bodhisattvas make offerings of the Dharma (to the Buddhas) then their offerings to the Tathagatas are completed. Thus do the Bodhisattvas present the truest offering of gifts to the Tathagatas.

My offering of such great and noble gifts to Buddhas will cease if the cosmic void of space is ended, (or) the spheres of beings are ended, (or) the karmas of beings are ended, (or) the sorrows of beings are all ended; but all the things from the space of the void to the sorrows of all beings are endless; so also are my offerings to Buddhas endless. Thought succeeding thought without interruption, in bodily, oral, and mental deeds without weariness.

Again, O Noble-minded Man, what is meant by being penitent and confessing one's evil deeds<sup>41</sup> and hindrances? A Bodhisattva would think thus: all the evil deeds I have committed hitherto during the kalpas without beginning of the past, caused by the emotion of lust, hatred, and stupidity leading to bodily, verbal, and mental actions are boundless. If such deeds were corporeal and in forms, all the cosmic spaces ilimitable as it is, could not contain them. I now confess and repent them all, by my three purified deeds,<sup>42</sup> and with a sincere heart, pledging myself not commit evil deeds here-after. I will always keep myself pure in the prohibitive precepts, and in all active moral deeds.

I will lay this penitence before all the Buddhas and

Bodhisattvas of all worlds and Dharma-circles equal in number to the smallest dust-motes. My penitence will cease when the void of space is ended, (or) the spheres of beings are ended, (or) the karmas of beings are ended, (or) the sorrows of beings are all ended; but all the things from the space of the void to the sorrows of beings are endless, so also is my penitence endless. Thought succeeding thought without interruption, in bodily, oral, and mental deeds without weariness.

Again, O Noble-minded Man, what is meant by "approving of and rejoicing at the merits and virtues of others"? In Buddha-lands, the Buddhas equal in number to the smallest dust-motes of all the worlds, throughout all the Dharma-circles and cosmic void, of the ten quarters and in the duration of the three yugas have devoted their lives to the purpose of acquiring all wisdom, and diligently accumulated merits since they began to direct their minds (towards Bodhi),<sup>43</sup> throughout the duration of unutterable and innumerable kalpas and in Buddha-domains, equal in number to the smallest dust-motes of all worlds. During each kalpa having sacrificed their heads, eyes, hands, and feet, in unutterable and incalculable number as the smallest dust-motes of Buddha-spheres, having thus overcome all difficulties, and accomplished all the arduous tasks, perfected the various stages of Paramita, passed through the experiences of Bodhisattva-wisdom, and accomplished the highest Bodhi Buddhas till entered into Parnirvana,<sup>44</sup> whereupon they distributed the sariras;<sup>45</sup> all such good roots of merit. I emulate and rejoice in.

Moreover, whatever merit or virtue may be possessed by any being either of the six divisions<sup>46</sup> of existence, or belonging to the four kinds of birth,<sup>47</sup> or appertaining to



any species of life in the worlds of the ten quarters, though such merit be as infinitesimal as a single grain of dust, all will have my sympathy and corresponding regard; with all such I rejoice.

Again, all the Sravakas,<sup>48</sup> the Pratyeka-Buddhas,<sup>49</sup> the thoroughly learned ones,<sup>50</sup> and those who are still to be advanced on the path of disciples, all such are the saints of the ten quarters and the three generations, with whom I rejoice at their merit if any may be possessed.

All the Bodhisattvas who through infinite self-sacrifice and boundless achievement have overcome all obstacles and having formed the wish to attain the highest goal of Bodhi, with them also I rejoice in their vast merits.

Thus, even though the void of space, together with the states of beings, with the karmas of beings, with the sorrows of beings, though all these be ended, yet, my approval and joy in the merits of all beings will not be ended. Thought succeeding thought without interruption, in bodily, oral, and mental deeds, without weariness.

Again, O Noble-minded Man, what is meant by beseeching the Buddhas to set in motion the "wheel of Dharma"?<sup>51</sup> It means that I will apply my bodily, verbal, and mental efforts, and various expedient means, and the most skilful methods, earnestly to request the Buddhas to rotate the wondrous wheel of Dharma. Such Buddhas are as incalculable in number as the smallest (flying) dust-motes of the Buddha-domains of the ten quarters, and three yugas, throughout the Dharma-realms and the cosmic void; each dust-mote respectively contains therein unutterable and innumerable vast Buddha-countries, equal in number to the smallest dust-motes. In each country dwell ineffable and innumerable Buddhas equal to the smallest dust-motes in

number. Each moment there are Buddhas equal to the smallest dust-motes in number, who are attaining enlightenment, and each are surrounded by an ocean-wide assembly of all Bodhisattvas. I constantly request such Buddhas to turn the wheel of Right Dharma. Thus, even though the space of the void has end, and likewise the worlds of beings, the karmas of beings, and the sorrows of beings all have end, yet my request is endless. Thought succeeding thought without interruption, and in bodily, oral, and mental deeds, without weariness.

Again, O Noble-minded Man, what is meant by "beseeching the Buddhas to remain in the world"? The Buddhas are infinite in number as the minutest dust-motes of the ten quarters and three generations throughout the Dharmarealms and cosmic void; and so are the Bodhisattvas, the Sravakas, the Pratyeka-Buddhas, the wholly learned ones, the partly learned ones, and the well learned laymen, when they set their minds on the attainment of Nirvana;<sup>52</sup> I entreat them all to remain in touch with mankind, instead of entering Nirvana; even to the duration of kalpas of Buddha-lands, equal to the minutest dust-motes in number, in order to benefit all living beings. Thus even though the cosmic void has end, and likewise the states of beings, the karmas of beings, and the sorrows of beings though all such have end, yet, my petition to the Buddhas is endless. Thought succeeds thought without interruption, and in bodily, oral, and mental deeds, without weariness.

Again, O Noble-minded Man, what is meant by being "Under Buddhas' guidance for ever"? It means, for instance the Tathagata Vairocana<sup>53</sup> of the Saha-world,<sup>54</sup> who, from the beginning, when He made an earnest wish (for obtaining Buddhahood, in order to deliver all beings), and having

made the exquisite advance by unremittingly skilful exertion, and sacrificed His lives and bodies, in unutterable and countless number, for the sake of alms-giving. He stripped off His own skin for parchment, used His own blood for ink, and His bones for writing-instruments. Thus the scriptures have been written in bulk as great as Mount Sumeru. In appreciation of the Dharma, He would disregard His life and body, how much more would He disregard the royal throne, dominions, palaces, gardens, and all that appertained to Him? He spared no energy in His arduous career and painstaking, until He accomplished the great Bodhi under the tree.<sup>55</sup> Then He displayed various exalted powers (Abhidjnas),<sup>56</sup> manifested various transmutations, revealed various Buddha-figures,<sup>57</sup> and presided at the various assemblies, such as the assemblies of great Bodhisattvas, the assemblies of Sravakas and Pratyeka-Buddhas, the assemblies of the Tchakra-varti-radja<sup>58</sup> and the Petty Kings<sup>59</sup> and their retinues, the assemblies of Kshatriya,<sup>60</sup> Brahmin,<sup>61</sup> Elders, and laymen, the assemblies of Devas,<sup>62</sup> Nagas,<sup>63</sup> Eight Groups,<sup>64</sup> mankind, and subhuman. At these assemblies and sanctuaries, He spoke in a full and round voice of thunder, with expedient means and skilful methods, teaching the beings in manner befitting their inclinations and happiness. Thus He led them to the maturity (of Bodhi), until He entered into Nirvana.

All these examples I will follow, not only that of the present World-Honoured One Vairocana, but of all the Tathagatas of the Buddha-countries, equal in number to the dust-motes of the ten quarters and three yugas, throughout the Dharma-realms and cosmic void. I will follow the examples of the Buddhas from thought to thought. Even though the void of space has end, and the worlds of beings,

the karmas of beings, the sorrows of beings all have end, yet, my practice and following of the examples of the Buddhas will not be ended. Thought succeeds thought without interruption, and in bodily, oral, and mental deeds, without weariness.

Again, O Noble-minded Man, what is meant by "Always in compliance with beings"? It means always in harmony with the beings of the worlds of ten quarters, throughout the Dharma-circles and cosmic void; they are known as the beings to be born from the womb, from the egg, from moisture, and produced by metamorphosis. They live in different elements,<sup>65</sup> either abiding on the earth, in the waters, in the fire (that is heat), or in the wind (air). There are also some beings flying in the void, perching in forests and bushes. They are of various species, forms, lineaments, colours, length of life, appellations, natures, knowledge, habits, characteristics, manners, costumes, and diets. They dwell at innumerable abiding places; in towns, villages, cities, and palaces.

They comprise the Devas, the Nagas, the Eight Groups, human beings, subhumans; some have no feet, some two feet, some four feet, and others have many feet; some are with form, some without form; with sense, or without sense, or neither with nor without sense. All of these should be accommodated and served by me (according to their needs and their natures), as attentively as I would show filial respect to my parents, due respect to my teachers, to elders, and arhats,<sup>66</sup> up to the Tathagatas, all in equality.

I would be a good physician to the sick, a guide to those who have wandered from the path, setting their feet in the right way. I would be a light to those who wander in darkness. I would enable the people in poverty to discover

the vaults of treasure. A Bodhisattva should thus benefit all beings in equal treatment, and bestow his loving care on all beings alike. And why? because if a Bodhisattva serves all beings that is equal to serving Buddhas dutifully. To hold all beings in high esteem, and render them respectful services, that is equal to reverencing and serving the Tathagatas. To make all beings happy, is to please all Tathagatas. And why? because the Great Compassionate Heart is the essence of Buddha-hood. For the sake of (delivering) all beings, (the Bodhisattva) develops great compassion, and from the great compassion springs the Bodhi-heart, from the Bodhi-heart comes the enlightenment.

This is like unto the King of mighty trees<sup>67</sup> growing in the wildness and barren-desert; (if it gets no water, it wilts and dies, but) if its roots be well watered, we shall see it flourishing with full foliage, blossoming in its full efflorescence, and bearing plentiful fruit. It will live to the full length of its normal existence. A King Bodhi-tree<sup>68</sup> is even thus, all beings are the roots of the Bodhi-tree, the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas are its fruits and its flowers. If (Bodhisattvas) apply the water of great compassion to all beings (who form its roots), the Bodhi-tree will bloom with flowers, and bear the fruits of the wisdom of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. And why? If Bodhisattvas apply the nectar of great compassion to benefit all beings, they will attain the "Anuttara-Samyak-Sambodhi".<sup>69</sup> Therefore the beings are essential to the Bodhi; for without them, there are no Bodhisattvas able to attain the supreme transcendental wisdom. Ponder O Noble-minded Man, on the truth in this parable. Look upon all beings with impartial mind and equality, thus will the great compassion be brought to the state of fulness and completion. To bestow the great compassion upon all

beings, that is equal to serving the Tathagatas (to their satisfaction).

My compassionate embrace of all beings shall never cease. Even though space of the void has end, the worlds of beings, the karmas of beings, and the sorrows of beings are all ended, yet, my boundless compassion is endless. Thought succeeds thought without interruption, and in bodily, oral, and mental deeds, without weariness.

Again, O Noble-minded Man, what signifies "Turning over all one's merits (to benefit all sentient beings)? This means that all the merits acquired from the commencement of paying the highest homage to all the Buddhas, and serving the needs of all beings, shall be transferred to all beings throughout the Dharma-worlds and the immeasurable spaces of the universe, wishing them always to be happy and free from affliction or illness. All their evil projects will fail, and all their virtuous intentions will be quickly achieved. Close the door against evil, and open the right path of Nirvana to men and Devas. If the beings are suffering the most terrible tortures in expiation of their accumulated evil doings, I will substitute myself and take upon myself the sufferings that their evil deeds have brought upon them, so shall they be released (from evil deeds), and finally attain the supreme Bodhi. Thus do all the Bodhisattvas devote themselves to the cultivation of virtue and merit, and turn the rewards over to the benefit of all beings.

My loving embrace of all beings is eternal, even though the void of space has end, (or) the worlds of beings, (or) the karmas of beings, (or) the sorrows of beings all have ended, yet, my compassion for all beings, by turning over my rewards of merit to them, is endless. Thought succeeds thought without interruption, and in bodily, oral, and mental

deeds, without weariness.

O Noble-minded Man, such is the Tenfold Great Vow of all Bodhisattvas and Mahasattvas, in completion. The Bodhisattvas who achieve the performance of these Vows, will lead all beings to the fruition (of Bodhi), and the attainment of Anuttara Samyak Sambodhi. He, (whosoever is a Bodhisattva), can fulfil the ocean of Vows of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra; therefore, O Noble-minded Man, thou shouldst comprehend the Truth, (and attain thereto).

If a noble-minded man or woman filled the incalculable Buddha-spheres in unutterable and innumerable number equal to the dust-motes of the ten quarters with the seven exquisite gems and with the highest joys of men and devas all as gifts to the beings of all worlds; and offered the same in adoration to the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas of all worlds; and continued such offerings for a period of kalpas of Buddha-countries, equal to the dust-motes of the universe in number, and so produced great stores of merit, (yet such an offering would be infinitesimal) in comparison with the merit acquired by one who has only listened to the very King of Vows.<sup>70</sup> The measure of the stock of merit of the former one, would not equal one hundredth part (of the latter); nay, not one thousandth part, even not to an upanisandth<sup>71</sup> part of the merit (of the latter).

Again, whosoever has profound faith in this great Vow, and will accept, recite, or write, even one gatha<sup>72</sup> of four lines only, such will quickly expiate the five deadly sins;<sup>73</sup> and all physical illness, or mental anguish, and afflictions of the (mundane) world, even his sinful deeds equal to the dust-motes of all Buddha-lands in number, will all be blotted out.

All malignant forces, yakas,<sup>74</sup> raksasas<sup>75</sup> kumbhandas,<sup>76</sup>

pisacas,<sup>77</sup> bhutas,<sup>78</sup> vampires (the blood suckers) and cannibals, all such evil spirits will keep afar from him, or even willingly protect him (by acting as his tutelary gods). Therefore, he who recites these vows will have no obstacles (to impede his progress) wherever he goes in the world, as the moon comes out from the hazy clouds. Praised by Buddhas and Bodhisattvas; he will be honoured by men and devas, and adored by all beings. This noble-minded man is well incarnated in a human body, and has brought to perfection all the merits and virtues of Samantabhadara. He will soon become like the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, with the glorious body of bliss, resplendent with the thirty-two attributes<sup>79</sup> of a hero. If he be born in the deva or human worlds, such an one will always be born into the most noble class; and he will destroy all evil influences, and keep far away from wicked friends; he will free from all passions; he will conquer the men of wrong doctrines, he will be like unto the King of Lions, able to subdue all animals; he deserves to receive gifts from all beings.

Again, when such a person comes to die, and at the last Ksana<sup>80</sup> (moment) approaches death, all his sense-organs perish, all kinsmen and relatives are abandoned, all influences are lost, his state-ministers and courtiers (are departed), trappings of the inner or outer palaces, elephants and horses, carriages, jewels, and treasure-repositories, all such are left behind. However, the King of Vows, who will be his sole companion, and will forsake him not, but at all time will go before him and lead him to Sukhavati<sup>81</sup> the World of Highest Happiness (the country of Buddha Amitabha).

In a Ksana, having already reached that Buddha-country and been re-born there. Upon his arrival, he sees the Buddha Amitabha,<sup>82</sup> surrounded by the Bodhisattvas Manjusri<sup>83</sup>



Samantabhadra, Avalokitesvara,<sup>84</sup> Maitraya,<sup>85</sup> and others. These are of magnificent form and noble appearance, and are perfected with all virtues and merits.

While that man (the vower), finds himself born from the lotus flower,<sup>86</sup> and favoured by the Buddha with the Prediction (Vyakarana)<sup>87</sup> (of attaining the Buddha-hood in the future). After having received the Vyakarana, will he pour out the power of his wisdom to benefit all beings according to their (faith, or the strength of their) minds. Such deeds shall he perform, throughout the duration of countless myriads of kalpas, and throughout the ten quarters of infinite and innumerable worlds.

Soon will he be sitting in the Bodhimandala, <sup>88</sup> quelling the forces of maras,<sup>89</sup> attaining enlightenment, and rotating the wondrous wheel of Dharma. So will he enable the beings of innumerable worlds of Buddha-lands, in number as the infinitesimal dust-motes, to direct their minds towards the attainment of Bodhi, according to their ability and nature being brought to maturity thereby; and so will he continue (such doings) throughout coming kalpas, and thus widely benefit all beings.

O Noble-minded Man, whosoever of the multitude has awakened faith on hearing this Great King of Vows, observes, reads, recites, and widely preaches it to others, the merits produced thereby, none but the Buddhas can estimate. Therefore, thou shouldst allow no doubts to cloud thy mind on hearing this King of Vows, but carefully accept, read, recite, and put the teaching into actual practice, and publish it to others. Such persons will attain to the fulfilment of this vow by a single thought, and their accumulation of bliss, acquired therefrom, is boundless. It can deliver all beings from the great ocean of pain and sorrow, and ensure

their re-birth in the Paradise of the Buddha Amitabha.

Thereupon, the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Samantabhadra, in confirmation of this Truth, turning around to the ten quarters, uttered the following stanzas:

1. I worship all the "Lions among men"<sup>90</sup> of the worlds of ten quarters and three yugas. With my pure body, speech, and mind, I do homage to them all, without exception.

2. By the divine power of the merits and vows of Samantabhadra, I manifest myself before all Tathagatas. From my original body emanate innumerable bodies, and with each of my bodies I do homage to the innumerable Buddhas (simultaneously).

3. I deeply believe that, in a grain of dust, exist countless Buddhas and assemblies of Bodhisattvas. Likewise, that the dust in boundless circles of the Dharma are filled with Buddhas.

4. Emitting from the ocean-like infinity all voices, with endless wondrous speeches I praise the profound merits and virtues of Buddhas. And (continue to do so) through all aeons in the future.

5. I present Tathagatas with the best gifts of flowery canopies, banners, garlands, fragrant ointments, and orchestra.

6. Again, I offer to Tathagatas with the best garments, incenses, lamps, and candles, in assemblage as high as the Mountain Sumeru.

7. Through my wise understanding and high aspiration, I have the profound faith in all Buddhas of the three yugas. By the power of the merits and vows of Samantabhadra, I adore and serve all Tathagatas without omission.

