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BUDDHISM AS KNOWN IN CHINA.

IN the year 1875 there was delivered, at the Library of the India Office in London, a collection of books in seven large boxes, carefully packed in lead, with padding of dry rushes and grass. The books are the Buddhist Tripitaka in Chinese characters, with Japanese notations, issued in Japan, with an Imperial Preface, in the years 1681–1683 A.D. The entire series of 2000 volumes is contained in 103 cases or covers. When placed in the library, they required eleven shelves of ten feet in length. This was the magnificent gift of the Japanese Government to England, made on the suggestion of the ambassador who had recently visited Europe. He had doubtless been struck by the anomaly between the intense desire of the English to convert the heathen, and their profound ignorance of all religions except their own, and especially of the one which most closely resembles it, the state religion of his own country, Buddhism. The Rev. Samuel Beal requested him to solicit the gift. No more appropriate gift could have been sent; and the Secretary of State directed Mr. Beal, Professor of Chinese in the University of London, to prepare a “compendious report of the Buddhist Tripitaka.” The result of his labours is the catalogue *raisonné*.* Professor Beal is well known as one of the first Buddhist scholars in Europe, and he had already reported upon the Chinese books in the Library of the India Office.

The importance of the Chinese copy of the Buddhist canonical scriptures lies in the fact that it was commenced in the first century A.D. The translation was made from the Sanskrit, or from some Indian vernacular, by early Buddhist missionaries from India to China. The Chinese canon derives its authority, as a Rule of Faith, from the successive Emperors who ordered the books to be published and disseminated among the people.

Like Socrates and other great religious teachers, Buddha taught only by word of mouth. Immediately after his death his disciples assembled in conclave to recall and commit to

* “The Buddhist Tripitaka as it is known in China and Japan. A Catalogue and Compendious Report.” Printed for the India Office.

memory the words of the master. These "words" were, like the Vedas, handed down from disciple to disciple, until they were finally committed to writing.* They were divided into three parts, or *baskets*, Tri-piṭaka: (1.) Doctrinal and practical discourses; (2.) Ecclesiastical discipline for the religious orders; (3.) Metaphysics and philosophy. So long as the words of Buddha were handed down by oral tradition, there was danger of heresies and false teaching; therefore, about the year 246 B.C., King Aśoka, who stood to Buddhism in a relation similar to that of the Emperor Constantine to Christianity, summoned a council to fix the canon. This council was to India what the Council of Nice became to Europe. The assembled fathers, who numbered a thousand, received the excellent advice from the king, that they should seek only for the words of the Master himself, for "that which is spoken by the blessed Buddha, and that alone, is well spoken." None of the Piṭakas can be traced back with certainty to an earlier date, although they contain matter which is much older. Many of the monasteries in China contain complete copies of the scriptures in the vernacular, and also of the Sanskrit originals from which the Chinese version was made. Great impetus to the work of translation was given by the influx of Buddhist missionaries on the conversion of the Chinese monarch in the middle of the first century of our era.† Thus, at the very time when Christianity was being carried westward into Europe by St. Paul and his companions, Buddhism was being carried eastward into China by missionaries no less courageous and zealous for the faith which they believed.

We propose to carry out the good intentions of the Japanese ambassador by giving an account of the life and teaching of Buddha as it is accepted by the popular Buddhist mind, apart from the metaphysical speculations of the philosophical schools in the scholastic and mystic periods.

I. *The Personality*.—In the fifth century B.C. there arose in the civilised world the remarkable intellectual movement of which Pythagoras is the representative in Europe, Zoroaster in Persia, Buddha in India, Confucius in China. Buddha is more fortunate than the others in having bequeathed to the world not only words of wisdom, as did they, but also the example of a life in which the loftiest morality was softened and beautified by unbounded charity and devotion to the good of his fellow-men. His walk through life was along "the path whose entrance is purity, whose

* Vassilief thinks that writing was not known in India until long after Buddha's death. "Der Buddhismus."

† Reinsat, "Foe-koue-ki," p. 41; Beal, "Fa-Hian," pp. xx.-xxii.

goal is love." The personality of the Buddha is still a living power in the world, and by its exquisite beauty it attracts the heart and affection of more than one-third of the human race.

Buddha is not, strictly speaking, the name of a man. The word means "The Enlightened," and is the title applied to a succession of men whose wisdom has enlightened mankind. It has, however, become identified with the founder of Buddhism, Gautama. Buddhists think it irreverent to say the word "Gautama," so they speak of him as the Buddha, Śakya-muni, "the sage of the Śakyas," * "the lion of the tribe of Śakya," "the king of righteousness," "the blessed one." Gautama, then, is *the* Buddha, † and his followers have been called Buddhists from the characteristic feature of the founder's office—he who enlightens mankind. Gautama claimed to be nothing more than a link in the chain of Buddhas who had preceded and who should follow him. ‡ This modest claim is characteristic of great reformers: Confucius said, "I only hand on, I cannot create new things; I believe in the ancients." Mohammed claimed to return to the creed of Abraham, "the Friend." Nevertheless, the glory of a religion belongs to the founder, not to his predecessors nor his successors, he it is who makes all things new: and therefore it is to the life and teaching of Gautama that we must look for the mainspring of the religion. Buddha is one of the few founders of religion who did not claim a special revelation or inspiration: "I have heard these truths from no one," he said; "they are all self-revealed, they spring only from within myself." He believed them to be true for all time: "The heavens may fall to earth, the earth become dust, the mountains may be removed, but my word cannot fail or be false."

Buddha commenced his preaching at the city of Benares on the banks of the Ganges, where Brahmanism was the religion of the mass of the people. He was a reformer. His reformation bears to Brahmanism the relation which Protestantism bears to Roman Catholicism, rather than that which Christianity does to Judaism, though it may be doubted whether a schism actually took place during Buddha's lifetime. It was primarily a protest against the sacrificial and sacerdotal system of the Brahmans;

* *Śakya* = the able ones: "These princes are *able* to found a kingdom and to govern it. Hence the name Śakya" ("Rom. Hist." 23). *Muni* comes from "man," to think; hence the thinker, the sage, the monk. Gautama is still the family name of the Rajput chiefs of Nagara, where Buddha was born.

† The word Buddha is the Sanscrit form of the Greek *οἶδα*, and the Latin *video*, signifying *knowledge* or *spiritual insight*. The German *wissen* and the English *wit*, *wot*, come from the same root.

‡ Traditional sayings of former Buddhas are translated in Beal's "Catena," pp. 158, 159.

it rejected all bloody sacrifice, together with the priesthood and social caste so essentially bound up with them. The logical consequence of animal sacrifice he admirably showed in the words: "If a man, in worshipping the gods, sacrifices a sheep, and so does well, why should he not kill his child, his relations, or his dearest friend, in worshipping the gods, and so do better?" But while Buddhism was opposed to sacerdotalism, it was in close alliance with the teaching of the philosophers, for all its main positions may be traced to their origin in the teaching of the philosophical schools of India.* Buddha states and accepts the high aim of these schools: "All the different systems of philosophy are designed to one end—to overthrow the strongholds of sin." He endeavoured to popularise this end of the philosophy of the day, and to bring it within the comprehension of the poorest and most outcast of the people. Indeed, one secret of his success lay in the fact that he preached to the poor as well as to the rich, and that the common people heard him gladly.

II. *The Birth and Early Manhood.*—The birth of Buddha† is veiled in a myth, the outward objective expression of the inner subjective idea, which is the ethical centre of his religion: Unbounded self-sacrifice and tenderest compassion for mankind. The scriptures say that Buddha, having by the Law of Evolution passed through the various stages of existence, at length attained the perfection of being in the highest of the heavens. It was not necessary for him to be again re-born; he was prepared to pass into the rest and repose of Nirvâna. Nevertheless, "he was so moved by the wretched condition of mankind and all sentient creatures, that by the force of his exceeding love"‡ he took upon him the form of man once more, in order that he might "save the world" by teaching them the way to escape from their wretchedness, and attain that perfection to which he had attained, and enjoy the rest and repose of Nirvâna. "I am now," he said, "about to assume a body, to descend and be born among men, to give peace and rest to all flesh, and to remove all sorrows and grief from the world."§ He chose as his earthly mother the wife of the king of Kapilavastu, named Mâyâ, who was henceforth known as the "Holy Mother Mâyâ." He was her first and only son.|| In

* Prof. Monier Williams gives a popular sketch of these philosophical systems in "Indian Wisdom."

† M. Senart has investigated the story as a solar myth in his "Essai sur la légende du Bouddha, son Caractère et ses Origines." Paris, 1876.

‡ "Catena," pp. 15, 130.

§ "Romantic History of Buddha," by S. Beal, p. 33.

|| St. Jerome says: "It is handed down as a tradition among the Gymnosophists of India, that Buddha, the founder of their system, was brought forth by a virgin from her side."—Cont. Jovian, i.

an account of his incarnation contained in a Chinese translation made in the year 194 A.D., this event is literally translated :
 “The Holy Ghost descended into the womb.”* The purity of Maya is described in a very beautiful sūtra :

“As the lotus springs unsullied from the water,
 So was thy body pure and spotless in the womb.
 What joy and delight was it to thy mother,
 Desiring no carnal joys, but rejoicing only in the law,
 Walking in perfect purity, with no stain of sin,” &c., &c. †

The “Incarnation Scene” is frequently met with in the Buddhist sculptures at Sanchi and Amravati, which are about the date of the Christian era. Around this myth there have gathered a string of legends which bear a striking resemblance, and a no less striking difference, both to the Gospel history and the apocryphal Gospels. On the day of the child’s birth the heavens shone with divine light, and the earth shook withal, while angelic hosts sang, “To-day Buddha is born on earth, to give joy and peace, to give light to those in darkness, and sight to the eyes of the blind.” The light shone because Buddha should hereafter enlighten the darkness of men’s minds, the earth shook withal because he should shake the powers of evil which afflict the world. An aged hermit of the Himalayas is divinely guided to the spot where the young child lay in the arms of Mâyâ, his mother, and placing his venerable head under the tiny feet of the infant, ‡ spoke of him as the “Deliverer from sin, and sorrow, and death.” Weeping, he repeated the following canticle :

“Alas, I am old and stricken in years ;
 The time of my departure is at hand ;
 I rejoice and yet I am sad.
 The misery and the wretchedness of man shall disappear,
 And at his bidding peace and joy shall everywhere flourish.”