8. The various wickedness I committed in the past, are derived from time without beginning, and through avarice, hatred, and infatuation of bodily actions, speech, and thoughts.

I now repent and abstain from them all.

9. Any merit or virtue of all the Tathagatas or the Bodhisattvas, the thoroughly learned ones, and the partly learned ones of the two Vehicles (Both are of the Hinayana School);<sup>91</sup> even of the ordinary beings of the ten quarters, I all approve and be pleased with.

10. Those pioneers of Bodhi, and the brilliant ones who are to be likened unto a lamp illuminating the worlds of ten quarters, I request them to turn the wondrous wheel of the Dharma.

11. When The Buddhas set their minds on the attainment of Nirvana, I earnestly entreat them to remain (in the worlds) for the duration of boundless kalpas, in order to benefit and delight all beings.

12. All the treasures of merit and roots of goodness, produced from the Tenfold Aspiration of Samantabhadra, I shall turn over to all beings in their favour, and in Buddha-hood.

13. I follow the way of the Tathagatas, and elaborate the merits of Samantabhadra in completion. Making offerings out of veneration for the Tathagatas in the ten quarters and of the three generations.

14. I desire to carry out the principles of the "Teachers of Devas and Men"<sup>92</sup> to their satisfaction; and I train myself by studying their teachings and quickly reach the goal of great Bodhi.

15. The Buddha-countries of ten quarters are vast, pure, and magnificent. There the Tathagatas are surrounded by various assemblies, respectively under each Bodhi-tree, the King of trees.

16. I wish the beings of the ten quarters may be free from passions and afflictions and be always happy; may they

acquire the deep profit of the right Dharma; may they tear out the passions even to the very root.

17. When I strove for the attainment of Bodhi, I was able to gain the Purvanivasanu Smritidjnana<sup>93</sup> (supernormal power of remembering previous lives and karmas), in all worlds wheresoever I was born; and during each of my pre-existence, I attained the same knowledge. Always I joined the order, observed the pure precepts strictly, without stain or leakage (Anasravah).<sup>94</sup>

18. There are Devas, Nagas, yakas, kumbhandas, men, and sub-humans etc, to whom I preach the law, by using various voices befitted to their native languages.

19. Deligently cultivating the pure Paramitas. I forget not the Bodhi-heart. Annihilating hindrances and defilements without exception. I achieved all the marvellous merits.

20. I am able to free myself from worldly-life and the environment of maras, just as the lotus-flowers shoots up from the water, but is not wetted thereby; and as the sun or moon appear in the void, but abide not in it.

21. I relieve the distress of the beings of all evil realms, and equally bestow happiness on them. I continue to do so throughout the lapse of boundless kalpas, and in the extent of the ten quarters of the universe. The benefits for all are eternal, and omnipresent.

22. I always be harmonious to the beings and render them aid, and will continue such doings throughout all coming kalpas. And I will cherish the great merits of Samantabhadra, and perfect the supreme great Bodhi thereby.

23. All my fellow-devotees shall be gathered together from all parts. Our bodily, oral and mental deeds are equivalent to one another. We study the same doctrine and vows together.

24. Any well learned man who shows me the practice of the vows of Samantabhadra, thus benefit me, I wish always to be in his company. May he be pleased with me.

25. I desire to see the Tathagatas often, and also their retinue the sons of Jina.<sup>95</sup> I will make vast offerings of veneration to them in all coming kalpas without cessation or indolence.

26. I desire to magnify and expand all the activities of Bodhi, by applying the wondrous Dharma of Buddhas. Perfecting the pure doctrine of Samantabhadra by studying and practising it throughout all the coming kalpas.

27. Among all the beings (or Sarvastivadah?<sup>96</sup> please see Note 96), I cultivated merits and wisdom boundlessly. Thereby I gained a never-exhausting store of Samadhi,<sup>97</sup> Prajna,<sup>98</sup> Upaya, <sup>99</sup> and Multi-moksa.<sup>100</sup>

28. A single grain of dust contains therein the incalculable countries.<sup>101</sup> In each country dwell incalculable Buddhas; each Buddha is surrounded by many assemblies. I see them constantly performing the practice of Bodhi.

29. Throughout the ocean-like system of worlds, and the ocean-like gathering of the Buddhas of the ten quarters, whereof each hair-point<sup>102</sup> appears an ocean-like system of the worlds of three yugas, I cultivate my merit by passing through all these oceans, and (continue to do so) for the period of an ocean of kalpas.

30. The speeches of all Tathagatas are pure and clear. Each word comprises the ocean of all voices, and respectively swelling the ocean of the orations of Buddhas. In order to preach the Dharma for the beings according to their understanding and pleasure, (the various forms of speech are applied).

31. All the Tathagatas of the three ages possess the

ocean of ever-lasting speech, and constantly rotate the wheel of the wonderful meaning of truth. Such I thoroughly fathomed by my profound wisdom.

32. I can clearly behold the state of the future, and combine all coming kalpas into a single thought. I penetrate all the kalpas of three ages thoroughly in a mental flash of vision.

33. I can foresee the three ages by one thought. Those who are called the "Lions among Men" also can enter the Buddha-state, as it were in a phantasm or vision, and that power enables them to reach the stage of emancipation.

34. From the smallest breadth as that of the point of a hair,<sup>103</sup> come forth the magnificent and holy countries of three yugas. I penetrate deeply all the innumerable, magnificent, and pure countries of the hair-points of the ten quarters.

35. I come into contact with those who shall be the light of the world in the future; who will be enlightened, and will turn the wheel of Dharma to awake all beings. They will enter into Nirvana after having perfected their Buddha-works; with all of whom, I will be friendly.

36. (May I possess the following powers):<sup>104</sup> the power of Abhidjña<sup>105</sup> which goes over every part (of the world) with supernormal speed; the power of Mahayana which penetrates the universal gate of all directions; the power of merits and virtues which is wisely and widely cultivated, and the power of great compassion which shelters all who come to that refuge through the Divinity and Grace (of the Buddhas).

37. (Again,) the power of blessing dignifies and purifies every part (of the world). The power of wisdom is independent, which attached to nothing, and abides nowhere. The power of concentrated immobility of medita-

tion (Samadhi), wisdom (Prajna), and expedient means (Upaya), are endowed with supernormal might. The power of Bodhi is in the positive and accumulative nature, throughout every part.

38. (Also), the power of purity refines all meritorious deeds. The power of destruction destroys all passions (Klesas). The power of conquest subdues all maras. The power of fulfilment perfects the merits of Samantabhadra.

39. (I wish to extend my power in the following directions): may I be able to purify and embellish the ocean of all worlds. May I emancipate all beings from the ocean (of birth and death).<sup>106</sup> May I be able to discern the ocean of various Dharmas. May I be able to enter deeply into the ocean of wisdom.

40. (Also), may I be able to purify the ocean of all conduct. May I fulfil the ocean of all wishes in perfection. May I be in close touch with, and serve, the ocean of Buddhas. Shall I cultivate and cherish the principle without weariness, through the duration of an ocean of Kalpas.

41. All the Tathagatas of the three yugas have their exalted activities and vows of Bodhi, which I fully practise in their adoration as my offerings. I shall be enlightened by the conduct of Samantabhadra.

42. All the Tathagatas have their eldest son (of the Dharma), whose name is Samantabhadra. I now turning all my good roots towards the attainment of wisdom and behaviour, may I be tantamount to him (the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra) in all qualities.

43. I wish my body, speech, and thoughts always be pure, and that the behaviour of others of the various worlds may be the same. Whosoever possesses such wisdom is entitled "Samantabhadra". I wish that I shall be equivalent

to him in every quality.

44. For the purpose of purifying all my virtues of Samantabhadra; and the great vows of Manjusri, may I fulfil all those duties to the uttermost without any omission. Shall I continue my task through the coming kalpas without weariness.

45. My cultivation of merit is boundless, therefore have I acquired boundless good deeds. I abide myself in the boundless virtues; and attained the high understanding of all supernormal powers.

46. I now turning over my accumulated virtues towards the attainment of the brave (or sharp) advance of Manjusri, and the wise conduct of Samantabhadra, follow the way of them and study ceaselessly.

47. I now devote my merits on the expectation of gaining the most excellent conduct of Samantabhadra. Such great vows will be praised by the Buddhas of three generations.

48. I wish, that at the approach of death, I may annihilate all hindrances, thus I may be able to see the Buddha Amitabha face to face; so that by His aid I may go and be reborn in (His) Peaceful and Happy World.

49. Upon my rebirth in that world, I shall actually fulfil my great aim, realize my every wish without any omission, and offer the benefits and happiness to all beings.

50. The members of the assembly of that Buddha are all pure and holy. Even so am I, springing into existence by (apparitional) birth from the pure and holy flower of the lotus, and seeing face to face the Tathagata of Infinite Splendour.<sup>107</sup> In His presence, I shall receive assurance of my destiny to attain Bodhi, namely Vyakarana. (i.e. the Buddha announces that so and so will become a Buddha at



such and such a time).

51. When I have been favoured by that Tathagata with the Prediction, then I reveal myself by transformation into incalculable bodies of myriads of koties in number, being possessed of great power and wisdom extending over the ten quarters, in order to benefit the various beings in all worlds.

52. When the infinitude of the universe come to an end; beings and their karmas and passions all are ended; nevertheless, my vows of aspiration are ultimately and solely endless.

53. He who offers the precious gifts, produced from the boundless countries of ten quarters, in honour to Tathagatas; and offers the best enjoyments to the devas and human beings, for a duration of kalpas equal in number to the finest atoms of dust composing all the worlds, makes merits beyond computation.

54. (On the other hand) he who upon hearing of this King of unique Vows, and thus being awakened to faith with the intention of seeking the wonderful Bodhi in fervent aspiration acquires merits in consequence thereof which are still greater, (than the former one).

55. Thus he will keep afar from wicked advisers, and will never sink into any of the evil realms.<sup>106</sup> Moreover, he will soon see the Tathagata of Infinite Light.<sup>109</sup> These are all the results of the wonderful vows of Samantabhadra.

56. Such a person will easily be born in the human world, and enjoy an excellent life of longevity.<sup>110</sup> He will soon attain the Bodhisattvahood of Samantabhadra.

57. In past time, owing to lack of wisdom, (I) committed the most wicked five deadly sins (Pantchanantarya). These will be expiated in a moment of thought, by reciting this great King of Vows of Samantabhadra.

58. (If he wishes to be born in the human or deva worlds), he is certain to be a member of the highest race, perfecting with noble lineaments, and wisdom. No enemies of other religions or maras, can subdue him. Moreover he is worthy to be adored by the triple worlds.<sup>111</sup>

59. Hasten to the king of great trees, the tree of Bodhi. Sitting there subdue the maras. Attain enlightenment and turn the wheel of Dharma, in order to benefit all sentient beings.

60. If there be any one who observes, recites, and preaches the Vows of Samantabhadra, the result thereof none is able to estimate, except the Buddhas. He infallibly will attain the supremacy of Bodhi.

61. Whosoever recites the Vows of Samantabhadra, I affirm, that having planted good roots, at least will bring every quality (of Dharma) into completion, by a single thought and finally will be able to deliver the beings, so as to fulfil his pure vows.

62. My practice of the unique Vows of Samantabhadra, from which boundless and marvelous blessedness is produced, are all to be turned over to the beings who are deeply sunken (into the sea of pain and sorrows, or of birth and death). Wishing them all to be delivered, I pray that they may soon attain to the country of the Buddha of Infinite Splendour.

When the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Samantabhadra had concluded his great oration on the Great King of Vows, and had recited the pure gathas before the Tathagata, the Kumara Sudhana was overwhelmed with joy, and all the Bodhisattvas enraptured with ecstasy. The Tathagata applauded: "Excellent! Excellent!"

At the assembly, where this inconceivable state of

emancipation and exalted Dharma was proclaimed, there were present the World Honoured One, and a great company of the saints, Bodhisattvas and Mahasattvas, with the Bodhisattva Manjusri at the head of the assembly. The great Bodhisattvas with their fully trained six thousand Bhikkhus,<sup>112</sup> were led by the Bodhisattvas Maitreya. All the great Bodhisattvas of the Bhadra-kalpa<sup>113</sup> were led by the Bodhisattva Vimala-samantabhadra.<sup>114</sup> The Ekajati-pratyeka-buddhas,<sup>115</sup> who are in the stage of Murdhabhichikata,<sup>116</sup> and the great Bodhisattvas and others of the ten quarters of the various worlds, all were present in this congregation; great and exalted beings of the ocean of worlds equal in number to the smallest dust-motes of all worlds, all these were led by the Great Wise One Sariputra,<sup>117</sup> and by the Mahamaudgalyayana.<sup>118</sup> There were present also the great Sravakas, Devas, Rulers of the worlds,<sup>119</sup> the Nagas, the Yakas, Gandharvas,<sup>120</sup> Asuras,<sup>121</sup> Garudas,<sup>122</sup> Kinaras<sup>123</sup> and Mahoragas,<sup>124</sup> Human and sub-human. And the whole multitude on hearing the discourse of the Buddha were inspired with great joy to faithful observance (of the Vows).

*Here ends the Vows of Samantabhadra.*



## APPENDIX (I)

A few days after having completed the translation of this book, I bought some lotus flowers and presented them in adoration before the pictures representing Buddhas and Bodhisattvas in my private Shrine Room. To my astonishment, I noticed that one of the lotus flowers had two petals shaped like human hands, each having a thumb crossed upon the other. With the exception of this pair, all the other petals of the said lotus-flowers were of normal shape. The regular form of the lotus-petal is oval, being neither lobated nor incised. This particular pair, being hand-shaped certainly is unusual.

When I removed the said pair of petals from the lotus-cup for preservation, I found the thumb of the inner petal was comparatively smaller than that of the outer one, because it had not had sufficient time to grow. A picture of them was taken by a professional photographer whom I employed. He was surprised to see them and doubted their genuineness saying: "They might be artificial, and were perhaps cut into such shape by scissors". However, he came to the conclusion and admitted that they were shaped thus by nature, after I had pointed out to him that the veins of the petals in the main part ran straight up from the bottom to the top; but some of them were twisted themselves and turned aside into the thumb and followed the thumb-shape evenly.

Moreover, when I first observed the curious formation, the flower was not fully unfolded, so that the thumbs were

crossed upon each other. No human hands however skilful, could have them done so as make them into the human-hand form without hurting the flower, as the petals of the lotus so easily fall at a touch, that is a peculiarity of the lotus. When I saw them the next morning, the thumb of the outer petal had grown larger than the inner one. All proved that they were grown by nature.

In pondering over the matter a few days later, it occurred to me to see whether the term "Lotus-hands" was given in the Buddhist Dictionary (Edited by Dr. F. P. Ting), though such a term was unknown to me. Yet it was actually discovered therein, the Sanscrit equivalent being "Padmapani". The term is illustrated by a quotation from the "Great Sun Sutra" (Vairocana Sutra) as follows: "Again, appears the Grasping Diamond,<sup>125</sup> Bodhisattva Samantabhadra of Lotus-hands". It is indeed remarkable that it tallies both as to the actual material evidence of the existence of "Lotus-hands"; and also the quotation from the Great Sun Scripture agrees with the title of the Bodhisattva who is the "Samantabhadra" of my present book.

Again, several months later, another term of the "Samaya<sup>126</sup> of Samantabhadra" was found in the same Dictionary, which tallied with the position of the said lotus petals. It was quoted from the Yoga Sutra, that the right thumb and the left thumb put together, is called the Samaya of Samantabhadra.

It is evident that the truth ever being revealed in the universe, is inexhaustible and inconceivable, certainly beyond the understanding of common minds, but may be ascertained by an attentive researcher.

At the end of the eightieth volume of the Avatamsaka Sutra, there published some auspicious records, which were

revealed to the devotees and translators of that Sutra. Inasmuch as there are such precedents given by the ancients in their editions, I am penning my story herein, and I think it is worthy of being commented upon as a fact of interest, not only to Buddhists and Theosophists, but also to Botanists.

I hope that my little story may help to throw a light on the mysteries of life, and especially on the unhappy and sorrowful life of mankind in these present days.





## APPENDIX (2)

Six months after the discovery of the "Lotus-hands" as described in Appendix (1), a further unusual manifestation revealed to me upon my drawing of a portrait representing the King of the Tenfold Vow, namely the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra. The work occupied seven days. On the morning of the last day, after the completion of the drawing, it was the 18th of February 1935 C.E. when I arose from bed, I was surprised to see that the water in the wash-basin of my chamber, which I had used to wash my hands on the previous evening, contained much earthy matter, which had sunk to the bottom of the basin and formed a picture with a resemblance to a lotus-flower. The figure was about seven inches in diameter, and round in shape, fully covered the round bottom of the basin. I counted its petals, which were exactly ten, corresponding to the number of the Ten Vows. I poured the water before I used the basin again. It is a pity that I had not a camera at hand, otherwise a photograph of it could have taken.

Besides the actual material evidence provided by the "Lotus-hands" and the dust-formed picture of the lotus, I dreamed that I had planted ten lotuses, when I began to translate this chapter of the Ten Vows. I had other dreams in connection with the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, which afterwards were fulfilled by actual happenings. In order to save time, I will not enumerate them now.

It is a custom in the Buddhist circles, for a devotee to select a particular elder, or Bodhisattva, to be his own patron.

Upon the revelation of the dust-formed picture of the lotus, I impulsively felt that I should cast myself upon the Glory of the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra; therefore on the 8th of March, I officially chose this Bodhisattva to be my patron henceforth, and in accordance with a solemn rite branded three marks on one of my arms, this being the symbol of pupilship.

### APPENDIX (3)

It was on the 18th of February that the dust-formed picture of the lotus-flower appeared to me. About a month later, on the 18th of the second month of the Chinese calendar (the 22nd of March of the European calendar) in the noon time after tiffin, I washed my hands and then went to the Shrine Room, where I typed the manuscript of this book for about an hour. I then returned to my bed-room, and again I saw a picture formed in the bottom of my wash-basin. It was a clear drawing in the dust below the water, resembling an outline of a lotus-flower, and there was a swan perching on it. The drawing of this picture was of a fine delineation differing from that of the first which was like a dense water-colour painting.

It reminds me of the scenery described in the "Smaller Sukhavati-Vyuha" which says that there are many kinds of heavenly birds in the Lotus-Lake and one of them is a kind of swan. Perhaps owing to the merit of translating this book, that the symbolic picture assures me of re-birth in that Buddha-country, which I am craving for.

I also hope that a scientist may give me an explanation as to how earthy matter could concentrate itself to form a particular picture in the water.



## NOTES

1. A Bodhisattva is a "Buddha-to-be" whose rank is immediately below that of a Buddha. But it is not necessarily inferior to the state of Buddha-hood in perfection, as a Bodhisattva may also be a Buddha, who has renounced Buddha-hood in order to remain in touch with the beings of various worlds, in order to sustain and support them with his spiritual power, and so help forward their attainment of Nirvana.

2. Samantabhadra is a great Bodhisattva; one of the two principal Bodhisattvas, the other being Manjusri, they are the subordinates of the Tathagata (or Dhyani Buddha) Vairocana, and are known as the Triple Saints of the Avatamsaka Sutra. Samanta means general or universal; bhadra means sage; and Samantabhadra, which is derived from these words, means the principle of universal love or compassion. He is also known as the Bodhisattva of Great Activity.

3. Mahavaipulya Buddha Avatamsaka Sutra is the greatest Buddhist scripture. In Chinese it means: The Buddha's great and wide teaching, leading to the attainment of Buddha-hood by noble action, as a collection of many flowers brought to fruition. Its abridged name being "The Flower-embellished Sutra." Sutra means scripture.

4. Samana is a devotee who has joined the Buddhist Order (Sangha).

5. Sanskrit is one of the classical Indian languages. The earliest Buddhist books were written in Prakrit; later

put into Pali; and still later written into Sanskrit. The Chinese, Japanese, and Tibetan Buddhist scriptures are most translated from the latter language.

6. Dharma means "Law" in its widest sense. Its profound cosmic significance is too esoteric to be explained here. The various forms of Buddhist meditation are designed to awake the intuition of Bodhi and so to attained realization of the nature of Dharma. If it operates itself, then it refers to the fundamental laws of evolution in which all beings are involved, and under its operation every man building his own character, good or bad, and creating his own environment and destiny in the future.

7. Mahayana is the school of the Great Vehicle of Salvation, whose object it is to deliver not only oneself, but also all beings, from the wheel of Birth and Death, and raise them to Buddha-hood.

8. Kumara Sudhana i.e. "The Celestial Youth of the Treasure of Merit," who, having consecrated his life to the attainment of Buddha-hood, visited fifty-three Saints, and finally met the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra who advised him to be born in the Sukhavati the Most Happy World of the Buddha Amitabha, by means of practising the Tenfold Vow. The account is given in the Avatamsaka Sutra.

9. Samadhi means concentrated equanimity, or an undisturbed state of mind; or meditative contemplation, which leading enter into the state of intuitive wisdom. It contains a deeper and wider sense than the explanation is given here.

10. Buddhism is a body of teachings, consisted of the elements of ethics, science, metaphysics, and the law of universe etc; taught by Sakyamuni the Buddha (560-480 B.C.). Being the highest religion of the world, and the

universal salvation of all sentient beings.

11. The Pure Land School was founded as the Lotus Sect in China by the great monk Whei-Yuan (400 C.E.), who taught that faith in the Buddha Amitabha and prayer to Him will ensure re-birth in His Western Paradise (Sukhavati) or the World of Supreme Happiness. This doctrine is of course, based upon Buddhist scripture-teaching. The Buddha Sakyamuni laid special stress upon this method of Salvation in many of the sutras spoken by Him.

12. Bodhisattva: Vide foregoing passage (Note 1).

13. Mahasattva means "A Great Being", or "One of Noble Character."

14. Samantabhadra, Vide supra (Note 2).

15. Tathagata is an appellation of Buddhas, and means "One who has attained full realization of "Such-ness", *i.e.* become one with the absolute "Body of Law" (Dharma-Kaya) so that he neither "comes from anywhere" (na-agamana) nor "goes to anywhere" (na-gaman). He is the "Norm which has thus appeared".

16. Kumara Sudhana, Vide supra No. 8.

17. Buddha, the highest degree of saintship of an enlightened being. Any person who has attained the transcendental wisdom, and has broken the bondage of birth and death, is ready to enter the Nirvana. There have been innumerable Buddhas in the past, and there will be others become Buddhas in the future.

18. The ten quarters are: north, south, east, west, north-east, south-east, north-west, south-west, the nadir, and the zenith.

19. Aeon *i.e.* Kalpa, is an age or great period not to be reckoned by usual calendar, during which the evolution in four divisions of a physical universe have taken place. The

divisions are: (1) The antara-kalpa, in which the universe is formed (2) The vivarttasiddha-kalpa, in which the universe possesses continued stability (3) The samvartta-kalpa, in which the universe is gradually destroyed (4) The sunya-kalpa, in which the universe disappears. Then the process of cosmic activity begins again in a cyclic evolution. The kalpas are divided into three measures (1) A great kalpa of 1,344,000,000 years (2) A medium kalpa of 336,000,000 years (3) A small kalpa of 16,800,000 years. Calculated by the solar system.

20 Dust-motes (Param-anuh) do not mean fine dry particles of earth, but are the "atoms" or ultimate units of the rarified matter of the superphysical planes of beings. They are waves of vibration of inconceivable rapidity, and are used to symbolize numbers or quantities of inconceivable magnitude.

21. Paramitas are the six stages of study and practice followed by the Bodhisattvas in their progress to Buddhahood. They are Charity or alms-giving; Observance of precepts; Patient resignation; skilful means of study; Meditation in the highest possible equanimity and from the latter, wisdom follows. There are also ten Paramitas, see the text of this version. The term "Paramita", Chinese version refers it as the Gate or Path through which the saints enter and cross to the "Other Shore" of Buddha-land.

22. Hindrances refer to the evil deeds committed in the past (in present life and in pervious lives); such are now obstacles in the path to enlightenment, and have to be overcome by severe penitence and strong meritorious deeds.

23. To approve of and rejoice in the merits of others, instead of being jealous of them.

24. To "Set in motion the wheel of Dharma" means



proclaiming the doctrine of the Buddhas to the world.

25. To beseech the Buddhas to remain in the world instead of entering into Nirvana.

26. To turn over one's merits to all beings, is to refuse the rewards of merit one has earned for oneself and to hand them over for the credit of others. This is a practical realization of the doctrine of Mahayana of "Non-ego" (Anatta).

27. The "Three Ages" (Tryadhva) are great periods comprising the past, present, and future, which we arbitrarily divided.

28. Bodily Deeds are the bodily actions; they may be either noble or evil deeds. The evil bodily deeds are such as the taking of life, (this includes the killing of any being, human or animal); Theft (all forms of acquiring for oneself that which belongs to another); and Sensuality (all forms of sex-indulgence).

29. Oral Deeds are the results of speech, the evil oral deeds being lying, Slandering, (in the Chinese version it is called "The double crossing tongue" which means speak ill of one friend to another, thus causing ill-feeling and dissension between them), Abusive language, (harsh and unkind) and Obscene and frivolous language.

30. Mental Deeds refer to either noble or evil thoughts. The evil thoughts are Covetousness, Malice (anger and ill-will), and Infatuation or foolishness. These, (Notes 28, 29, 30), are known as "Three-Deeds", the results from action, or speech, or thought. The effects whether meritorious or sinful, depend on the motives, whether noble or evil. All karmas are controlled by the Threefold Deed. The details of the three-deeds which constitute the "Tenfold Karma" are three deeds of the body, four deeds of the mouth, and three

deeds of the mind, as above stated. If one has committed these deeds which are all of an evil nature, then he is bound by a system known as the "Tenfold Vice" (Dasakusala). The "Ten Meritorious Deeds" (Dasabhadra) are the positive virtues reversing to the aforesaid ten vices, for instance, one frees oneself from the Tenfold Wickedness, he is regarded as having preformed the ten meritorious deeds. "Deed" means some thing that is done; even though the actual "doing" or "committing sin" may have taken place in the past, yet, its karma thereof will continue to exist, and will work out its retributive effect sooner or later. So one is liable to reap what he sows, unless the cause is removed by a further strong action which reverses his previous deed, a great merit attained by some noble action, would be the atonement for some previous evil deed, or a great sin comitted, would deprive him of the merit acquired by his past noble deed. The ten meritorious deeds will be the reward to any performer, either in his present life or in one of his future lives, the choice of being born in the heavenly or human worlds. Should he devote such good deeds to Bodhi, they will be credited to his future Buddha-hood.

31. Karma is the law of cause and effect; it mostly applies to the acts of individuals, but it may be applied to the unity-result the actions of many people together, such as groups of persons, families, nations, etc. So there is group karma, family karma, and national karma. The result of karma, whether favourable or unfavourable, depends on past deeds, whether good or evil. It is not limited to the actions of the present life, but may extend back into the infinite past and forward into the infinite future. It is karma that forms the connecting link between one's consecutive lives. And it is also most implicative, thereby making one's life

of a mixture of misery and happiness. Buddhas teach us how to break the fetters of karma and escape from rebirth.

32. Klesa, means sorrows, vexation, suffering, anger, ill-will, infatuation, greed, and includes all forms of passion.

33. Thought succeeds thought without interruption. The minds of ordinary beings are weak and vacillating; a thought cannot be sustained without interruption: but the mind of a devotee can be firmly fixed, and in the case of a Bodhisattva such as Samantabhadra, there is no cessation or vacillation.

34. Thing large in size or number which can be contained in an atom without impediment, are made possible under the law of spiritual freedom (Isvara) beyond the limitations of "Space"; and those which enter into the Three Ages (the past, the present and the future) by a twinkling thought, are beyond the limitations of "Time". A singular number transformed into a plural, or a plural embodied in a singular, are ideas common to Buddhism, and especially are they found in the Avatamsaka Sutra. They express paradoxes too profound in meaning to enable an intellectual explanation to be given. Hundreds of volumes of explanatory commentaries on the Avatamsaka Sutra have been written in the efforts made to elucidate its profound doctrines.

35. Sarasvati is the (Hindu) Goddess of Eloquence who possesses many tongues, each tongue having many voices.

36. Yuga is a period of time. The three yugas are the present, the past, and the future. A yuga is one thousandth part of a Kalpa.

37. Clouds mean that the quantity of gifts are as great as that of the clouds; or the term may have a symbolic meaning. The Chinese term refers to actual clouds.

38. Sumeru is the heavenly mountain, its height being

168,000 yodjanas; some say that it is the axis of the universe and forming the solar system; numerous commentaries have given to it, which here be omitted.

39. Bodhi-heart is the inner perception of absolute wisdom and all-embracing love that pours forth as compassion for all living beings. It is the seed of Truth in the spiritual heart of mankind, the fruition of which is Buddha-hood.

40. Koti, nayuta, kala, etc. are terms indicating an infinity of multiplications.

41. Evil deed, vide Note 22.

42. Three Deeds, Vide Notes 28, 29, 30.

43. Bodhi, Q. V. Note 39.

44. Parinirvana, the final emancipation from the limits of existence, in which all attributes of phenomenal existence cease; the extreme stillness, and the supreme state of peace.

45. Sariras are the relics to be found in the bones of a Buddha or a Bodhisattva, after cremation. They are in the shape of pearls, extremely hard and of brilliant colours. The term sarira also has its wider sense. The expression is here used with the symbolic meaning that such beings will use every particle of themselves in the service of others, even to the dust of their relics.

46. The Six divisions or the Six states of existence are: existence in the Heaven worlds (Deva-lokas); the Human state of existence; the state of Asuras (semi-blessed beings, powerful, but of fierce and quarrelsome nature, who are thought of as half good, half evil, but who are nevertheless, included among the Three good states of existence); the Three bad states are those of the Animals; the Ghost-order; and the state of those in the various Hells or the purgatorial regions. These six divisions are not dominated by a tyrant who created all beings, from man kind to bed-bugs, house-flies

etc., such a theory certainly is false. The various beings fall into such divisions themselves, by their own karmas which are either of noble aspirations or downward deeds.

47. The Four kinds of Birth are: born from the womb, from the egg, from the heat and moisture, and by metamorphosis.

48. Sravakas are the "Hearers", a grade of disciples in the Hinayana School, who attain liberation through a pious life, but who lack the intellectual power of the Pratyeka-Buddhas, and the active compassion of the Bodhisattvas.

49. Pratyeka-Buddha is one who attains enlightenment along the lines of intellect. He attains the goal by self-discipline, but lacks the loving self-sacrifice of the Bodhisattvas, and is in consequence less esteemed by mankind.

50. The thoroughly learned ones or Perfected in discipline (Saiksa). There are four grades of attainment in the Hinayana School (the small vehicle) namely the Srotapana which means "He who has reversed the current of birth and death. The Sakridagamin, he who has but one birth before the attainment of Nirvana. The Anagamin, he who will never return to this stage of existence. The Arhat, he who is free from all attachment to existence, and can attain Nirvana whenever he chooses to pass away from life. With the exception of the Arhat, all these need to learn more in discipline.

51. "To set in motion the wheel of Dharma". Vide supra no. 24. The Buddhas not only preach the good law which releases all beings from the wheel of Birth and Death (Samsara), but being channels or reservoirs of spiritual power, help mankind to overcome the power that binds one to Samsara. They are thus Saviours or mankind as well as Teachers.

52. Nirvana is the abridged form of Parinirvana.

53. Tathagata Vairocana, the name Vairocana means "The Great Sun which illuminates everywhere," i.e. the Spiritual Sun of Righteousness which removes the darkness of ignorance, and illuminates the heart of man with spiritual grace. Here it is used to indicate the Buddha Gautama Sakyamuni, who was the vehicle for the power of Vairocana.

54. The Saha-world means the world of "Tolerance of Affliction," or the "Endurable World." This explanation is popular in China, but some say "Saha" refers to spiritual power. Since writing the above I find that Eitel, in his "Hand-book of Chinese Buddhism" supports the former explanation. He gives the meaning as "The World of Suffering", or the capital of a chiliocosm. The inhabited portion of every universe (the "island universes" of modern science), including all persons subject to transmigration and needing a Buddha's instruction, and divided into 3 worlds (Trailokya) ruled by Sahampati.

55. The "Tree" is the sacred Bodhi Tree (Bodhi-druma), under which the Buddha Sakyamuni attained Enlightenment and became the Buddha.

56. Abhidjnas (or Abhijna) are the supernatural powers attained by the heavenly beings. They are: (1) Riddhi-sakchakriya (the heavenly step) with a transmutable body which can travel throughout all space without impediment. (2) Divyachakchus (the heavenly eye) giving sight without limitation of time and space; (3) The Divyassrotra (heavenly ear), that can hear all sounds, and understand all languages and voices; (4) the Paratchittajna (intuitive mind), knowing and understanding the thoughts of all beings; (5) the Purvanivasanu-smritijnana (knowledge of previous existences of oneself and all other beings); (6) the

Asravakchaya (the knowledge of the stream of life and the exhaustion of worldly passions. The ordinary heavenly beings possess these powers with the exception of the sixth (The Asravakchaya) which is attainable only by the saints of the Three Vehicles. Buddhas and Bodhisattvas certainly possess supernatural powers not limited by these six; even the inhabitants of the Paradise Sukhavati possess more powers than the heavenly beings. (See the Larger Sukhavati-Vyuha).

57. All Buddhas have the "Threefold Embodiment": (1) The Dharmakaya (the Body of Law), which is the essential body omnipresents in all the universes; (2) the Sambhokaya (the Body of Retribution), achieved through merits cultivated during countless kalpas, and having its fixed abiding place, such places as the Western Paradise, etc.; (3) the Nirmankaya (the Body of Manifestation or revelation), which is often transformed into countless myriads of figures and types, in order to deliver the various beings according to their affinities (Nidhana). All personalities and qualities of a Buddha or Bodhisattva, such as a golden body, encircling light, and miraculous powers, are called the "Bodily Retribution" (or Principal Retribution). These are not limited to those exalted beings, but belong also to all sentient beings who have both their bodily and abiding retributions. For instance, a powerful brain and intellect are the bodily retributions of mankind; buildings and furnitures etc. are man's abiding retributions. Roosts, sties and the like, are the abiding retributions of animals; horns, paws, tusks and claws are the animals' bodily retributions.

58. Tchakra-varti-radjas or "The Holy Kings who Turn the Wheel". There are four grades of them, and they are the rulers of some worlds, but are not Buddhas and are perhaps even inferior to great Bodhisattvas.

59. The "Petti-Kings" are also known as "The Kings of Scattered Corn". They are inferior to the "Wheel Turning Kings" (v. s. No. 58).

60. Kshatrya. At the time of the Buddha Sakyamuni, the people of India were divided into four Castes, the highest being the Brahmins or priests; the next the Kshatrya or warrior-statesmen; the third was that of the Vaisya or merchant class; and the lowest the Sudra or common people. The last-named were mostly of non-Aryan descent.

61. Brahmin q. v. above No. 60.

62. The Devas are the heavenly beings, Gods or Angels.

63. The Nagas, a word meaning dragons, is applied to a certain class of deities of great wisdom.

64. Eight Groups. These are supposed to be spiritual and powerful beings. (1) The Devas or the heavenly beings, whose bodies radiate light, and who dwell in the Heavens as follows: The Six Kama-heavens (Heavens of desire) the spheres where Lust still exists; next come the Four Rupadhatu-heavens (Heavens of ethereal form) which are superior to the six Kama-heavens, because the Rupadhatu-heavens are without sexual and dietetic desires but every material convenience is of the great beauty and utmost excellence, and the dwellers enjoying states of mental ecstasy. Next come to the Arupadhatu-heavens (Formless heavens), the worlds of pure abstract thought, and every thing is without material form, the dwellers having no body, but only feelings. The Devas of all these Heavens are certainly blessed ones; yet, they may backslide into the evil orders when their merits are exhausted, unless they reach the ultimate goal of Buddhahood. (2) The Nagas Vide Note 63. (3) The Yakas or flying deities. (4) The Gandhavas who live on perfumes only, and are the musicians of the Indra, the chief God.



(5) The Asuras Vide Note 46. (6) The Ganrudas or golden winged birds, the length between their wings is more than three million miles. They are fed on dragons. (7) The Kinasas, a horn-headed species in semi-human form. They are the singers of the Indra. (8) The Maharajas, a type of Nagadeity with large abdomens. All these Eight Groups are invisible to man-kind.