And he added : “Alas ! while others shall find deliverance for their sins, and arrive at perfect wisdom through the preaching of this child, I shall not be found among them.” The princes of the tribe of Śākya brought rare and costly gifts and presented

* “Catalogue of Buddhist Tripitaka,” in the India Office, 1876, pp. 115, 116.

† “Romantic History of Buddha,” p. 275, a Chinese translation from the Sanskrit, made in the year 69 or 70 A.D. “We may therefore safely suppose,” says Mr. Beal, “that the original work was in circulation in India for some time previous to that date.”—Intr. vi.

‡ In Spier’s “Ancient India” there is a drawing from the Cave of Ajanta, which represents the old man with the infant Buddha in his arms (p. 248).

them to the child ; but the brightness of his person outshone the lustre of the jewels, and a voice from heaven proclaimed :

“ In comparison with the fulness of true religion
The brightness of gems is as nothing.”

The neighbouring king of Maghadha is advised to send an army to destroy the child who is to become a universal monarch ; but he answers, “ Not so, if the child become a holy man and wield a righteous sceptre, then it is fitting for me to reverence and obey him, and we shall enjoy peace and safety under his rule. If he become a Buddha, and his love and compassion leads him to save and deliver all flesh, then we ought to listen to his teaching, and become his disciples.” He astonished his teachers when he entered the schools of letters and of arms : they said, “ Surely this is the instructor of gods and men, who condescends to seek for a master ! ” He simply said, “ It is well ; I am self-taught.” * This is the only record of his youth until his twenty-ninth year, when he was converted.

It is difficult to assign any definite date to those legends. “ All evidence tends to prove that they are earlier than the Christian era.” † There is little doubt, however, that they arose after the death of Buddha ; who would certainly have rejected all such appeals to the miraculous. Buddha never refers to them, and when some enthusiasts sought a sign from him to convince the people, he answered, “ The miracle my disciples should show is to hide their good deeds and confess their faults.” ‡ The chief are sculptured on the rails of the tope at Sanchi, which is a sort of Buddhist picture-Bible carved in stone. §

These legends are of comparatively small value, for they add nothing to the glory of the man's life, which, after his “ conversion,” became a life of the loftiest moral perfection and the noblest self-devotion to the good of others. Born the son of a king, he was brought up in all the luxury of an Oriental court. From this epicurean life he was converted by three sights—an old man tottering under the weight of his years, a young man tossing in the raging heat of fever, and a corpse lying exposed by the roadside. These sights made him reflect that

* Cf. Apoc. Epistle of Thomas vi. Pseudo-Matthew xxx. xxxi. The same legend reappears in the biography of Nanak, founder of the Sikh religion (1469 A.D.), “ The Adi Granth,” p. 602, printed for India Office, 1877.

† Beal's “ Rom. Hist.” ix.

‡ So Mohammed's reply : “ My Lord be praised ! am I more than a man sent as an apostle ? . . . Angels do not commonly walk the earth, or God would have sent an angel to preach His truth to you.”

§ Fergusson's “ Tree and Serpent Worship,” p. 182.

though he were now young and vigorous, yet he, too, was liable to the sorrows of old age, disease, and death.

While he pondered in his heart over these things, he saw a holy mendicant with the placid expression of a disciplined spirit who had renounced all pleasures and had attained to perfect calm. He asked who the holy man might be, and was told: "Great Prince! this man constantly practises virtue and flees vice; he gives himself to charity, and restrains his appetites and desires; he is at peace with all men; and, so far as he can, he does good to all, and is full of sympathy for all."

These sights depressed his spirits, and he sought for means to escape from such sorrows, if, indeed, they were not irrevocably fixed upon all men alike. Herodotus mentions a Thracian tribe who mourned when a child was born and rejoiced when any one died. The same sad aspect of life oppressed the mind of the young prince. His sadness was no selfish desire of escape from his own troubles; it arose from intense sympathy with the sorrows of others. As he walked about the palace, men heard him repeat: "Nothing on earth is stable, nothing is real. Life is passing as a spark of fire or the sound of a lute. There must be a Supreme Intelligence wherein we can rest. If I attained it, I could then bring light to men. If I were free myself, I could deliver the world."

This thought of the salvation of mankind and the deliverance of the world became the dominant aim of his life. On the birth of his first-born son, the people flocked joyfully to the palace gates; but the sight almost moved him to tears: "All these people are without the means of salvation, without any hope of deliverance, constantly tossed on the sea of life and death, old age and disease; with no fear or care about their unhappy condition, with no one to guide or instruct them; ever wandering in the dark, and unable to escape. Thinking thus, his heart was moved with love, and he felt himself strengthened in his resolution to provide some sure ground for the salvation of the world." In the night watches he hears a voice calling him: "A man whose own body is bound with fetters, and who yet desires to release others from their bonds, is like a blind man who undertakes to lead the blind." In the daytime the songs of the singing-girls seemed to say: "Quit the world, prepare thy heart for supreme wisdom; . . . thy time is come, it behoveth thee to leave house and home." He again hears the divine voice—

"Whatever miseries of life or death are in the world,
The Great Physician is able to cure all."