65. Elements refer to the "Four Great Elements" they are: earth, water, fire (that is heat), and wind (air). These are the fundamental ingredients of the universe.

66. Arhat Vide Note 50.

67. The King of Mighty Trees. The Bodhi-tree is the greatest of trees. The term "King" is applied in Buddhist writings to the great of its kind in every sphere of life.

68. The Bodhi-tree. Vide note 55. This is a parable of the novices of Mahayana School.

69. Anuttara - Samyak - Sambodhi is transcendental knowledge, the highest form of wisdom attainable by the Buddhas.

70. The King of Vows refers to the Vows of Samantabhadra. For the meaning of "King" see Note 67.

71. Upanishad. Vide Note 40.

72. Gatha is a hymn or verse; the versified part of the Buddhist scriptures.

73. The Five Deadly Sins (Panchanantaryani) are, patricide, matricide, setting the Buddhist order in discord, killing an Arhat, and causing blood to flow from the body of a Buddha. (The last term I believe being a metaphor of destroying the pictures, images etc. which representing the Buddhas).

74. The Yakas are flying evil spirits.

75. The Rakasas are nocturnal demons of malignant

nature.

76. Kubhandas are demons of gluttony, with bodies like big jars (Kumbhi), which incite men to greed and lust.

77. The Pisacas are mad ghosts.

78. The bhutas are ghosts of self-creative birth, or created from metamorphosis.

79. The 32 attributes or signs of a Great One are too detailed to enumerate here. They can be found in the Buddhist Dictionary.

80. Ksana is a moment of time; the twinkling of an eye; a moment of thought.

81. Sukhavati is the Western Paradise (or Pure Land) of the Buddha Amitabha known as the "Most Happy World." For description see "The Smaller Sukhavati-Vyuha" and the "Larger Sukhavati-Vyuha" translated by Max Müller; especially in the "Amitayur-Dhyana-Sutra" translated by J. Takakusu, all of these are contained in the "Sacred Books of the East" volume 49, published by Oxford University Press.

82. The Buddha Amitabha is the Lord of the Western Paradise or the "Most Happy World" (Sukhavati). He formerly was the Bhikkhu Dharmakara, prior to the time of prehistoric kalpas (of our world), and on a world long since vanished, he made forty-eight Vows for delivering all beings to His prospective Buddha-country which He realized ten kalpas ago and is now known as the "Most Happy World." Amit means boundless, abha means light or splendour. He is also called the Buddha Amitayur, which means endless life. The life of this Buddha, and the lives of the people in that country are eternal; therefore He is named Amitayus.

83. Manjusri is one of the two principal Bodhisattvas, who are the subordinates of the Buddha Sakyamuni; the

other is Bodhisattva Samantabhadra. Manjusri represents the principle of Universal Wisdom, as Samantabhadra represents that of Universal Love.

84. Avalokitesvara is one of the two principal Bodhisattvas of the Western Paradise or Pure Land (Sukhavati), the other being Mahasthama (the Mightest One). Avalokitesvara is the figure best known and most pleasing to the people in general of China and Japan. In some cases, he appeared himself in the vision of a female Bodhisattva, and therefore, he has been misunderstood by the people as a Goddess. Account is given in the famous 24th chapter of the "Saddharma Pundarika" (Lotus of the True Law) in the volume 21 of the "Sacred Books of the East."

85. Maitreya, also named the Bodhisattva Ajita, is the future Buddha of our Saha-World, and is to come when Buddhism has perished in this world, as foretold by the Buddha Sakyamuni in the Maitreya Vyakarana Sutra (or another title of Digha Nikaya). The existence of Buddhism in this world is divided into three periods, which began with Buddha Sakyamuni as follows: (1) The Law of Origin, taught by Buddha Sakyamuni and His successors, which ended after five hundred years; (2) The Law of Reproduction, taught through images and books only, which lasted one thousand years; (3) The Law of Finality, which will carry forward for ten thousand years, then be declined to the point of zero. At that time a Renaissance of Buddhism will be caused by the Bodhisattva Maitreya. At present, we Buddhists are under the period of Final Law.

86. Lotus is the symbolic flower of Buddhism; especially in the Pure Land (Sukhavati) where the holy beings are springing into existence by apparitional birth from these flowers, to whom, parentage and sexual differentiation are

unknown to them.

87. Prediction (Vyakarana) is the term applied to the prophecy of a future Buddha in long ages to come, and will be called by the name of a certain Tathagata (a personal name symbolizing the character of a Buddha). The prediction of Buddha-hood is a great event for the followers of Buddha, because their achievement is therefore assured. Vyakarana must not be confused with predestination, for the Law predestinates no one, and Buddha-hood is attainable only by one's own effort; no others can fore-ordinate him. Even Buddhas cannot predestine anyone. But Buddhas can foresee certain events and foretell them. This is one reason why Buddhism is superior to all other religions of the world.

88. Bodhi-mandala is somewhat like a conclave of divine beings, who unite to carry out some definite object, such as a meeting held where the Precepts are to be given, (not an ordination). Here it means the Platform of Bodhi, or the Platform of Dharma, where all the Bodhisattvas sit down when about to become Buddhas.

89. Maras are powerful evil spirits, but the word is used generally in its meaning of the evil power which invade the minds of men, and which can be expelled only by mind-control strengthened by the power of Bodhi on which it draws. Meditation empowers the mind to overcome the forces of mara.

90. The Lions among Men, or "Human Lions" the latter sounds strange in English, and may perhaps be better translated as "Lion-Hearted Men" but the text makes no mention of the word "Heart", so I translate it literally. Human Lions refer to men of great valour, who break the web of birth and death, attaining the eternal freedom, and transcendental wisdom. Here indicates Buddhas.

91. Hinayana School is the primitive form of Buddhism. The name signifies "Small Vehicle" as contrasted with the Mahayana or "Great Vehicle." Hinayana is commencing with Sravakas, and leading upwards to Arhatship. Its dogmas are the "Four Truths" (Catvari-Aryasattvani) which range as follows: (1) Duhkha or "Suffering", which is the concomitant of sentient beings and is unavoidable to any physical body. (2) Samudaya" or "Accumulation" which means that the sufferings are accumulated and intensified by the passions. (3) Nirodha or the "Extinction of Passions". (4) Marga or the "Path" which leads to the extinction of passions. Also the twelve Nidanas *i.e.* the concatenation of the potential developments, which form the endless and cyclic existence of births, by means of the twelve linked affinities. They are: (1) Avidya or "passions"; (2) Samskara or "deeds"; (3) Vijnana, or "The seeds of discerning knowledge"; (4) Namarupa, or "Name and form"; (5) Sadayatana, or "the Six organs"; (6) Sparsa, or "Contact"; (7) Vedana, or "Feeling"; (8) Trichna, or "Love"; (9) Upadana, or "Seizure"; (10) Bhava, or "Existence"; (11) Jati, or "Preparation for future birth"; and (12) Djaramarani, or "Decrepitude and death". This is the analysis which is to solve the riddle of life, and the understanding of the emptiness of existence; therefore all beings should seek the path through which to enter into Parinirvana. The final goal of Hinayana is the obtaining of the Arhatship, or becoming a Pratyeka-Buddha, who does not expect Buddha-hood as the Bodhisattvas do; so Hinayana is called the Small Vehicle. The teachings of this school are based on the sutras of the "Agama Class", and the sastras of Kosa and Satyasiddhi etc.

92. The "Teachers of Gods and Men", is one of the

ten appellations of the Buddhas. The other nine are: Tathagata, or He who has come to Such-ness; Arhan, or He who is deserving to be adored by Devas and Men; Samsaksambuddhah, or He who has the correct and universal knowledge; Vidyacaranasampanah, or He who has a perfect knowledge of all supernormal power; Sagata, or the charioteer who possesses all wisdom and completes the eightfold truth thus entering into Nirvana; Lokavit, or He who knows the world; Anuttarah, or He who is the highest One without a superior; Purusadam-yasarathin, or the Great Tamer of Men; and Lokajyesthah, or the world honoured One.

93. Purvanivasanu. The supernormal knowledge of all forms of pre-existence of oneself and others, this being one of the "Six supernormal powers". Stanza No. 17 refers to the fact that the Bodhisattva has the power of remembering his previous lives (in metempsychosis) in all the six divisions, i.e. Devas, Humans, Asuras, Animals, Ghosts, and Dwellers in the infernal regions. Doubtless many readers will exclaim: "How can an exalted being such as a Bodhisattva fall into such evil orders of existence as that of the animal or the purgatorial regions?" To this I reply: "Ordinary beings sink into such evil states by the Karma of their evil deeds; but a Bodhisattva enters such states by his own free will. In order to deliver those unhappy beings, he would to be born as one of their species, and to live in close touch with them thereby. For example, The Bodhisattva Kshitigarbha (The Bodhisattva of the Treasure-chamber of the Earth) is well known as the "Hell-frequenter". Christian readers will recall that Jesus Christ went down into Hell to "preach to the spirits in prison" (v. 1 Peter 3.19), and in the Creeds it is stated he "descendit ad inferos" (descended into hell), for the purpose, the Church teaches, that he might "comfort and

deliver the souls held captive there”.

94. Anasravah means a deed without leakage; any meritorious act without selfishness is called a deed without leakage. For example, he who performs a noble deed with the expectation of worldly reward, he cannot attain the Bodhi by it, but reaps what he sowed, as a siphon transfers liquid from one vessel to another.

95. The Sons of Jina (Jinadharah) are the heirs to the doctrine of the Buddhas, viz Bodhisattvas.

96. Sarvastivadah is the school which discusses the existence and the reality of all visible phenomena. It is the reverse of “Nihilism” or “Voidness”. However, it is unlikely to have that meaning of the term used in this verse, because the word used in the Chinese version means “Existence” only. Some say “existence” means the lives of the various beings. I am penning it herein for reservation.

67. Samadhi is an undisturbed state of mind, or concentrated equanimity.

98. Prajna is transcendental wisdom, divine intuition; one of the Six Paramitas (v.s. No. 21).

99. Upaya, means a “device” or “expedient”. The Bodhisattvas use every method their all-embracing love can devise to instruct humanity and remove the sorrows of existence.

100. Multi-moksa means emancipation; or Deliverance from bondage.

101. To understand this verse one should refer to Note No. 20, and understand that, as modern science is now explaining to us, there is a universe in an atom. Yet the (physical) atom is a manifestation of still more wonderful life: it is a crystallization of superphysical forces, usually termed etheric. A grain of dust, then, contains innumerable

universes, stretching back in their ultimate origin to super-physical worlds, having their origin in ultimate Reality; the Buddha-worlds.

102. A hair-point means an infinitesimally small unit of matter. A reference to the preceding explanation (No. 101) will help in the understanding of this.

103. A thoughtful consideration of Nos. 20, 101, will help the readers to understand this paragraph. All are efforts to express the transcendental nature of the Buddha-worlds and the profundity of the teachings.

104. Here the text makes no mention as to who possesses these powers, neither does it indicate how one is to acquire them. With a view to completing the sense of this verse the translator has taken the liberty of adding the words in parenthesis, but does not guarantee that the added words correctly represent the meaning.

105. Abhidjñā, v. Note No. 56.

106. The Ocean of Birth and Death (Samsara). The existence of a human being or an animal in any one of the various phenomenal worlds is like a ceaselessly revolving wheel (a circle of continuous metempsychosis) under karmic Law. For example, when one dies, his spirit may be reborn in the body of a sheep or other animal, owing to his evil deeds; or may be exalted to the angelic life in the heavenly world through his meritorious deeds. Thus the life never ceases, only the form changes. Even the Devas of the heavens cannot escape from birth and death, unless they attain the Buddha-hood. From the enlightened eyes of a Buddha, this continuous existence in nothing but suffering and misery, and it is extremely difficult to escape from it, on account of the concatenation of causes and effects which sentient beings are ever weaving by their actions. They themselves, make



their next, or rather the endless continuation of life. There is no other creator than themselves (See the "Buddhabhasita Dasabhara Karmamara Sutra). The fundamental teaching of Buddhism instructs us how to escape for ever from Samsara, the ocean of birth and death.

107. The Tathagata of Infinite Splendour, *i.e.* the Buddha Amitabha.

108. Evil Realms: The Three Evil Realms are the animal state; the ghost order; and the hells.

109. Tathagata of Infinite Light, *i.e.* The Buddha Amitabha.

110. "He who will be born in human world and has an excellent life" means if he so desires, to be born in the human world he will attain longevity. In its wider sense it means that if he has performed these vows he has well used his life, has taken full advantage of being a human, and has not wasted the value of his human life; for only human beings can obtain the fruition of these vows: animals cannot.

111. "The Triple Worlds" (Trilokya) are firstly "Kamadhatu" the worlds of appetites and sensual desires. These refer to our mundane world and include the heavens. Secondly, "Rupadhatu" the world of material excellence, but without sexual and dietitic desires, and thus superior to the Kamadhatu; and thirdly the "Arupadhatu" which are the superlative and formless Heavens.

112. Bhikkhu is an official member of the Buddhist Order (Sangha) who keeps the full precepts, and whose life is governed by 250 rules. The Bhikkhu relies for his sustenance upon the gifts of the laydisciples, not being allowed to possess money or property.

113. Bhadra-kalpa means the kalpa (era) of the Sages, during which period a thousand Buddhas appear on earth.

We are still living in this kalpa, so it is here referred to as the "present Bhadra-kalpa." This kalpa is to last 236 million years; but over 151 million years have already elapsed.

114. Vimala-samantabhadrā: "Vimala" means pure, undefiled. The reference to this Bodhisattva is unknown to the translator.

115. Ekajati-pratibuddhas are the Bodhisattvas who from the first stage of their turning towards Buddha-hood attained the pure Bodhi-heart. Thereupon they acquired boundless Samadhi (immobility of meditation) and Dharani (mystic powers) and thereby arrive at the Ten Stages in succession and become Buddha-elects. The old traditional explanation of the Ekajati-pratibuddhas was that they would attain Buddha-hood in their next life, but this, nowadays is denied by some prominent Buddhists. However, I include it herein with reservation.

116. Murdhabhishikta, is sprinkling the top of the head with water; a ceremony of Buddhist baptism.

117. Sariputra known as the wisest of the disciples of Buddha Sakyamuni.

118. Maudgalyayana, known as the most advanced in occult powers; whose position was similar to that of Sariputra.

119. The Rulers of the worlds are the heavenly Kings.

120. Gandhavaras v. Note No. 64.

121. Asuras, v. No. 64.

122. Garudas v. No. 64.

123. Kinaras v. Note No. 64.

124. Mahoragas, v. Note No. 64.

125. Grasping Diamond (Vajra-pani), this is a symbolic manner of some of the Bodhisattvas or deities of the Sect of Occultism.

126. Samaya. There are many means to this term,

## NOTES

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one of them is to put the hands or fingers into a particular position, and thereby praying the Buddhas for help.

# AN OUTLINE OF THE PURE LAND DOCTRINE

Translated, compiled and edited by  
Upasika Chihmann (Miss P. C. Lee of China)  
Bodhisattva in Precepts

## AN OUTLINE OF THE PURE LAND DOCTRINE

OM! Adoration to the Buddha Amitabha whose Dharma-kaya (Body of Law) is omni-present in all universes. OM! Adoration to all the Bodhisattvas and Pure Beings of the ocean-wide assembly of Sukhavati. OM! Adoration to all the Buddhas and Saints of past, present, and future, and of the ten quarters of the chiliocosmos.

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### INTRODUCTION

Thus have I heard, that if a religion renounces the present world as hopeless and promises only blessings after death by re-birth in another world, such would be rejected by materialists. There also is a small minority of Buddhists who believe that this world can be reformed as well as any other, and therefore they endeavour to realize the "Pure Land" in this world, without seeking elsewhere millions of miles away. This plausible suggestion sounds well, but unfortunately there is no possibility of realizing here the highest state of excellence that exists in the "Pure Land" of a Buddha-country.

Let us look at the world as it is. There are sufferings and crimes among individuals and nations. Science is not only unable to relieve them, but intensifies the trouble by putting dangerous power in the hands of mankind by which the world is drenched in blood and tears. Even though one may say: Let us look forward to the time when all such troubles will be settled by statesmen, and world-peace will thus be maintained for ever; yet, in my opinion, such a millennium is still at an infinite distance, and its realization is even more difficult than travelling from our present world to a Buddha-country, or to any other astral sphere.

Suffering and misery are the inseparable concomitants of physical bodies, the cure of which is beyond the power of mankind. Buddha said: "All living beings are subject to suffering: birth is suffering, decrepitude is suffering, sickness is suffering, death is suffering, not to get what we desire is suffering, to be separated from what we love is suffering, to be united to what we hate is suffering, the distracted mind of the Five Skandhas or Aggregates (*i.e.* 1. Rupa or matter, 2. Vedana or sensation, 3. Samjna or perception, 4. Samraka or tendencies, 5. Vijnana or consciousness) is suffering. These sufferings are divided into two kinds viz. (1) The inward or mental Duhkha, such as sorrow, fear, anxiety, melancholy, mental anguish, jealousy etc. (2) The outward or physical Duhkha, such as bodily injuries caused by mankind and wild beasts, and physical calamities.

There are also loathsome burdens such as the fact that all the organic channels (orifices) of a being's body give issue to foul matters or liquids, so that one's body is really a fresh-bag containing waste matter which encumbers every body for life. No matter how beautiful people's faces and figures are, and pleasing to the eyes of those who look at

them, yet from a spiritual point of view they are as jewel-vases containing filth.

As to the lives of beings they are like a swarm of flies on a heap of debris or garbage enjoying themselves according to their circumstances. Again, we may think of people as prisoners who have been born in a prison cell and never had a chance of looking outside. The outer world is utterly unknown to them, and they even do not believe in its existence. If any one suggest that they should attempt to get away from their present position, such advice would not be acceptable to them. They are under such an arrogant illusion of self-content that they attempt to improve and reform their prison, the prison where they are content to live.