It is in vain that his father tries to dissuade him; he replies, "Your majesty cannot prevail against my resolve; for what is it? Shall a man attempt to prevent another escaping from a burning

house? " At length his resolution is taken: "I will go ; the time is come to seek the highest law of life." *

Very touching is the account of the temptations of the young prince. When his child was born he said, "This is a new tie, yet it must be broken." At midnight he seeks the chamber where lay his wife; he pauses in the doorway—their first-born lay upon her breast. He fears to take the infant in his arms lest he should wake the mother. He tears himself away, vowing that he will return not as husband and father, but as teacher and saviour. He rides forth to the city gate. Here Mâra, the evil one, meets him, and now by threats, now by the offer of the "kingdoms of the world" for his empire, seeks to turn him from his resolution; he answers, "A thousand honours such as those you offer have no charm for me to-day. I seek enlightenment. Therefore begone, hinder me not."

Riding far enough from the city to baffle pursuit, he turns to take one farewell look ; he then dismounts, strips himself of his princely robe, and putting on a mendicant's dress, takes an alms-bowl † to beg his daily bread, and determines henceforth to be known by no other name than the Rēcluse of the Śâkyas, Śâkyamuni.

Many were the temptations which now beset him ; for “ as a shadow follows the body, so did Mâra follow the Blessed One, striving to throw every obstacle in his way towards the Buddhahood.” The nausea of the mendicant’s food, the recollections of the affection, the home, the kingdom he had renounced, tried him sorely. His father sent to entreat him to return to him,

* The "fulness of the time" was marked by the conjunction of a certain star with the moon.

† The legend of Buddha's alms-bowl migrated to Europe as the legend of the Sanc Greal. "Fa-hian," pp. 162-164. "Mémoires sur les Contrées Occidentales," par Hiouen-Thsang, en A.D. 648. Stanislas Julien, i. 81. Fa-hian was told that when men became very bad, the alms-bowl should disappear, and then the law of Buddha would gradually perish. Hiouen-Thsang caught a glimpse of it in a cave: "Suddenly there appeared on the east wall a halo of light, large as an alms-bowl, but it vanished instantly. Again it appeared and vanished." The alms-bowl can only be recovered by a man who is perfectly pure, then the earth shall recover from its loss and degeneracy. "Catalogue," p. 115. These characteristics of the legend are unconsciously preserved by Mr. Tennyson in his "Legend of the Holy Grail":—

“What is it?”

The phantom of a cup that comes and goes.

. If a man
 Could touch or see it, he was healed at once
 By faith of all his ills. But then the times
 Grew to such evil, that the holy cup
 Was caught away to heaven and disappeared

It is the "maiden knight" Sir Galahad who finds the Holy Grail.

to his wife and child; he answered, "I know my father's great love for me, but then I tremble to think of the miseries of old age, disease, and death, which shall soon destroy this body. I desire above all things to find a way of deliverance from these evils; and therefore I have left my home and kinsfolk to seek after the complete possession of supreme wisdom. A wise man regards his friends as fellow-travellers, each one going along the same road, yet soon to be separated as each goes to his own place. If you speak of a fit time and an unfit time to become a recluse, my answer is, that Death knows nothing of one time or another, but is busy gathering his victims at all times. I wish to escape from old age, disease, and death, and have no leisure to consider whether this be the right time or not." The beauty of his person and the wisdom of his mind induced a neighbouring king to offer him a share in his kingdom; "I seek not an earthly kingdom," he replied; "I seek to become enlightened."

To attain this enlightenment, he first studied under the Brahmans, but he soon found that they and the Vedas could not help him. He next joined five hermits in the jungle, and underwent such austerities that, while his body became "worn and haggard," his fame as an ascetic "spread abroad like the sound of a great bell hung in the canopy of the sky." But after six years' trial, he found that the road to enlightenment did not lie through asceticism. Therefore he abandoned it, and annunciated one of the fundamental truths of his system: "Moderation in all things." He had tried the two extremes of luxury and asceticism; true enlightenment was not to be found in either. Then he learned that, "like as the man who would discourse sweet music must tune the strings of his instrument to the medium point of tension, so he who would arrive at the condition of Buddha must exercise himself in the medium course of discipline." *

Once more he went begging through the villages. At length the day of enlightenment came, as he was seated one evening under a tree, which for many centuries afterwards became the most interesting object of the pilgrim's pilgrimage.† The temptation which preceded that supreme moment is most touching. A peasant woman led her little child by the hand to offer food to the holy man. The sight carried back his thoughts to

* So the Hebrew Preacher: "Be not wise overmuch; be not foolish overmuch; be not righteous overmuch; be not wicked overmuch" (Eccles. vii. 16, 17).