One may say: "Well, the present world is not a satisfactory one, but can you prove the existence of a better world, where it is possible for us to be reborn?" To this I answer: There are definite facts available-plenty of them; and there already exists a great body of knowledge about the subject. And this knowledge has given light to myself and thousands of others. There are various books which prove that numerous people have been reborn in the Pure Land, widely published in Buddhist circles for two thousand years and more. It is only those who have prejudiced and reluctant minds, under the delusion of worldly strife, that have remained ignorant of them. Let me point out some evidence from thousands of records narrated in various books, and from verbal information among my acquaintances. These form a collection of "signs" which may be fully or partly achieved by devotees when they come to die. (1) The devotee informed by the Buddha will foretell the date and hour of his death. (2) Some of the devotees can choose a day to pass away from life by their own free will. (3) He will

see before his eyes the vision of Buddha Amitabha or other Bodhisattvas. (4) He will see the unusual shining splendour of Buddha. (5) A scent of unique perfume will be cognized either by the devotee himself or by those who are near him at the moment of his death; it will even last for many days after his death. (6) The warmth issuing from the head of a dead body may be perceptible to others. (7) A dead body will remain supple like a living being, and not become a stiffened corpse. (8) He may pass away from life in a sitting position or standing, though the latter position is very uncommon. (9) His countenance will show ease or a smile, without any sign of suffering. (10) His face may show a slight golden colour, but this is very unusual. (11) "Sariras" may be found from the ashes after his cremation (Sariras are relics in the form of pearls extremely hard and lustrous). (12) The vision of a lotus-flower may appear before his eyes when approaching death; or a picture resembling the lotus-flower may be formed from the ashes of his cremation. (Lotus is the symbolic flower of purity, which gives birth to the beings of Pure Land, where parentage and sex-differentiation are unknown). These are all the signs of being born in the Pure Land, as seen in the past, and also at the present day.

That holy beings are begotten from lotus-flowers in the Pure Land, such truth certainly is inconceivable to the ordinary minds. If any one asserts that the said birth from lotus-flower is false, and believe only the birth from the womb is true; let him search into the ultimate origin of the physical birth, from which our first ancestor was begotten, and say how that womb came into existence? It is also inconceivable. There seems no reason to doubt the existence of another world on a high plane than ours, as described by the Buddha, and we earthly beings should hearken to His message, without



reluctance.

To my knowledge, many maintained a stubbornly incredulous attitude towards the Pure Land teaching and even slandered it; but after many years they yielded with profound remorse to their intuition and experiences. It is not wise to abuse the teachings of salvation; so stupid an attitude only encumbers one with evil Karma. It is most unfortunate for those who by their irrational arrogance entirely oppose their deepest interest and bar their own path to the new world of bliss.

Occult signs are not so easy to be verified as those of material science. Success is only to those who devote their lives to occult pursuit. However a spark of light, *i.e.* sporadic visions, may come to anyone, if he is willing to be patient for such a task. It is full of possibility and is accessible to any pious seeker. If he seize on any fragment of a sign which occurs to him, unremittingly with his expectation of future development, it will lead to his whole enlightenment.

The Pure Land Sect shows the easiest and shortest way of achievement among the many different schools of Buddhist teaching. Although there has been controversy between the Pure Land Sect and the Dhyana School (Zen Buddhism), the latter asserting there is no actual existence of a Pure Land, that it is only a pious device to lead beings to the Nirvanic state, such a conjecture no longer exists in face of the undeniable records of the devotees who have been born in the Pure Land, so proving the reality of that Buddha-country. Many have broken through the chrysalis of worldly delusion and solved the riddle of life by this particular method which spread widely all over China and eventually became the dominant one among all Buddhist sects. Therefore it is not necessary for me to edit any additional work to the numerous

Chinese books already written on the subject. The present work is dedicated to our Western fellow-Buddhists who have not perceived the advantage of this special method. Now the attempt has been made, and I look forward to the day when our Western brethren attain and publish their own records of being born in the Pure Land, and thereby convert those who are limited only to the materialistic lines of thoughts of the nineteenth century.

The first step for a seeker is to control himself by the practice of the five precepts: (1) To abstain from the taking of life (this refers both to mankind and our fellow-creatures the animals, and no slaughter for food is allowed). (2) To abstain from taking that which is not given. (3) To abstain from sex-indulgence; if he is an official member of the Buddhist order then he must keep himself absolutely free from all forms of sensuality (this is to against metempsychosis). (4) To abstain from lying, slander and deceit. (5) To abstain from intoxicating liquors and drugs. These precepts were set by the Buddha. Whether the seeker be ordained or not, he must obey accordingly; continence, truthfulness, mercy, and the avoidance of luxury must be made the basis of life. All worldly desires or passions must be eliminated as far as possible.

When the moral foundation is soundly laid, then begin with the practical means of achievement. Much steady effort has to be made. The general way taught by the ancient teachers and the elders of the present day is to hold your six sense-organs (*i.e.* eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind) free from the six sense-objects of sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, and thought, so as to keep the mind in a serene

state in which not the least worldly thought can have a chance to mingle: not even the slightest ripple of anger, love, or jealousy etc. be allowed to fret your mind. Then begin to recite the Holy Name of the Lord Amitabha, as long as possible. This should be done as a daily lesson.

One will find some signs similar to those enumerated in the foregoing paragraph, happen on certain occasions due to one's vibrations of faith which are the marks of progress, they must not be thought of as proofs of success, for one will lose what he has acquired, even at the moment approaching death when he has already seen the Buddha, if he turns his mind again, hankering after his beloved ones, or wealth, fame etc., Then he cannot be born in the Pure Land; even the Buddha cannot help him. I have quite often heard that when a devotee came to die, the vision of Buddha appeared before his eyes, but vanished at once when his mind was distracted by the voice of his wife crying and calling upon his name. And in some cases the devotee was not only unable to be born in the Pure Land, but fell into the evil realms on account of his anger, because his body being not yet thoroughly dead, whilst being removed by others was thus made to feel pain which leads to hatred. Evil thoughts will subject one to evil re-birth especially at the end of one's life when they are exceptionally stronger.

There are still two very important points: (1) The devotee must repent of all the sinful deeds which he may have committed in the past. A sincere confession should be laid before Buddhas or Bhikkhus without any concealment, and he should refrain from evil-doings thereafter. (2) One must direct his mind to the great goal of salvation for all sentient beings; not only wishing to deliver himself, but also all others. This is the doctrine of Mahayana.

In the introduction to his translation of the Larger Sukhavati Vyuha, Dr. Max Müller states as follows: "The Smaller Sukhavati-Vyuhā lays great stress on the fact that people can be saved or can be born in the Land of Bliss, if only they remember and repeat the name of Buddha Amitabha two, three, four, five, six or more nights before their death, and it distinctly denies that people are born in the Paradise of Amitabha as a reward or necessary result of good works performed in the present life. This would seem to take away one of the fundamental doctrines of Buddhism, namely the doctrine of Karma, or of the continuous working of our deeds whether good or bad. Instead of the old doctrine, as a man soweth, so he shall reap, a new and easier way of salvation is here preached, viz. As a man prayeth, so he shall be saved. It is what is known to us as salvation by faith rather than by works. The Larger Sukhavati-Vyuhā lays likewise great stress on prayer and faith in Amitabha, but it never neglects "the stock of merit" as essential for salvation. It would almost seem as if this popular and easy doctrine had secured to itself the name of Mahayana, as meaning the Broad Way, in opposition to the Narrow Way, the Hinayana". According to the above statement Dr. Müller not only misunderstood and misinterpreted the meaning of Mahayana, but also overlooked the passage about "Karma" which is contained in the said Sūtras, thereby causing himself a bewilderment. Let me answer him as follows: "In the Smaller Sukhavati-Vyuhā it is clearly stated: "With inferior root of goodness and insufficiently accumulated merits, and with unfavourable cause and conditions, one cannot be born there". The above passage is not only contained in the Chinese translation of the said Sūtra but also has appeared in Dr. Müller's version. Is it not a clear statement that both the Larger and Smaller

Sukhavati-Vyuha lay great stress on the necessity of Karma? I simply cannot understand why Dr. Müller should have forgotten his own work of translation. May I give a further explanation as to the fact that even those who have committed the five deadly sins or the tenfold wickedness are also allowed to be born in the Pure Land, yet they must have the good Karma which they sowed in one of their previous lives of long ago, otherwise they will have no chance of hearing the name of the Vaipulya-Sutras, or of meeting a good friend to advise them to pray for re-birth in the country of Buddha Amitabha, when they are approaching death.

A non-Buddhist critic may ask: If those who having committed the five deadly sins or the tenfold vice, nevertheless also can be born in the country of Buddha Amitabha, simply by repeating that Buddha's name, then that country would become a refuge for criminals. To this I answer: The doctrine of salvation refuses no guilty man, if he is really repentant of what he has done and is earnestly seeking the reform of a new life. Moreover, when a guilty man has been delivered in that country of the Highest Happiness, yet he will be bound to stay within the calyx of a lotus-flower for six to twelve great Kalpas. A great Kalpa consists of 1,344,000,000 years. Our brain reels when we reflect upon the length of such a period. Upon the completion of that period, when the flower of the lotus unfolds, the dweller will be able to see the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, who will console him in a compassionate voice full of great sympathy as stated in the Sutra. And why? such a point should not be overlooked by the readers. I imagine that it is to soothe him after his long confinement. It is not a penalty imposed on him by the Buddhas but it is due to his own evil Karma, however I believe it entails no suffering. Owing to the so-called "Emptiness

of the nature of sin" which enables the guilty to be born in the Pure Land, there also exists the Law of Karma which binds the sinful man in confinement for millions of years; and even when he is so born, is subject to the Inferior Grade. While those meritorious people who are to be born in the Pure Land will be able to see the Buddha at once, and can travel throughout all the Buddha-worlds immediately without any delay.

Again, a critic may ask: "Why should the privilege of being born in that Buddha-country depend on repeating the name of that Buddha? Is good Karma alone not sufficient to cause one's re-birth?" My answer is "The realization of any matter or existence is produced by Karma and also by Vijnapti (*i.e.* the nucleus or the spiritual seeds of sensate knowledge or empirical mind), just as it is the nebula which forms the universe. The various phenomena or creatures of the world are produced by hair-splitting and the discriminated desires of beings. So, Karma and Vijnapti both are the dynamic of rebirth in Pure Land or any other world. Their maturity may occur in different times depending on the bias of either of these two elements. Meditating on Buddha (or reciting His Name) is to strengthen the Vijnapti to sublimate it to its highest purification.

The accumulation of a stock of merit certainly will be the foundation of the cause of re-birth, but sometimes the Vijnapti is also very strong, if it precedes the other (the Karma). For instance a pious follower of the Pure Land doctrine, if he changes his mind or gets into violent anger at the end of his life, will fall into the evil realms of existence and be born as an animal of a malignant nature. However his good Karma resulting from faith in the good law (Dharma) still exists; sooner or later it will be matured, so that in spite of the

evil realms he may pass through from life to life, yet at last he will be saved by his previous noble aspirations which ensure his birth in the Pure Land of Buddha-country.

He who possesses a good stock of merit is still required to do the work of reciting the name of Buddha Amitabha. This is to prevent divergence from the right path, drawn by the Vijnapti. The heart of mankind is restless bringing about noble or evil thoughts from moment to moment. The thoughts are the seeds which will have the fruition of a favourable or unfavourable life in the future. A single thought possesses the potentiality of producing one's existence in any of the tenfold Dharma-circle (the states of universal law), especially at the particular time when one is approaching death; at such a moment, it is necessary to repose his mind on the name of the great Saviour. Therefore a deep impression of the Pure Land should be made beforehand, by meditating on the Buddha or repeating His Name, whose power saves one from falling into wrong ways of re-birth. The power and virtue of the Buddha are as vast as the ocean, while the power of earthly beings in comparison to Him is very weak. But if one's aspiration is joined to the Buddha's Glory it is like a drop of water which is embodied in the sea and is thus sufficient to stand against any stream.

There is a further point widely used in Buddhism *i.e.* Pratyaka or affinity. Let me explain by a parable: a seed of corn, which latently possesses the potentiality of bringing forth sprouts, becomes corn, but it requires favourable circumstances to lead to this development, *i.e.* it must get water and earth, otherwise it will never grow into the corn. Buddha Amitabha wishes to deliver all beings, but if beings keep themselves away from Him, that is lack of the essential Pratyaka.

One may say: The happiness of Pure Land is about

the same as that promised by Christianity, that Christians after their deaths will become angels in Heaven and share happiness with God. What is the preference for accepting the Pure Land doctrine instead of Christianity? To this my answer is: The heavenly beings in Buddhism are called "Devas", which belong to one of the "Six Divisions of Existence", they are not the immortals, they cannot escape from birth and death, they also may back-slide into the evil orders, even lower than human beings, when their stock of merit is exhausted; while the beings of Sukhavati (Pure Land of Buddha Amitabha) are the real immortals, their lives as endless as that of their Master The Buddha of Infinite Life.

The Pure Land Doctrine of Mahayanism is not only a happy state for the enjoyment of indolent bliss in the paradise; the beings of the Pure Land have to perform their duties *i.e.* to preach the Law in order to deliver the earthly beings of other worlds. This is proved by the Lord Amitabha's Vows which read as follows:—

Vow 25th:—Provided I become a Buddha, if those Bodhisattvas in that country of mine should not be able to preach the Law . . . then may I not attain enlightenment.

Vow 29th:—Provided I become a Buddha, if the Bodhisattvas of my country should not all possess the wisdom of eloquent oration . . . then may I not attain enlightenment.

Vow 30th:—Provided I become a Buddha, if the Bodhisattvas of my country have their wisdom of oration limited, then may I not attain enlightenment.

It is also proved by the "Vows of Samantabhadra". The Bodhisattva Samantabhadra advised Kumara Sudhana to be born in the world of Highest Happiness (the country of Buddha Amitabha), and then to transmute himself in countless numbers of bodies and possess the great power and



wisdom which extend over the ten quarters, in order to benefit the various beings in all worlds. The benefits for all are eternal and omnipresent.

One of many great differences between the Pure Land and the Heavens of other religions is the "Equality" which is peculiar to Buddhism, that every Buddha-follower may finally attain the same omnipotence as Buddha; not as in other religions where omnipotence is peculiar to a tyrant chief of the universe, whose adherents (*i.e.* the heavenly beings) only enjoy the bliss and leave the great task of salvation to their chief alone.

Buddha Sakyamuni laid special stress on the Pure Land doctrine. He almost everywhere taught beings that the adoration of Buddha Amitabha is a shorter and easier way than that of self-struggling with difficulties amid the sea of pain and sorrows, to cross over the other shore of Buddha-land. He did not teach us to recite His own name "Sakyamuni", but directed us to recite that of the Buddha Amitabha, because there is more possibility for us to achieve by that method. The founder of no other religion has directed the people to worship another instead of himself. His suggestion therefore is obviously free from selfishness, and is reliable.

In conclusion, if he who considers that his own power, virtue, and stock of merit are strong enough to render him independent in attaining fruition without the slightest worldly passions (such a state is attainable at least by Arhats), then he certainly does not need the help of Buddha. Otherwise the worldly passions would involve one into endless births and deaths. "During the period of the Law of Finality, there will be very few who succeed by self-attainment; not even one out of many millions can achieve without the aid of Buddha Amitabha"; says a certain Sutra.

People go into the icy polar regions to explore new lands; why should not the attempt be made to discover new astral worlds in order to set all beings in eternal happiness?

Buddha said: "For the achievement of crossing over to the other shore never mind if the present world is blazing with fire, we must go ahead and pass through it until we reach that new world of peace and happiness."

I myself am en route and have decided to dive through the ocean even though it be of ice or fire, until I reach my destination; and it is my wish that my fellow-beings may share the benefits, therefore I am writing this book on the subject.

Already there exist in the English language renderings of the Sutras of Pure Land doctrine from the Sanscrit by Max Müller and J. Takakusu. But I think this imperfect book of mine, epitomized and translated from various Chinese versions, will nevertheless be useful on account of two viewpoints: (1) The Sutras of Pure Land that have been translated into English are contained in the "Sacred Books of the East" which are voluminous and bulky, and obtainable only at a high price, so that they are not accessible to the general public. (2) The above mentioned English versions certainly are erudite works, yet not only have omitted some of the textual materials but also differ in meaning in some passages as compared with the Chinese versions. The latter express deeper meanings which are worthy and justifiable to be re-translated and published in the European language.

In spite of my limited qualification in translating these Sutras, the brilliant nature of Buddhism will show itself any way, just as a precious diamond, even though split into pieces, will emit its rays on every side. Therefore I venture to edit the present book regardless of my imperfect attainment.

The fact that the English and Chinese versions are not identical in some parts as above stated, is due, I imagine, to the difference in time, the Sanskrit Sutras translated by the above mentioned savants were only done within the last half-century, whereas the Chinese translations were done at a far earlier time of nearly two thousand years ago. In the early age (in Asia, it was the mediaeval age) in India, all the sutras were written on the leaves of the pattra-tree, as in China the classical history was written and engraved on bamboo known as the "Annals of the Bamboo Books" (about 2850 B. C.) No matter how strong and enduring the original pattra-leaves were, they naturally became worn after many centuries, and thus made the Texts incomplete. The European translators, puzzled by the imperfect Texts, had a lesser chance of understanding the meaning than the Chinese translators had.

Some time after the Nirvana of Buddha Sakyamuni, the efflorescence of Buddhism was almost over; its golden age was transferred from India to China. Its vast system of sutra-collections (Tripitaka) each in thousands of volumes were translated and published under the imperial auspices of various Dynasties for centuries. Thus the Buddhist literature in Chinese fortunately has been kept in good condition. I suggest, that Buddhist literature alone is sufficient for establishing a Library. It is indeed an unexplored treasure-mine for the world and awaits explorators.

The truth of the Pure Land doctrine would take many volumes to expound than can be written in a manul such as the present work. However there are numerous books written on the subject by noble Buddhist scholars in China, which may be translated by others in the future. Now let me draw to a close with the verses so well known in Buddhist circles, the Four Great Vows of the Mahayana novices; may

some of my readers join me in chanting the following Vows:

I take my solemn oath that I will save  
All sentient beings that know life's cruel pain  
And, by the Dharma teaching, for them pave  
A road by which the Buddha-hood to gain.

I take my solemn oath that I will break  
The power of evil passions and desire  
And, through the Grace of Buddha, undertake  
To quench for now and ever sorrow's fire.

I take my solemn oath that I'll aspire  
To learn the countless system of the Law,  
And, having learned each one to go still higher  
Till ignorance has fled for ever more.

I take my solemn oath that I will strive  
Among the Bodhisattvas to enrol,  
Nor shall I ever rest till I contrive  
To reach the Tathagatas' highest Goal.

## SYNOPSIS OF THE APARIMITAYUS SUTRA

Translated from Sanskrit into Chinese by Sanghavarman (252 C.E.). Re-translated from Chinese into English by Upasika Chihmann (Miss P. C. Lee).

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The Buddha (Sakyamuni) thus addressed the blessed Ananda: An inconceivable and countless number of Kalpas ago, there arose in the world a Buddha, Lokesvararadjna (World Freely Existing King) by name (and with the following titles), Tathagata, or He who has come to "Suchness". Arhan, or He who is deserving to be adored by Devas and Men. Samsaksambuddha, or He who has the correct and universal knowledge. Vidyacaranasampanah, or He who has a perfect knowledge of all supernormal power. Sagata, or the Charioteer who possesses all wisdom and performs the Eightfold Truth thus entering into Nirvana. Lokavit, or He who knows the world. Anuttarah, or He who is the highest one without a superior. Purusadamyasarathin, or the Great Tamer of Men. Sasta, or the Teacher of Devas and Men. Buddha, or the Enlightened One. Lokajyesthah, or the World Honoured One.

At the same time of the Buddha Lokesvararadjna, there was a King who possessed the superior talents, wisdom, and courage, and exceeded all the people of the world in personality. He awakened his heart with the highest aspiration to seek the truth, and was enraptured with joy upon hearing the preaching of law by that Buddha. He therefore resigned

his throne and became a monk (samena) named Dharmakara and went to where that Buddha was and made obeisance to him. He then also praised that Buddha by reciting these hymns: (The following passage of the hymns are here omitted). Where-upon, the Buddha Lokeshvararadjna having preached and revealed to him the excellences and good qualities of the properties, and the virtue or character of the Devas and Men in various degrees, for a system of two hundred ten millions of Buddha-countries (The details are here omitted). Then the Bhikkhu Dharmakara devoted his thoughts to these teachings for a period of five Kalpas, again, he went to pay homage to that Buddha and made forty-eight vows for the realization of his prospective country, and saying: May the World Honoured One thus listen to me as to what my vows are, in regard to how, after I shall have attained the Buddhahood, my own Buddha-country shall thus be realized, as follows:

1. Provided I become a Buddha, if in that Buddha-country of mine there should be either hell, or the animal state of existence, or the realm of hungry ghosts, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

2. Provided I become a Buddha, if in that Buddha-country of mine the beings who are born there should fall away (die) into the three evil realms, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

3. Provided I become a Buddha, if in that Buddha-country of mine the beings who are born there should not all be of the colour of genuine gold, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

4. Provided I become a Buddha, if in that country of mine the beings who are born there should not all be of one appearance without the difference of noble looking or

ugly lineaments, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

5. Provided I become a Buddha, if in that country of mine the beings who are born there should not be possessed of the supernormal knowledge of recollecting the previous lives of themselves (Purvanivasanu *i.e.* knowledge of all reincarnations), and knowing the events of evolution of hundred thousand nayuta years of kalpas, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

6. Provided I become a Buddha, if in that country of mine the beings who are born there should not be possessed of the Divine-eye (Divyatchakchus) which can see a hundred thousand nayuta of Buddha-countries, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

7. Provided I become a Buddha, if the beings of that country of mine should not be possessed of the Divine-ear (Divyassrotra) which to be able to hear the preachings of a hundred thousand kotis of nayuta of Buddhas, and to a faithful observance, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

8. Provided I become a Buddha, if the beings of that country of mine should not all possess the Intuitive-mind (Paratchittadjna) knowing the thoughts of all beings of a hundred thousand kotis nayuta of Buddha-countries, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

9. Provided I become a Buddha, if the beings of that country of mine should not all be possessed of the Heavenly-step (Riddisakchatkriya) which can in the shortest moment of one thought travelling over a hundred thousand kotis of nayuta of Buddha-countries, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

10. Provided I become a Buddha, if the beings of that country of mine should have arise in their minds the idea of selfishness and covetous thoughts, even with regard to their

own bodies, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

11. Provided I become a Buddha, if the beings of that country of mine should not all be firmly abiding in a concentrated state of meditation and equanimity (Samadhi) till they have reached Nirvana, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

12. Provided I become a Buddha, if my light should be limited in measurement so that it could not illuminate a hundred thousand nayuta of kotis of Buddha-countries, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

13. Provided I become a Buddha, if the measure of my life should be limited, even by counting a hundred thousand nayuta of kotis of kalpas, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

14. Provided I become a Buddha, if any being should be able to count innumerable pupils belonging to me in that country of mine, even if all the beings of those three million worlds and the whole triple chiliocosm, who after having become Pratyeka-Buddhas, count and continue to do so for a period of a hundred thousand nayuta of kotis of kalpas, could know the balance, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

15. Provided I become a Buddha, the life of the beings in that country of mine should be eternal, excepting by their own free will whenever they choose to pass away from life, otherwise may I not attain the enlightenment.

16. Provided I become a Buddha, there should be no evil or sinful existence in that country of mine, even its very name is unknown. Otherwise, may I not attain the enlightenment.

17. Provided I become a Buddha, if the innumerable Buddhas of the worlds of ten quarters do not glorify my name, then may I not attain the enlightenment.



18. Provided I become a Buddha, if the beings of the ten quarters who after having heard my name, and thus awakened their highest faith and aspiration of re-birth in that country of mine, even they have recollected such a thought for ten times only, they are destined to be born there, with the exception of those who have committed the five deadly sins (Anantarya), and who have blasphemed the orthodox Law (Dharma), otherwise may I not attain the enlightenment.

19. Provided I become a Buddha, if the beings of ten quarters who have directed their thoughts towards the Bodhi and cultivated their stock of various merits with a fervent craving for re-birth in that country of mine, if at the moment of their death, should I not appear with an assembly of retinue before them, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

20. Provided I become a Buddha, if the beings of ten quarters, after having heard my name always longing for that country of mine and cultivating various essential merits for the purpose of realizing their earnest wish to be born in my country, should their fulfilment be failed, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

21. Provided I become a Buddha, if the beings of that country of mine should not all be endowed with the glorious body perfected with the thirty-two attributes (Laksanani) of a great being, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

22. Provided I become a Buddha, the Bodhisattvas who come to be born in that country of mine are to be bound to that one birth only, then to become Buddha-elect (Ekajatipratibuddhas), with the exception of those who by their own free will remain in the stage of Bodhisattva-hood for the sake of delivering various beings, wearing the armour of vows to travel to all worlds, performing their Bodhisattva-duties and accumulating their stock of merit, who wish to

serve the Buddhas of ten quarters, and convert the various beings in number like the grains of sand of the River Ganges to the highest perfect knowledge, whose activities have surpassed the stage of ordinary beings, and who practise the universal virtue of Samantabhadra, otherwise may I not attain the enlightenment.

23. Provided I become a Buddha, if those Bodhisattvas in that country of mine, through the Grace of the Buddha should not be able to serve all the Buddhas throughout the countless nayuta of Buddha-worlds within a moment as short as a length of time of refreshment, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

24. Provided I become a Buddha, if those Bodhisattvas in that country of mine who wish their stock of merit to produce any appliance to be used before the Buddhas, should such things not appear for them to their satisfaction, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

25. Provided I become a Buddha, if those Bodhisattvas in that country of mine should not be able to preach the law of wisdom in completion, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

26. Provided I become a Buddha, those Bodhisattvas of that country of mine should not all be in possession of a golden body as strong as the diamond of Narayana, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

27. Provided I become a Buddha, the heavenly beings and the various properties produced in that country of mine should all be of supreme beauty and in boundless quantity, and in the infinity of various forms. If any being therein who even possessed the divine-eye is able to perceive the appellations and quantity of such beauties, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

28. Provided I become a Buddha, if any Bodhisattva of that country of mine who possesses even the least stock of merit, should not perceive the boundless shining beauty of the Bodhi-trees of my sanctuary, their height being at least four millions of miles, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

29. Provided I become a Buddha, if the Bodhisattvas of that country of mine should not all possess the wisdom of eloquent oration after having read, recited, and observed the Dharma of the sutras, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

30. Provided I become a Buddha, if the Bodhisattvas of that country of mine, have their wisdom of oration limited, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

31. When I have obtained the Buddhahood, if that country of mine should not be so limpid and brilliant as to reflect the miniatures of the innumerable, inconceivable and boundless Buddha-worlds of ten quarters as one's face is seen in a bright mirror, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

32. If after I have obtained the Buddhahood, in that country of mine, there should be magnificent palaces towering up from the ground to the void, also the lakes, winding streams, blossoming trees, and all other properties which are compounded of various jewels and thousands of kinds of perfumes, minutely embellished in the most wondrous state surpassing all heavenly and human worlds. The scent of the perfumes should thoroughly pervade the worlds of ten quarters, whereof the Bodhisattvas, having smelt them thereby directed their minds to Bodhi; otherwise may I not attain the enlightenment.

33. When I obtain the Buddhahood, any being of the boundless and inconceivable Buddha-worlds of the ten quarters

whose body if be touched by the rays of my splendour should not make his body and mind gentle and peaceful, in such a state that he is far more sublime than the gods and men, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

34. When I obtain the Buddhahood, if the beings of boundless and inconceivable Buddha-worlds should not attain the "Endurance of Nirvanic Life" (Ajatah sarvadharmah) of Bodhisattva, and the deep knowledge of "Adharanamudro" (or Dharani?) after having heard my name, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

35. When I obtain the Buddhahood, women of boundless and inconceivable Buddha-worlds of the ten quarters after having heard my name thereby awakened in faith and joyful aspiration, and turning their minds towards Bodhi, therefore dislike their own female lives, when they be born again, in their next life should not be incarnated into a masculine body, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

36. When I obtain the Buddhahood, the Bodhisattvas of boundless and inconceivable Buddha-worlds of the ten quarters having heard my name, after their death (in their next life) will still continue their Bodhisattva-duty till they have obtained the Buddhahood, otherwise may I not attain the enlightenment.

37. When I obtain the Buddhahood, the heavenly beings of the boundless and inconceivable Buddha-worlds of the ten quarters, having heard my name, should not worship me with prostrate reverence, and joyfully and faithfully perform their Bodhisattva-duty, and be honoured by gods and men, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

38. When I obtain the Buddhahood, the heavenly beings of that country of mine, should they desire a garment will be able to perceive themselves, as quick as thought,

covered by apparitionally produced costumes, excellent to their satisfaction, worthy to be praised by the Buddha, without the work of sewing, washing, dying, etc. otherwise may I not attain enlightenment.

39. When I attain the Buddhahood, if the heavenly beings of that country of mine should not be enjoying happiness as great as that of the holy bhikkhus (Asravakchava the finality of the stream of passions), then may I not attain the enlightenment.

40. When I attain the Buddhahood, if the Bodhisattvas of that country of mine wish to see the boundless, holy, pure Buddha-worlds of the ten quarters, they will at once behold them from the jewel-trees as though one's face were being reflected in a highly burnished, brilliant mirror, otherwise may I not attain the enlightenment.

41. When I attain the Buddhahood, if the Bodhisattvas of other worlds after having heard my name, should suffer from any diminution in the functional powers and not be endowed with all sense-organs in completion before reaching the Buddhahood, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

42. When I obtain the Buddhahood, if the Bodhisattvas hearing my name from other Buddha-countries, should not all attain the pure Samadhi of emancipation (Suvibhaktavati) from which they could serve innumerable and inconceivable number of Buddhas, Tathagatas, by a moment of thought; and if that Samadhi of theirs should come to an end meanwhile, then may I not attain enlightenment.

43. If after I have obtained the Buddhahood, that any Bodhisattva of other countries having heard my name, will be incarnated as a member of a noble family (if he so desires) when he dies, otherwise may I not attain enlightenment.

44. When I obtain the Buddhahood, the Bodhisattvas

of other countries having heard my name will all obtain a combination of full virtues and joyfully perform their Bodhisattva-duty, otherwise may I not attain enlightenment.

45. When I have obtain the Buddhahood, the Bodhisattvas of other countries having heard my name, all will obtain the "Samantanugata" (the thoroughly and equal Samadhi in a fixed state of meditation) through that Samadhi they will see innumerable and inconceivable Buddhas constantly till they have obtained the Buddhahood, otherwise may I for-bear from obtaining enlightenment.

46. When I obtain the Buddhahood, the Bodhisattvas of that country of mine should be able to hear the preachings of the Dharma whenever they desire (the voices of teaching will present themselves naturally to their ears), otherwise may I refrain from attaining enlightenment.

47. When I obtain the Buddhahood, if the Bodhisattvas of other countries after having heard my name should not immediately reach the state of Avaivartika (*i.e.* not turning back from Bodhi), then I would refrain from attaining enlightenment.

48. When I have obtained the Buddhahood, if the Bodhisattvas of other countries having heard my name should not reach the first, second, and third degrees of Dharma-endurance immediately or should turn back from the Law of Buddhas, then I would refrain from attaining enlightenment.

And again, O Ananda (This was addressed to him by Buddha Sakyamuni) when that Bhikkhu Dharmakara had spoken such prayers, he also spoke the following verses (from the first to the eleventh verses are here omitted) "12th, O Bhagavat, (this was addressed to the Tathagata Lokeshvara-radjā) if these vows of mine can be realized in the future,

may this great chiliocosm of thousands of worlds tremble, and may a shower of wondrous jewel-flowers descend from the gods in the cosmic void”.

Then again, O Ananda, when that Bhikkhu Dharmakara had concluded his reciting of such exalted prayers, at once the sphere wholly trembled in six manners, and wondrous flowers gracefully rained down from the sky, also there was a heavenly music sounding with praise: “Thou art sure to obtain the unsurpassed, highest, and perfect knowledge of Thy fulfilment.”

Then, the blessed Ananda asked the Buddha: Has that Bhikkhu Dharmakara now become a Buddha or not yet? The Buddha (Sakyamuni) replied to Ananda: The Bodhisattva Dharmakara has now already become a Buddha; and in the western part from here over a hundred thousand kotis of Buddha-worlds, there his Buddha-country is situated, and it is named “The World of Peace and Happiness.”





## A PART OF THE AMITAYUR DHYANA SUTRA

Originally translated from Sanskrit into Chinese by Kalayasas (424 C.E.). Re-translated from Chinese into English by Upasika Chihmann (Miss P. C. Lee).

*The essence of this Sutra consists of sixteen steps of Meditation on the Buddha Amitayur (An epithet of the Buddha Amitabha) and His two co-operators the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara and the Bodhisattva Mahasthama. And also meditates on the various glorious excellences of the Pure Land i.e. Sukhavati. The narration started with a dramatic story of Queen Vaidehi the consort of King Bimbisara of Magadha, who suffered from domestic distress and therefore prayed to be born in the Pure Land. Buddha Sakyamuni at her request preached this Sutra for her and others.*

*The meditations from the first to the thirteenth are of the most phantastic nature, and the scenes are described in hair-splitting, which are almost incomprehensible to the minds of earthly beings; however from fourteenth to sixteenth sections, the gradations as the various fruitions attainable by the devotees are narrated. These three sections (i.e. 14th, 15th, and 16th) obviously can be taken as a compendium for the practice of novices, so I hereby translate them as follows:*

## THE FOURTEENTH MEDITATION

Buddha thus addressed Ananda and Vaidehi: "With regard to the highest existence of the Superior Grade, it is attainable by any one of the multitude who has the aspiration of being born in that country. His desire will be realized upon having the threefold mind, which is firstly a most sincere mind, secondly a profound mind, thirdly a mind filled with the prayer of being born in that country by turning his stock of merits towards the subject as the preparation. Whosoever is perfected with such a threefold mind will be destined to be born in that country.

Again, there are three other classes of beings who also can be born in that country. They are firstly those who possess the compassionate heart, refrain from the taking of life (*i.e.* they do not slaughter man or animal) and control themselves according to all the prohibitive precepts. Secondly those who read and recite the sutras of Mahayana (*i.e.* the great vehicle of salvation) and Vaipulya (the expanded school). Thirdly those who practise the "Sixfold thought" (*i.e.* (1) Thinking of the Buddha; (2) Thinking of the Dharma; (3) Thinking of the Sangha; (4) Thinking of the precepts; (5) Thinking of alms-givings; (6) Thinking of Nirvana) and direct such meritorious thoughts towards the desire of re-birth in that country as a fundamental preparation. He who possesses such merits from one day to seven days is destined to be born in that country, and when he comes to die, out of his sharp and zealous aspiration and fine progress will be able to see the Buddha Amitabha with (the Bodhisattvas) Avalokitesvara, Mahasthama and innumerable transformed Buddhas, thousands of Bhikkhus, Sravakas, and countless Devas, together with (the reproduction or vision)

of palaces made of the seven jewels. All such things will appear before him. The Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara and Mahasthama will present him with the diamond throne. Buddha Amitabha will give forth a great and magnificent splendour which will illuminate his body. The Buddha and Bodhisattvas will hold out their hands to meet him. His mind will be encouraged with the admiration by the Bodhisattvas whereupon he will be enraptured with joy and find himself riding on a diamond throne lead by the Buddha. In the length of time as quick as a twinkling of an eye he will perceive himself has already been born in that country, and will see the glorious figures of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas with all noble attributes in supremacy and perfection. He will also see magnificent rays shining over the jewel-trees, and hear the voices preaching the wondrous law which will enlighten him with the "Endurance of Nirvanic Life". Soon he will serve all the Buddhas throughout the ten (cosmic) quarters, and he will receive the "Prediction" (of his future Buddhahood) from those Buddhas. When he returns to his own country (the country of Buddha Amitabha) he will obtain countless hundreds thousand of system of Dharani (Sacred words which produce the supernormal powers). The above is called the highest existence of the Superior Grade.