† Asoka's daughter brought to Ceylon in 245 B.C. a branch of this tree (*Ficus religiosa*). The branch grew, and is now "the oldest historical tree in the world." Its history is preserved in a series of continuous chronicles, which are brought together by Sir Emerson Tennent, "Ceylon," vol. ii. pp. 613 sq. Fergusson, "Tree and Serpent Worship," p. 56.

the home he had left. The love of wife and child, the wealth and power of place, came upon him with a force overwhelmingly attractive. It was a sore temptation.* But as the sun set, the religious side of his nature won the victory; he came forth purified in the struggle; he abandoned all—wife, child, home, princely power—in order to win deliverance for mankind: “I vow from this moment to deliver the world from the thralldom of death and of the evil one. I will procure the salvation of all men, and lead them across to the other shore.” The supernatural side of this struggle is described with all the wealth of Oriental imagery. Mâra† with his daughters and angels alternately rage against and caress him; all nature is convulsed at the conflict “between the Saviour of the world and the Prince of evil;” the earth shakes as she only does when a man’s virtue reaches perfection or is utterly lost. The Buddhist description bears a striking resemblance to the passage in “Paradise Regained” in which the “patient Son of God” was tempted in the wilderness, and sat “unappalled in calm and sinless peace.” Buddha sat “unmoved from his fixed purpose, firm as Mount Sumeru,” until Mâra, having exhausted all his powers, fell at his feet in terror; and the cry went through the worlds of heaven and hell, “Mâra is overcome, the Prince is conqueror.” Then Buddha’s mind was enlightened, and he saw the way of salvation for all living creatures.

“ From out the darkness and gloomy night of the world,
The gross darkness and ignorance that envelop mankind,
This Holy One, having attained the perfection of wisdom,
Shall cause to appear the brightness and glory of his own light.”

The tree beneath which Buddha attained enlightenment and the Buddhahood has become to his followers a symbol as expressive of their faith as is the cross to the Christian. The victory won beneath that tree has brightened, and to this day brightens, the lives of more men and women than does any other victory in the history of the world; for out of the thousand million inhabitants which it is computed people this earth, 450,000,000 are Buddhists. On that day heaven and earth sang together for joy, flowers fell around the Holy One; “there ceased to be ill-feeling or hatred in the hearts of men; all wants of food and drink and clothing were supplied; the blind saw, the deaf

* The temptation scene is figured on the middlebeam of the northern gateway at Sanchi. Frontispiece to “Tree and Serpent Worship.”

† “Mâra est le démon de l’amour, du péché, et de la mort; c’est le tentateur et l’ennemi du Buddha.”—*Burnouf, Introd.* 76. Mâra, as the night-mare, still torments English people.

heard, the dumb spake; the prisoners in the lower worlds were released; and all living creatures found rest and peace.”*

III. *The Enlightenment*.—What was the enlightenment which made the young prince the Enlightened One, the Buddha, who should enlighten the world? It was *The Way* by which men could escape from the sorrows of old age, disease, and death. The Way was contained in the Four Sublime Truths, or Noble Truths, proclaimed in his first sermon, the Sûtra of “The Foundation of Righteousness.” These truths are—(1) Sorrow exists; (2) Sorrow increases and accumulates through desires and cravings after objects of sense; (3) Sorrow may be destroyed by entering on the “Four Paths;” (4) The Four Paths are perfect faith, perfect thought, perfect speech, perfect deed.† These paths lead to the rest and repose of Nirvâna.

Thus Buddha taught that it is through perfection of life that men attain enlightenment and knowledge. “Not study,” he said, “not asceticism, but the purification of the mind from all unholy desires and passions,”—a position we may place side by side with the words of Christ: “If any man willeth to do God’s will, he shall know the doctrine.” The perfection of goodness, bringing with it the perfection of wisdom, Buddha taught as the end and aim of our existence. When man has attained this perfection, his soul is freed from all slavery to the objects of sense, and as there is therefore no longer any need for him to be reborn, he passes into the rest and repose of Nirvâna, which is the perfection of being.

This religion of perfection Buddha based upon the corner-stones of self-conquest and self-sacrifice. Self-conquest is developed by the observance of the Five Commandments: “Thou shalt do no murder: Thou shalt not commit adultery: Thou shalt not steal: Thou shalt not lie:‡ Thou shalt not become intoxicated.” The man who keeps these commandments orders his conduct aright, and “remains like the broad earth, unvexed; like the pillar of the city gate, unmoved; like the tranquil lake, unruffled.”§ Self-sacrifice is to be shown by an unbounded charity, and a devotion

* “Rom. Hist.” p. 225.

† Nanak, the founder of the Sikh religion (1469–1538 A.D.), taught that Nirvâna was to be reached by the four paths of—(1) Extinction of individuality, (2) Disregard of ceremonies, (3) Conversion of foes into friends, (4) The knowledge of good. “The Adi Granth, or the Holy Scriptures of the Sikhs,” by Trumpp; Trübner, 1877.

‡ The absolute necessity of truthfulness is constantly enforced. Buddha once said to Mâra, “O Mâra! I am born a Kshatriya, and therefore I scorn to lie.” This oath of the Kshatriya is the origin of “the word of honour” in chivalry. “Rom. Hist.” 222 n.