Next comes the medium existence of the Superior Grade. There is no necessity for those (in this grade) to read and recite the Vaipulya sutras, (but they must) well understand the meaning and not doubt or show surprise at the highest truth, nor abuse the doctrine of Mahayana, but deeply believe in Karma (the law of cause and effect). They can turn these merits in preparation for realizing their desire of being born in that country of the Highest Happiness. He who possesses these merits when comes to die (in due course), the

Buddha Amitabha will lead the (Bodhisattvas) Avalokitesvara and Mahasthama, and an innumerable retinue in a great assembly to appear before him (the devotee) and present him with the purple-gold throne, and admire him saying: O, Thou Son of Dharma, thou hast performed the doctrine of Mahayana and realized the highest truth, I therefore come to usher thee to go to our country. Whereupon the Buddha with his thousands of transformed bodies in manifestation simultaneously will offer hands to him. Then the devotee will find his own body sitting on that purple-gold seat, stretching his joined palms towards these Saints and praising them. As quick as a flash of thought, he will be born in the lake of seven jewels of that country. The purple-gold throne (which he rode in coming) is in size as the large disk of a gem-lotus flower which will unfold over a night. His body will turn into purple-gold colour, and a lotus-flower of seven gems will form itself under his feet. The Buddha and Bodhisattvas will simultaneously give forth their lights and shine there on his body, whereupon his eyes will immediately be opened and clear in sight. Owing to his old experiences in his previous life, he will hear voices now harmoniously preaching the highest truth of profound meaning. Then he will descend from his golden throne and reverence the Buddha with folded hands praising and applauding the World Honoured One. He will punctually in a period of seven days obtain the Avaiivartya (the state of non-reversion from Bodhi) of Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi (the transcendental wisdom), and simultaneously will be able to fly and will visit all the Buddhas of ten quarters, from whom he will learn to practise the Samadhi in many formulas. After a small Kalpa (16,800,000 solar years) he will attain the "Endurance of Nirvanic Life". He will also receive the

“Prediction” (announcement of his future Buddhahood) from the Buddhas. Such is entitled the medium existence of the Superior Grade.

Next comes the lowest existence of the Superior Grade. This is for those who also believe in the Karma, and do not blaspheme the doctrine of Mahayana, but simply devote their minds to the attainment of the supreme Bodhi. The merits thereby produced are all turned towards the preparation for re-birth in the Country of the Highest Happiness. When a seeker of such a class approaches to death, the Buddha Amitabha and the Bodhisattvas Avalokitesvara and Mahasthama and others transform themselves into a number of five hundred Buddhas simultaneously offer hands to him and say: O, the Son of Dharma, thou art now pure, as thou hast devoted the thoughts to supreme Bodhi; we come for thee. Upon having heard this he will at once find himself ascending on the golden-lotus flower. When he is seated, the flower will fold around him, and he will then ride it following the Buddha to go to that country where he will be born in the lake of seven gems. After one day and one night the lotus flower will unfold, and in seven days he will be able to see the Buddha's Body, but his mind will not as yet be powerful enough to perceive the exalted signs of the Buddha. However he will be able to see clearly after three weeks. He will then hear the various sounds all carrying the meaning of wondrous Dharma (which I suppose means that one's mind is conscious of wisdom by hearing the sounds only, although without words Ed.). He will travel throughout the ten quarters and adore all the Buddhas therein, from whom he will learn the profound truth. After the elapse of three small Kalpas he will obtain the system of one hundred kinds of knowledge (Satadharma vidyadvaya) and abide in

that joyful stage. This is called the lowest existence of the Superior Grade. The above mentioned three classes are all in the system of superior existence.

### THE FIFTEENTH MEDITATION

The Buddha spoke to Ananda and Vaidehi thus: Now let us come to the next stage, the highest existence of the Intermediate Grade. This is for those who observe the five prohibitive precepts, the fasting enjoined by the eight prohibitive precepts, and all other rightful precepts, and who do not commit the five deadly sins, and are free of any demeritorious acts, who will lay these good roots (the moral foundation) as their justification to be born in the Western Paradise as desired. When any such a devotee approaches the end of his life, Buddha Amitabha with Bhikkhus and retinue will send out golden rays before him, and lecture on the truths of suffering, emptiness (the negative view-point of life), impermanence, non-ego and praise one who frees himself from the family, thereby enables one to avoid various pains. The devotee upon having noticed all these, his mind will be enraptured with joy and he will find himself sitting on the stage of a lotus flower, he will then prostrate himself and stretch forth his folded palms in homage to the Buddha. Before he raises his bowed head, he will find himself already has been born in the World of Supreme Happiness. The flower of lotus (which he rode in coming) will soon unfold and then he will hear voices praising the Four Truths and will instantaneously obtain Arhatship, thus possessing the Threefold Knowledge, the Six Supernormal Talents, and perfecting the Eightfold Emancipation. This is entitled the highest existence of the Intermediate Grade.

Next being the medium existence of the Intermediate Grade. This class is for those who observe the fasting of the eight precepts, or observe the precepts of the Samana (or Sramaneras the novices who below the rank of Bhikkhus), or the precepts of completion. They must observe any of these forms of precept for one day and one night, without losing any dignity in manner but keep themselves in complete nobility; the merits consequently produced to be turned towards the preparation they desired for re-birth in that kingdom of the highest happiness. Their virtue will be matured by the cherishing of the precepts as a garment is scented by perfumes. Such a devotee when he comes to die will see the Buddha Amitabha with His retinue emitting forth golden rays of light, and bringing a lotus of seven gems towards him. He will hear a voice in the air praising him by saying: O, Noble-minded Man, thou art such an excellent person, owing to thy obedience in accordance with the teaching of the Buddhas of three ages, I therefore come to escort thee (to our country). The devotee will then see himself enthroned on the lotus flower. Immediately the flower will shut him therein and he will ride to the western paradise the World of Highest Happiness. The flower (in which he dwells) in the precious lake will unfold in seven days. Then he will open his eyes and put together his two palms, stretching them with praise towards the Buddha, from whom he will learn the law with joy, and attain to the fruition of a Sratapana (the primary stage of saintship). After the period of half a kalpa he will obtain the Arhatship. Such is entitled the medium existence of the Intermediate Grade.

Next comes the lowest existence of the Intermediate Grade. This class is for those noble-minded men or women who support their parents with filial duties, and also possess

affectionate and benevolent thoughts for all the beings of the world. When such a person dies, he will meet a good and wise adviser who will wisely describe to him the happiness of the country of Buddha Amitabha, and will also narrate to him the Forty-eight Vows of the Bhikkhu Dharmakara (the previous incarnation of the Buddha Amitabha). The dying person will end his life just at the particular time he has heard the story, and will immediately be born in the Western World of the Supreme Happiness, as quickly as a brave man stretches out his arm in action. After seven days he will meet Avalokitesvara and Mahasthama from whom he will learn the law with pleasure and thereby he will obtain the fruition of Sratapana. Then after the period of a small kalpa he will become an Arhat. The above is called the lowest existence of the Intermediate Grade. All the three degrees of this grade are in the system of medium existence.

### THE SIXTEENTH MEDITATION

Buddha spoke to Ananda and Vaidehi: The Highest existence of the Inferior Grade in that Buddha country is for any one of the multitude who though does not abuse the Mahayana sutras, yet has committed a great many evil deeds, and is unscrupulous in what he has done, not ashamed of himself. Such a stupid man when he dies, may meet a good and wise adviser from whom he can provisionally learn the canonical titles of the Vaipulya—suttas of the twelve divisions (Tripitaka), and thereby expiate his greatest sins which would have bound him to births and deaths for a thousand kalpas. The wise adviser will teach him to put his two palms together and stretching forth his folded hands, say: "Namo-Buddha Amitabha". For having recited the



Name of the Buddha, he will be freed from the sins which would otherwise have subjected him to the sufferings of births and deaths for fifty millions of kalpas. Thereupon that Buddha will send his transformed body (the manifestation of Buddha Amitabha) and the transformed bodies of Avalokitesvara and Mahasthama to see that person with words of praise, saying: O pious man, your sins have been blotted out by reciting the Name of the Buddha, therefore we come to meet you. Then he will see the light of that transformed Buddha brilliantly filling up his room; whereupon he will joyfully pass away from life, and ride on a precious lotus-flower to follow the Buddha and he will be born in the gem-lake. The flower (he rode) will unfold not, until after seven weeks. When the flower is unfolding, the great compassionate Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, and the Bodhisattva Mahasthama will stand before him, and pouring out the great light, then preach to him the deep meaning of the twelve divisions of the sutras, which he will understand with faith. Consequently he will direct his mind to the supreme Bodhi. After the lapse of ten small kalpas, he will accomplish the system of one hundred kinds of knowledge, and will enter in the primary stage of (Samadhi). This is called the highest existence of the Inferior Grade.

Buddha spoke to Anande and Valdehi: The medium existence of the Inferior Grade is for any one of the multitude who has broken and violated the five precepts, or the eight precepts, and also has transgressed the complete precepts, or has stupidly stolen something which was the property of the Sangha the public or an individual; and without the conscience of shame in his impure preaching of the law. He may also have enriched himself with many evil deeds. Such a sinful person is subject to descend into hell in consequence of his

sins. When he is approaching to death, the purgatorial fires will come all around him; if he happen to meet a good and wise adviser who will out of a great compassionate heart, preach to him the tenfold power and virtue of the Buddha Amitabha, widely praise the Splendour and the Divinity of that Buddha, and also will preach the truth of precepts, meditation, and wisdom which will lead to emancipation. The sinful man upon hearing these will be emancipated from his evil deeds, which would otherwise subject him to births and deaths for the period of eighty millions of Kalpas; while under such circumstances the violent flames of the purgatorial fires will be transmuted into a pure and cool wind, which will fan forward the heavenly flowers. On each flower there will be standing a transformed Buddha or Bodhisattva to welcome and lead him. In a moment as quick as a thought he will be born in the calyx of a lotus flower, planted in the seven-gem lake. The lotus flower will bloom not, until after six Kalpas, when Avalokitesvara and Mahasthama will offer him consolation in the Brahma-voices and preach to him the profound meaning of the Mahayana sutras. Upon having heard these laws he will immediately conceive the thought of highest Bodhi. This is entitled the medium existence of the Inferior Grade.

Buddha spoke to Ananda and Vaidehi: Regarding the lowest existence of the Inferior Grade. If one of the multitude has done evil deeds and committed the five deadly sins and brought to the completion of tenfold wickedness, that stupid person is subject to fall in evil realms by his evil Karma, and be bitterly tortured for the duration of many kalpas. If he meet a good and well learned man just at the time before his death, who will comfort him by many means, preach to him the wondrous law, and teach him to meditate on the

Buddha. But while he endures the torture of pains he will have no time to meditate on Buddha. Then that good friend will further teach him, saying: if you are unable to meditate on the Buddha you may recite the name of the "Buddha of Infinite Life" instead of meditation. At least repeat it ten times thus: "Namo Buddha Amitabha", in an uninterrupted voice and with a very sincere heart. Reciting the name of Buddha will have the effect that, each time he recites it, will be expiated the sins which would otherwise cause him to have births and deaths for eighty millions of kalpas. He will, at the moment of approaching death, see a golden lotus flower like the solar disk presented him. Thereupon he will immediately be born in the lotus flower of the World of Highest Happiness; however he will remain in the calyx of the lotus-flower until the completion of the duration of twelve great kalpas. Then the lotus flower open, whereupon Avalokitesvara and Mahasthama will speak to him in compassionate voices of great sympathy, preaching the details of the true-nature of the law how to expiate sins. On hearing of these he will instantaneously be brightened with joy and his aspiration to obtain the Bodhi-heart will be aroused. This is entitled the lowest existence of the Inferior Grade. All the three classes of which, this grade consists are in the system of inferior existence. (Here ends the sixteenth mediation, and the following text is here omitted).



## THE SUKHAVATI-VYUHA

Originally translated from Sanskrit into Chinese by Kumarajva (384 C. E.). Re-translated from Chinese into English by Upasika Chihmann (Miss P. C. Lee).

I have been so told. Once, the Buddha was sojourning in the country of Sravasti, at the garden of Anathapindika, in the Jeta Grove, and with Him were twelve hundred and fifty great Bhikkhus all famous Arahans. Among them were Elder Sariputra, Maudgalyayana, Mahakasyapa, Mahakatya-yana, Mahakaustila, Revata, Suddhipanthaka, Nanda, Ananda, Rahula, Gavampati, Pindola-Bharahaga, Kalodayi, Mahakp-phina, Vakkla, Anirouda, such great disciples, also with many Maha-Bodhisattvas: Manjusri, The Prince of the Dharma; Bodhisattva Ajita, Bodhisattva Gandhastin, and many others. Also infinite celestial beings including Indra Sakradevas were there. While the Buddha addressed Elder Sariputra thus: Passing over ten million Buddha-lands from here there is in the West a world named Sukhavati (the country of supreme happiness) where a Buddha known as Amitabha now preaches the Dharma (Law). O Sariputra, why is that world named "The Happiest One"? Because all beings dwelling there suffer no miseries whatsoever, but enjoy the fullest happiness. Therefore it is called Sukhavati.

The Sukhavati is surrounded with seven lines of ornamental railings, seven curtains of netted tapestries, and seven rows of precious-trees arranged in order, all adorned

with four kinds of gems. Therefore it is named Sukhavati.

Again, Sariputra, in the Sukhavati there is a lake of seven gems, flowing with the water of eight meritorious qualities; its bottom covered with pure golden sand; its four-sided banks and walks are composed of the precious gold, silver, lapis-lazuli, and crystal. Above tower the palaces of gold, silver, lapis-lazuli, crystal, beryl, red pearls and carnelian. In the lake there are lotus flowers as large as the cart-wheels in circumference, blue-coloured with blue radiance, yellow-coloured with yellow radiance, red-coloured with red radiance, white-coloured with white radiance; fair, pure, and fragrant. Thus, O Sariputra, is Sukhavati, brought to so glorious a state of excellence, through the merits of the Buddha Amitabha.

Again, O Sariputra, in that Buddha-land, celestial music often sounds. The heavenly mandarava-flowers six times in day and night whirl down upon the golden ground like a shower of rain. At dawn, the dwellers in this land receive and load their robes with these falling wondrous flowers, present them in reverent worship to a million Buddhas of other Buddha-fields, returning to their own land by the time for refreshment. O Sariputra, thus is Sukhavati, brought to so glorious a state of excellence, through the merits of the Buddha Amitabha.

Again, O Sariputra, in that land there are many kinds of wondrous birds in variegated colours: the crane, the peacock, the parrot, the swan, the jiva-jiva, and the kalavinka, and many others. Singing harmoniously day and night to proclaim the five roots of virtue, (Pantcha-Indryani), the five powers (Pantcha-Balani), the sevenfold path of Bodhi (Bodhyanga), and the eightfold path of holiness (Marga), and other such noble laws. These draw the thoughts of the dwellers to meditate on the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha. Think

not, O Sariputra, that these birds are born through their evil karma. In this Buddha-country there are no three evil realms (*i.e.* animals, hungry ghosts, and the prisoners in Hell). How could such things exist where even the names of them are unknown? For the purpose of propagating the various sounds of Dharma that Buddha Amitabha brought these creatures into being, by apparitional birth.

O Sariputra, when in that Buddha-land the zephyrs fan the jewel-trees and the precious curtains into gentle motion, so emitting a fine and entrancing music, as from a thousand orchestras playing in harmony. And in the minds of all who hear these, there arises remembrance of the Buddha, of the Dharma, and of the Sangha. Thus O Sariputra, is Sukhavati brought to so glorious a state of excellence through the merits of the Buddha Amitabha.

What do you think O Sariputra, that the Buddha Amitabha is so named? (In Sanskrit "Amita" means infinite, and "abha" means splendour Ed.) It is so called because the splendour of the Buddha is infinite, illuminating without hindrance throughout the Buddha-lands in all the ten quarters. Also the life of this Buddha and of his people are eternal, and comparable only to Assamkhyeyas (infinite in number) of Kalpas. Therefore is the Buddha so named. Ten Kalpas only have passed away since he attained Buddhahood. With that Buddha, O Sariputra, there is a countless number of Sravaka-disciples. All of them have attained arhatship, and their number is beyond computation. So also is it with the Bodhisattvas. Thus O Sariputra, is Sukhavati brought to so glorious a state of excellence, through the merits of the Buddha Amitabha.

Again, O Sariputra, the persons born in Sukhavati are Avarvartyas (they never revert from the Bodhi). Among

them are many Ekajati-Pratibuddhas (Buddha-elects) who attain thereto in one more life. Their number is comparable only to Assamkhyeyas of Kalpas.

Sariputra, all who hear this should make fervent aspiration to be re-born in that land, so that they may be in the company of such most virtuous beings. But Sariputra, one cannot be born there with insufficient root of merit or virtue, nor a lack of good nidana (previous good deeds and felicities). Sariputra, and virtuous man or virtuous woman, hearing the name of Amitabha and calling on his name for one day, two days, three days, four days, four days, five days, six days, and seven days, keeping their mind undisturbed, such, when they come to die will see before their eyes the vision of Buddha Amitabha and his retinue. If he or she keeps intently in mind the aspiration for rebirth in Sukhavati (Eliminating all desires for mundane things), such an one will inevitably be reborn in the happy land of the Buddha Amitabha. O Sariputra, in view of these advantages have I made given the counsel that all who hear this message should aspire to be born in that Buddha-land.

Sariputra, as I now praise the inestimable merits of the Buddha Amitabha, so in the East there are also other Buddhas such as the Buddha Akshobhya, the Buddha Merudhvaja, the Buddha Mahameru, the Buddha Meruprabhasa, and the Buddha Manjudhvaja and many others. The number of such Buddhas is incalculable even as the sand of the Ganga River. Each in his own country speaks forth the Truth with omnipotent tongue, in the hearing of three million chiliocosmos, saying: "May all sentient beings have faith in this sutra which extols the inconceivable blessings of Sukhavati, and which is guarded and favoured by all the Buddhas.

Sariputra so in the South, there are also the Buddha



Chandra-suryapradipa, the Buddha Yasahprabha, the Buddha Maharchiskandha, the Buddha Merupradipa, the Buddha Anantavirya, and many other Buddhas equal in number to the sand of Ganga River. Each in his own country speaks forth the Truth with omnipresent tongue, in the hearing of three million chiliocosmos, saying: "May all sentient beings have faith in this sutra which glorifies the inconceivable blessings of Sukhavati, and which is favoured and guarded by all the Buddha.

Sariputra, thus also in the West, there are Buddha Amitabha, the Buddha Amitaskandha, the Buddha Amitadhvaja, the Buddha Mahaprabha, the Buddha Maharatnaketu, the Buddha Suddharasmiprabha, and many other Buddhas, equal in number to the sand of the River Ganga, each in his own country speaks forth the Truth with omnipresent tongue, in the hearing of three million chiliocosmos, saying: "May all sentient beings have faith in this sutra which glorifies the inconceivable blessings of Sukhavati, and which is favoured and guarded by all the Buddhas.

Sariputra, thus also in the North there are the Buddha Archiskandha, the Buddha Vaisvanaranirghosha, the Buddha Dushpradharsha, the Buddha Adityasambhava, the Buddha Jaleniprabha, and many other Buddha, equal in number to the sand of the Ganga River, each in his own country speaks forth the Truth with omnipresent tongue, in the hearing of three million chiliocosmos, saying: "May all sentient beings have faith in this sutra which praises the inconceivable merits of Sukhavati, which is favoured and guarded by all the Buddhas.

Suriputra, thus also in the Nadir, there are Buddha Simha, Buddha Yasas, Buddha Yasahprabhava, Buddha Dharma, Buddha Dharmadhvaja, Buddha Dharmadhara, and

many other Buddhas, equal in number to the sand of Ganga River, each in his own country speaks forth the Truth with omnipresent tongue, in the hearing of three million chiliocosmos, saying: "May all sentient beings have faith in this sutra which eulogizes the incomprehensible merit of Sukhavati, which is favoured and guarded by all the Buddhas.

Sariputra, there are in the Zenith, the Buddha Brahmaghosha, Buddha Nakshatraraja, Buddha Gandhottama, Buddha Gandhaprabhasa, Maharchiskandha, Buddha Ratnakusumasampushpitagtra, Buddha Salendraraja, Buddha Ratnotpalasri, Buddha Saruarthadarsa, Buddha Sumerukalpa and many other Buddhas, equal in number to the sand of Ganga River, each in his own country speaks forth the Truth with omnipresent tongue, in the hearing of three million chiliocosmos, saying: "May all sentient beings have faith in this sutra which glorifies the incomprehensible merits of Sukhavati, which is favoured and guarded by all the Buddhas.

Now, Sariputra, what think you is the reason why this sutra is entitled "The Sutra favoured and guarded by all the Buddhas"? Sariputra, every virtuous man or virtuous woman who recites this Sutra, and who hears the names of the Buddhas therein, such are protected and favoured by all the Buddhas, and will never lose the knowledge of the Anuttara-Samyak-Sambodhi (the supreme wisdom).

Therefore, Sariputra, all should accept and have faith in my counsel, and that of all other Buddhas, for one who has vowed, or is now vowing, or shall vow, that they will be born in the paradise of Amitabha such shall never lose the Anuttara-Samyak-Sambodhi.

This is true of all beings those who have been in existence, those now being born, and those who shall be born. So, Sariputra, all virtuous men and virtuous women

should have the desire to be born in the paradise of Amitabha, if they will trust this sutra.

Sariputra, as I now glorify the inconceivable merits of all those Buddhas, so also, they praise mine by saying: "Sakyamuni Buddha has performed a difficult task, a unique undertaking. In spite of the five kinds of defilement of this evil world: the defilement of the present age (kalpa), the defilement of erroneous views, the defilement of passions, the defilement of various beings, the defilement of destiny (Karma), he is yet able to attain the Anuttara-Samyak-Sambodhi in this Saha World (the World of sufferings), and for all beings preaches this Law (Pure Land Doctrine) which the people of all worlds are inclined to doubt, and which it is difficult to convince them to accept.

Sariputra, you should understand it is very difficult for me to perform such a difficult task of preaching this Law in this incredulous age, and amidst the five kinds of corruption of the Saha-world, where I attained the Anuttara-Samyak-Sambodhi.

And having listened to the preaching of this sutra the Elder Sariputra, all the Bhikkhus, the realms of mankind, of Devas, and Asuras, accepted Buddha's speech with joy, and prepared to practise the teaching. And having made their obeisances to the World Honoured One, then departed.



## APPENDIX

The 17th of November being the day in memory of the Buddha Amitabha. This is emanated from a traditional legend in China. In 1931 C.E. on the day of 17th November, I prayed to Buddha Amitabha, saying: I have recited Thy Holy Name for one year and I have not received any answer from Thee, as to whether I will have a chance of re-birth to be born from the Lotus-flower. To-day being the date in Thy honour, may I be favoured a sign from Thee, to encourage me and give me strength.

At night of the same day, when I went to bed had a dream that I saw something floating on the surface of the water of a lake, I could not see clearly what it was, then I went forward to have a close look, and I clearly beheld them, they were all the sprouts of the lotus.

The scene however suddenly changed into another, there were double lines of the fence made of bamboo or wood which crossed the surface of the water. Only a little of the top was showing, and it looked like a plan of a tramway. Between them there were some large leaves of lotus. I said to myself: By whom is this lotus planted on the Path?

When I awakened, I suddenly remembered that in the day time I had asked for an answer. This dream must be a sign of it. As the lotus is the symbolic flower of Pure Land from which the devotees are to be born within. And I remembered that I had laid special accent on the word "Path" or "Way", when I spoke of it in my dream. The lotus is the water plant and cannot be grown on the path which is generally made of earthy matter. But the path in my dream was formed by the fence in the water where the lotus grew within. How ingeniously was the dream constructed. The answer in conclusion is "You have the way to be born from lotus, and you are just at the beginning". This was the answer of Buddha to my prayer.

(Upasika Chihmann)



## ADDENDUM

### AN EXPLANATORY NOTE ON THE TEN CHINESE BUDDHIST SECTS

(By Ven. Kong Ghee)

The Chinese possess a history of over five thousand years. An important component which had yielded fruitful results on Chinese culture is Indian Buddhism. One will realize this enormous influence when reading the cultural History of China. If one tries to talk about Chinese culture without touching on Buddhism, one will be in the position of a blind man as told in the Story of the Blind Men and the Elephant.

Buddhism had been established some twenty-five centuries ago. It had been transmitted to China during the Ch'in and Han Dynasties some five hundred years after the parinirvana of Sākya-muni Buddha. Buddhism in China had risen and fallen according to the law of constant changes during the past two thousand years. Nevertheless it had been well established in China. In the past it had not been greatly affected by the upheavals and chaos of political changes. For the Chinese have been open-minded in their nature and have been capable of absorbing foreign culture. That is why Buddhism, when introduced into the well-cultured land of China, has flourished abundantly and developed fruitfully. That the grandeur is still glamorous is something the Chinese can be proud of today.

The golden age of Chinese Buddhism was from the age of the Three Kingdoms to T'ang Dynasty. During this period the various Sects in Buddhism evolved their irreproachable and infallible theories based on the doctrine of Sakyamuni Buddha.

Historically speaking the rise and fall of the various Sects had been closely connected to the evolution of cultural thoughts and current events in China. For the past fifty years, the social system of China had been changed from Absolute Monarchy to Constitutional Monarchy, Republicanism, and then to Socialism. Buddhistic thoughts and movements in China do undergo certain changes.

A student of Chinese Culture therefore cannot neglect Buddhism, otherwise his progress will be handicapped as a wheel without an axis.

It is the duty of a lover of Chinese culture to shoulder the responsibility of fostering the study of Buddhism so that the culture will again radiate its splendid light.

It is encouraging to see at this chaotic moment of multiple ideologies that Buddhism still flourish in various countries. Now I would like to introduce briefly the ten Sects of Chinese Buddhism as follows:—

Chinese Buddhism

1. Reality Sect or Kosa Sect or Abhidharma Sect.
2. Satysiddhi Sect or Cheng-se Sect.
3. Three Sastra Sect or San-lun Sect.
4. The Lotus Sect or T'ien-t'ai Sect (it absorbed the Nirvana Sect).
5. The Garland Sect or Hua-yen Sect or Avatamsaka Sect. (it absorbed the Dasabhumika Sect and the Samparigrahasastra Sect).
6. Intuitive Sect or Ch'an Sect or Dhyana Sect.
7. Discipline Sect or Lu Sect or Vinaya Sect.
8. Esoteric Sect or Chen-yien Sect or Mantra Sect.
9. Dharmalaksana Sect or Ch'u-en Sect or Fa-siang Sect.
10. Pure-land Sect or Sukhavati Sect or Ching-t'u Sect.

The principles of all the above Sects are based on the partial doctrine of Sakyamuni Buddha. In the beginning there were no such things as Sects in Buddhism. The disciples of Buddha, however, took up what had been most beneficial and most practicable to them. Thus ten Sects had been evolved. Buddhism may also be divided into thirteen Sects, but the other three had been absorbed with the ten.

1. *Kosa Sect*: The foundation text is the Abhidharma-kosa-sastra by Vasubandhu. The Sastra was translated and introduced to China from India by Shuan-chuang. His disciples P'u-kuang and Fa-pau who wrote these and commentaries on the Sastra propagated this Sect. The Sastra classifies all phenomena of the cosmos under seventy-five categories. A student of this Sect learns the way of liberating oneself from the passions and attains subsequent annihilation of



suffering. He bases his learning on the Four Noble Truths, viz, 1. Sorrow or suffering. 2. Cause of sorrow. 3. Cessation of sorrow. 4. The Noble Eightfold path. This Sect teaches Theravadin Buddhism. It was popular in China during the T'ang Dynasty only. Modern Chinese scholars of this Sect are the late Ven. Fa-fang and Mr. Chang-si-shen.

2. *Satysiddhi Sect*: It based upon the Satyasiddhi Sastra by Harivarman (4th cen. A.D.) translated into Chinese by Kumarajiva (5th cen.). This Sect flourished during the six-Dynasty and T'ang Dynasty (5th & 6th cen.). It teaches one to look upon the cosmos in realms: the worldly realm and the supreme realm. A student is to meditate on the unreality of self and the unreality of things in order to enter Nirvana.

3. *Three Sastra Sect*: It based its tenets on Madhyamika Sastra, Dvadasanikaya Sastra by Nagarjuna and the Sata Sastra by Aryadeva. These three Sastras were translated by Kumarajiva (5th cen.). It teaches one to dispose of the Eight Misleading Ideas (birth, death, end, permanance, identity, difference, coming, and going) and establish correct thinking. One will discover the truth between the relative sense and the absolute sense, for the truth lies between them. Rev. Yin-sun propagates this school. He published A Modern Commentary on Madhyamika.

4. *The Lotus Sect*: It is also called the T'ien-t'ai School. This name is attributed to the T'ien-t'ai Mountain in Che-chiang Province. The Sect was founded by Chih-che during the Sui Dynasty (6th cen.). The chief text is the Lotus Sutra (the Law-flower Sutra). Others are the Commentary on the Prajnaparamita Sutra, the Mahaparinirvana Sutra, etc. This school divides each of the ten realms of existence (hells, ghosts, animals, asuras, men, devas, sravakas, pratyeka-buddhas, bodhisattvas, and buddhas) into ten divisions and each division has ten qualities making a total of one thousand qualities. These qualities are further multiplied by three (past, present, and future) making a total of three thousand qualities. This Sect teaches one to visualise these three thousand qualities in an instant. The hundred division of realms and the thousand qualities form the sphere of visualisation. It teaches one to rest the physical body in three aspects and to gain a clear insight into truth from three views. Chih-che also divided the gospel of Buddha into five periods and the doctrine into eight kinds. The late Ven. T'isien and Shing-ch'e propagate this Sect.

5. *Avatamsaka Sect*: It founded by Tu-shun in the T'ang Dynasty (7th cen.). The foundation work is the Garland Sutra. This Sect was expanded by Chih-yien, Fa-chang, Ch'en-kuan, Chung-mi and other patriarchs. It treats Buddhism in five sections (Theravada, Protomahayana, Mahayana, the intuitive, and the perfect). These five are differentiated into ten Sects of thoughts. It presents ten Metaphysical propositions and six characteristics of things for meditation. To meditate on the fundamental nature of the universe is the door to enlightenment. The theory is profound. It is said that one will not appreciate the richness in Buddhism of not studying the Garland Sutra. The late Ven. Yue-shia founded the Hua-yen College in Shanghai. The Ven. Ying-ch'ih, Ch'in-chow, Chi-shong are the modern expounders of this Sect.

6. *The Intuitive Sect*: It established in China by Bodhidharma in the Liang Dynasty (6th cen.). This Sect does not rely on the use of letters. It points directly to the mind and sees into one's own nature. This special transmission outside the scripture was succeeded by Hui-k'o, Shen-ch'an, Tao-sin, Hong-jen, and Hui-neng the 6th Patriarch. After the 6th Patriarch this school expanded into five and later seven Sects. It has been very popular over a thousand years and causes most temples in China to acquire the name of Ch'an Temples. The Ven. Shu-yun the one hundred twenty years old monk who passed away in 1959 could stay in meditation for ten to twenty days at one stretch. The Ven. Lai-kuo of Kau-wen Temple in Yang-chou, Chiang-su Province has attained identical level of achievement.

7. *The Discipline Sect*: It based on the monastic rules laid down by Buddha. The rules have five divisions. Theravada and Mahayana have separate sets of monastic rules. These rules are the basic commandments of Buddha. Tao-shuan promoted the Four-division Vinaya and founded this Sect in the T'ang Dynasty. He wrote several treatises and volumes of commentaries on Vinaya. The essence of this Sect is to do good and cease to do evil. One must follow strictly the commandments so as to free oneself from the ocean of misery and prepare oneself for Buddhahood. After Master Ling-chi of Sung Dynasty and Master Yuan-chau of Yuan Dynasty this Sect was dormant in China nearly seven hundred years until the revival of this Sect by the late Master Hong-it.

8. *Esoteric Sect*: It based on Vairocana Sutra, the Diamond Apex Sutra and Susiddhi Sutra. This Sect was introduced to China

during the T'ang Dynasty by Subhakarasiṃha, Vajramati and Amogha. The fundamental concepts are the six elements (earth, water, fire, air, space, and cognition) and four magic circles (pagoda, jewel, lous and sword) which symbolise the power of the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas. One is to attain self-realization by the three mystic things of body (its posture and signs), mouth (its voice), and mind (meditation). (The mystic body is associated with earth, water and fire; the words from the mouth with wind space; the mind with cognition). It maintains that there are two aspects of the cosmos: the phenomenal or material and the absolute or spiritual. After the T'ang Dynasty, it was debased in China proper. It passed to Tibet and is known as the Tibetan Esoteric School. It also passed to Japan as the Shingon Sect. The ceremonies and services of this Sect are very complicated. One can hardly learn about it without a teacher. In recent years there were Fa-chun and Ta-yung going to learn about the Tibetan school and Chi-sung, Shien-yin and Wang-hung-yuan going to learn about the Shingon Sect.

9. *Dharmalakṣana Sect*: The foundation works are the Sandhinirmocana Sutra, Abhidharma Sutra, Yogacaryabhūmi Sastra, and the Vijnaptimatrasiddhi Sastra. This Sect aims at studying the nature in relation to the phenomenal expression of the cosmic existence. It was advocated by Maitreya and succeeded by Asang, Vasubandhu, Dharmapāla Silabhadre in India. Shuan-chuang studied about this school from Silabhadre at Nalanda Monastery. On his return to China, he translated many sutras and sastras in the Ch'e-en Temple built by the T'ang Emperor. There were several thousand people including government officials engaged in translating the Buddhist Scriptures into Chinese. He established this school in China. He was succeeded by K'uei-chi, Hui-chau, and Chih-chou. It maintains that the three planes of existence are merely the manifestation of the conscious mind and that all phenomena are the reflection of the sub-conscious mind. This mind-evolution teaching is a profound philosophy and it is radical in the modern Buddhist thoughts among the Chinese. In order to grasp the gist, one has to spend considerable amount of time in solid research. The late Ven. Me-an, Tau-kie, Yuen-ying and Hui-ch'uang, Yan-wen-san of Fu-chien Province especially the Ven. T'ai-she were the modern exponents of this school. There are many notable successors such as the Ven. Ch'ang-sing, Ou-yungu of Nanking and Han-ching-ching of Peking.

10. *The Pure-land Sect:* It based on the Sukhavati Vyuhā Sutra, the Great Sukhavati Vyuhā Sutra, the Small Sukhavati Vyuhā Sutra. This Sect was established by Hui-yuan of Chin Dynasty (4th cen.). He set up the Lotus Society at Chiang-si Province. There were one hundred twenty-three distinguished members including the notable poets T'au-yen-ming and Liu-wei-min. This organization greatly incited the zeal of studying Buddhism among the Chinese. San-tau and Kuang-ming of T'ang Dynasty undertook to popularize this school and were succeeded in spreading it to almost every household. It teaches one to set the mind solely on Amitabha, to recite the holy name and to recite the holy name repeatedly, and one may gain salvation to the Pure-land of Amitabha. The method employed is simple, thus it is suited to everyone who has faith in Amitabha, and who resolves to be reborn in the Pureland. The late Ven. Yin-kuang greatly promoted this Sect. He persuaded people to do good at the same time so as merits may as well be brought to the Pure-land, the ideal final resort.

The above is just a very brief account of the ten Sects. The contents, the rises and the falls of the various schools have not been sketched. Wing to the space available, only an outline of the various Sects can be presented for reference.

The various Sects may be further classified into Mahayana and Theravada; esoteric teachings and open teachings, and the easy way as contrasted to the hard way of salvation. Kosa and Satysiddhi Sects belong to Theravada whereas the other eight belong to Mahayana. The Mantra Sect belongs to the esoteric teachings whereas the other nine are open teachings. The Pure-land School is the easy way of salvation as compared to the other nine Sects which are the hard way. This is just a general view of classification on the Buddhist Sects. May I apologize for having not touched upon the principles underlying these modes of classification.

*With bad advisors forever left behind,  
From paths of evil he departs for eternity,  
Soon to see the Buddha of Limitless Light  
And perfect Samantabhadra's Supreme Vows.*

*The supreme and endless blessings  
of Samantabhadra's deeds,  
I now universally transfer.  
May every living being, drowning and adrift,  
Soon return to the Pure Land of Limitless Light!*

*~ The Vows of Samantabhadra ~*

*I vow that when my life approaches its end,  
All obstructions will be swept away;  
I will see Amitabha Buddha,  
And be born in His Western Pure Land of  
Ultimate Bliss and Peace.*

*When reborn in the Western Pure Land,  
I will perfect and completely fulfill  
Without exception these Great Vows,  
To delight and benefit all beings.*

*~ The Vows of Samantabhadra  
Avatamsaka Sutra ~*

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May those who see or hear of these efforts  
generate Bodhi-mind,  
spend their lives devoted to the Buddha Dharma,  
and finally be reborn together in  
the Land of Ultimate Bliss.  
Homage to Amita Buddha!

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