§ “Texts from the Buddhist canon, the Dhammapada.” By S. Beal. Trübner. 1878.

to the good of others which rises to an enthusiasm for humanity.

The motive for this self-conquest and self-sacrifice was, that by their development to perfection of character they would enable men to escape from the sorrows and miseries of life. This motive appealed to the common sense of mankind, for Buddha taught that every thought, word, and deed bear their own consequences. Goodness is rewarded, badness is punished, in the way of natural consequence; and these consequences continue through countless births and re-births on earth, in heaven, in hell. We are now reaping, in this present stage of our existence, the natural harvest of the seeds of good or evil sown by us in previous stages; we shall in the future reap the harvest of the sowing in the present. Whatever a man hath sown he is now reaping; whatever a man is now sowing, that shall he also hereafter reap. *We are* that which we have made ourselves in the past; *we shall be* that which we are now making ourselves. A man is born blind because in a previous stage of existence he indulged in the lust of the eye; a man has quick hearing, because in a previous stage he loved to listen to the reading of the law. Each new birth is conditioned by the *Karma*—the aggregation of the merit and the demerit of previous births—the conduct of life.

A man once asked the Master, "From some cause or other mankind receive existence; but there are some persons who are exalted, others who are mean; some who die young, others who live to a great age; some who suffer from various diseases, some who have no sickness until they die; some who are of the lowest caste, some who are of the highest;—what is the cause of these differences?" To this Buddha replied: "All sentient beings have their own individual Karma. . . Karma comes by inheritance from previous births. Karma is the cause of all good and evil. It is the difference in the Karma which causes the difference in the lot of men, so that some men are low and some exalted, some are miserable and some happy. A good action well done, a bad action wickedly done, when they reach maturity, equally bear inevitable fruit."* The Master himself had obtained the Buddhahood by the same law, "by the meritorious Karma of previous births." Step by step had he won his way; born as a bird, as a stag, as an elephant, through each successive stage of human rank and condition by continued

* Hardy's "Manual of Buddhism," pp. 445, 446. The Jews believed in the pre-existence of souls (St. John ix. 2). Alger's "Critical History of a Future Life," New York, 1867, for the history of the subject. There is an interesting passage on pre-existence in Lessing's "Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts," which is pure Buddhism.

births had he at last reached the highest elevation of purity and self-sacrifice ; and now he has come into the world the Saviour of mankind, to teach them the way by which they might all attain to the same perfection.

Of the first origin of things, of the first birth, Buddha knew nothing. "When he was asked whether the existence of the world is eternal or non-eternal, he made no reply," because he considered such inquiries of no profit. He starts from the material world and the conscious beings in it. Here he finds all things changing by the law of cause and effect ; nothing continues in one stage. Then this reflection came into his mind : Birth exists, and is the cause of decay, disease, and death. Therefore, destroy birth, and the effects of birth are destroyed likewise ; and this world, which is but a mass of sorrows culminating in decay and death, will be annihilated.

As of the beginning of existence, so of the end of existence Buddha knows nothing. He traces the progress of the human being as it develops towards perfection through a series of ever-ascending heavens, until the last and final heaven is attained. Gradually, by a series of steps, has all imperfection been purified, and man has become perfect, so far as the mind of man can conceive of perfection. And when made perfect, there is no further need for it to be re-born, because no more births could make it more humanly perfect than it is. Therefore it passes into the rest and repose of Nirvâna, that transcendental stage of being which overpasses the horizon of man's conception. What the precise nature of that state may be Buddha knows not—it is Nirvâna. It is described as "the eternal place of bliss, where there is no more sorrow, no more disease, nor old age, nor death," as the "home of peace," "the other shore of the ocean of existence," the "shore of salvation," the "harbour of refuge," the "medicine of all evils." The rest and repose of Nirvâna may be obtained on earth by the man who attains the ideal holiness. Indeed, Mr. Rhys Davids proposes to translate Nirvâna by the word "holiness—holiness, that is, in the Buddhist sense, *perfect peace, goodness, and wisdom*."† Some people, not in harmony with the mind of Buddha, have spoken of Nirvâna as though it meant annihilation. But there is no thought of annihilation in the mind of the Founder who said, "I devote myself wholly to moral culture, so as to arrive at the highest condition of moral rest, Nirvâna."‡ There can be no thought of the loss of personal being in the place whose four characteristics are—"Personality, Purity, Happiness, Eternity."§

* "Buddhism," p. 112 ; Childers' Pali Dict., "Nibbanam."

† "Catena," p. 183.

‡ "Letter to Dr. Rost," p. i.

Indeed, the controversy between the Confucians and the Buddhists in China turns upon the belief in a future life as a motive for virtue, as may be seen from the biographical section of the history of the Sung dynasty: "The instructions of Confucius include only a single life; they do not reach to the future state, with its illimitable results. His only motive to virtue is the happiness of posterity. The only consequence of vice he names is present suffering. The reward of the good does not go beyond worldly honours. The aims of Buddha, on the other hand, are illimitable. His religion removes care from the heart, and saves men from all danger. Its one sentiment is mercy seeking to save. It speaks of hell to deter from sin; it points to heaven that men may desire its happiness. It exhibits the Nirvâna as the spirit's final refuge, and tells us of a body (dharmakâya) to be possessed under other conditions, long after the present body has passed away." *

Thus Buddha taught that the aim of life is perfection, and that rest and repose can only be found in the perfection of the moral and spiritual being. How closely this coincides with the teaching of Christ on this point five hundred years later, will appear from the words, "Be ye *perfect*, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect,"—τέλειοι, complete, all-embracing, godlike in your charity and love to others, like the Father, who sendeth His rain, and maketh His sun to shine both on the evil and the good. Again, "He that is *perfect* shall be as his master,"—κατηρτισμένος, fully instructed, well conditioned, knowing his duty and doing it.† So also St. Paul urges men to arrive at the "perfect man" (εἰς ἄνδρα τέλειον), "to the measure of the stature of Christ's fulness."

It is quite true that Buddha did not give as the standard of ideal perfection "our Father in the heavens," that most touching name by which the early Aryan clan spoke of God, and which reappears in the language of their European descendants. Buddha, as a rationalist, knew nothing of a personal God, but only of His manifestation in the law of Karma.

There are some who have described Buddhism as atheistic, but the mind which refuses to predicate attributes of God which it cannot prove is different from the mind which boldly asserts "There is no God." It may be difficult to prove the

* "Travels of Fa-hian," introd. p. xxvi. "If we look in the Dhammapada," says Prof. Max Müller, "at every passage where Nirvâna is mentioned, there is not one that would require that its meaning should be annihilation; while most, if not all, would become perfectly unintelligible if we assigned to the word Nirvâna that meaning."—*Buddhaghosha*, p. 41.

† The Buddhistic spirit of this passage was pointed out to me by the veteran scholar, Mr. Bryant Hodgson.

existence of a personal God ; it is not less difficult to prove His non-existence. Buddha neither asserted nor denied. Buddha is accused of atheism because he rejected Indra, Brahma, and the whole material pantheon ; but the accusation comes with a bad grace from those who must know that the early Christians were called *ἄθεοι*, because they refused to believe in Jupiter and the other divinities of Greece and Rome. Buddha had a very high conception of deity ; but so far did he push the refinement of deity or the divine existence, that he not only eliminated from it all human conditions and relationships, but he thought that it must embrace all existence. In other words, nothing really exists but *it*, and phenomenal existence is really phenomenal. Therefore, the leading idea of his religion, when regarded as a rule of faith for shaping our lives and raising them to the ideal of the divine, is that we must not only get rid of all the imperfections included in the idea of ill-conduct, but also the limitations included in the idea of individual existence. This is not pantheism, but, if anything, transcendentalism—a conception of deity which transcends human thought.

The idea of a perfect life on earth Buddha taught not merely by word of mouth, but also by the moral purity and the lofty purpose of his character, and by his devotion to the good of his fellow-men. Every Buddhist believes that it was Buddha's "exceeding great love" which moved him with compassion for suffering humanity, and brought him back from heaven to earth to teach mankind the way of salvation. His enemies blamed his disciples for applauding his saying, "Let all the sins that have been committed fall upon me, in order that the world may be delivered."* This spirit of self-sacrifice we constantly find in his disciples. For instance, King Rantiveda, who endured hunger and thirst that he might relieve others, says, "I desire not from the Lord that highest destiny which is accomplished in the eight perfections, neither do I ask to be exempted from future births. I seek to live within all corporeal beings, and endure their pains, so that they may be freed from suffering."† The traditions show this self-sacrifice pushed to the point of extravagance, in stories of Buddha having, in previous stages of existence, given his body to a famished tigress to enable her to succour her young. "As a mother," he said, "even at the risk of her own life, protects her son, her only son, so let there be good-will without measure among all beings. Let unmeasured good-will—unhindered love and friendliness—prevail in the whole world, above, below, around. If a man remain in this state of mind at

* Max Müller, "Ancient Sanskrit Literature," p. 80. A similar noble sentiment was expressed by Moses (Ex. xxxii. 32), and by St. Paul (Rom. ix. 3).

† "Bhâgavata Purâna," ix. 21.

all times, then is brought to pass the saying that is written, 'Even in this world has holiness been found.'" One of the highest acts of charity is to pray to a Buddha "from a desire to save all living creatures." "Our object should be by personal profit to profit others." "It is because men seek their own profit that sorrows come upon them." "Love is the greatest of all things, and frees the man whose heart is full of it from all bonds of ignorance and sin."* "When a man abstains from evil, and experiences in his heart a feeling of universal charity and love, and desires to arrive at perfection in order that he may benefit others, and from no selfish desire, then, like dry wood, the fire may be easily kindled." Indeed, Buddha is described as "that great man who, unaided, works out salvation for the world."†

IV. *The Teacher*.—Buddha, having attained this enlightenment, shrank at first from the task of proclaiming it to the world. Men, weighed down by sorrow, oppressed by false teaching, would not be able to understand this law of enlightenment; had he not better remain a solitary hermit? As he thought thus, the divine voice of his better nature spoke, "Oh, do not act thus; be not silent, but, for the sake of man sunk in sin, declare thy law! Let thy love constrain thee to do so, let thy compassionate heart move thee to declare thy law; for though the world be wicked, yet are there many prepared to receive this message of love and to be converted, many who would otherwise perish. Let the World-honoured One, therefore, resolve to preach the law for the good of others." Then by the power of his wisdom he beheld the various conditions of men, in ignorance and in knowledge, like the lotus flowers in a tank, some emerging from the mud but not yet above the water, others above the water but not yet expanded, others just opening, waiting for his word to complete their development. Then his resolution was formed, and he said, "I am willing now to open the gate of immortality. If any will listen, let them come gladly; let them hearken as I declare the tidings of this law."

The first persons to whom he preached the kingdom of righteousness, or "turned the wheel of the law," were the five hermits who had been with him in the time of his penance, and who now dwelt in the Deer Park near Benares. Afterwards he went to preach in the city. An acquaintance met him on the road, and inquired whither he was going. "I am going to Benares," he answered, "to establish a kingdom of righteousness,‡ by giving

* Cf. the Hebrew proverb, "Love covereth all sin" (x. 12), quoted in 1 Peter iv. 8.

† Burnouf, "Lotus de la Bonne Loi," p. 332.

‡ This is the translation proposed by Mr. Rhys Davids for the usual Buddhist phrase, "to turn the wheel of the law."—*Encyclopædia Britannica*.



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comes a Brahman." "Not by plaited hair or family shall one become a Brahman ; for what avail thy plaited hair and garment of skins when within thee there is impurity, and the outside only thou makest clean. He who walks truthfully and righteously, he is the true Brahman." *

No one was too unlearned. When Patisena, who could only learn one gâtha, attained supreme wisdom, men exclaimed, "How hath this man this wisdom?" Buddha replied, "Learning need not be much ; conduct is the chief thing. Patisena has allowed the words of the gâtha to penetrate his spirit. . . . To explain one sentence of the law, and to walk according to it, this is the way to find supreme wisdom." †

No one was too poor to win Buddha's praise. He tells the story of a poor old woman who wished to offer him a gift. She had only two small coins (mites), so she spent them in buying a little oil, which she took to a sacred place, and burned it in a lamp to his honour. The lights of all the rich folk were extinguished, but hers burned on continually.‡ Poor people were able with a few flowers to fill his alms-bowl, although there were rich men who could not fill it with many baskets of flowers.§

During a famine a certain Pratyeka Buddha got up early one morning, and putting on his robe, took his alms-dish in his hand, and entered the city of Benares, where he begged from door to door. He obtained nothing, so he went home again, washed his alms-bowl, and sat down. Now there was in Benares a certain poor man who had watched the holy man, and seen that he received nothing ; so he went to him, and invited him to his house to share all that he had, which was just one measure of coarse cockle-seed. A servant girl, whose mistress had refused to relieve a dirty old man, ugly and graceless, begged her daily portion of meal, and gave it in charity to the man ; "for," said she, "in holy men one does not look for comeliness of person, but for purity of heart."

But not only did Buddha preach to the poor and the low-caste, he preached to the rich and the high-caste also, and gathered disciples from all ranks of society. For all he laid down as the characteristic of the "true disciple, the disciple indeed"—"He ministers to the worthy, does harm to none, gives honour to whom honour is due, loves righteousness and righteous conversation, rejoices in meditating on the law, reflects in his life the divine wisdom, practises self-discipline in order to lead a pure and chaste life, always does good to those around him." For one

* Dhap. "Young philosophers assume a cloak and grow a beard, and say, 'I am a philosopher.'"—*Epictetus*, iv. 8. Cf. 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4.

† Dhap. xvi.

‡ Beal's Letter to Rost, p. 7.

§ "Travels of Fa-Hian," p. 38.

class, indeed, he made special provision—the hermits. Brahmanism had developed by its teaching men who retired from the world under vows of chastity and poverty. Buddha had himself tried their system, and it had failed to give rest and repose to his spiritual being. He now offered to those ascetics the way by which they might escape from the sorrows of life and find spiritual rest. The way of salvation was the same for all men, but for those who desired to live a higher life he provided special “counsels of perfection.” Hence there sprang the elaborate conventual system which so keenly exercised the speculation of the early Jesuit missionaries, and which is so powerful to this day in Buddhist countries. The monastic order was bound by vows of celibacy and poverty; but those vows did not bring in themselves merit, they were only to be regarded as a help to the men and women who bound themselves by them. All men and women were admitted without distinction of caste, and no one who was under age was received without the consent of their parents. They were not priests, for they neither offered sacrifice nor prayers. Originally they lived under trees, but they soon assembled in religious houses—the men in monasteries, the women in convents. Their time was spent in meditation, which is the effort of the “true self” to obtain freedom from the trammels of sense. “Cleansed from all personal defilement, the candidate,” says Buddha, “comes out of the world, and is truly a homeless one—a disciple indeed.” Henceforth he must give himself up to work and chastity, for “the man who has left home to become a Shaman, and yet gives way to idleness and sloth, or whose mind hankers after impure indulgence, is like the rotten tree against which the wind blows, which can hardly resist its force, but is soon blown down.”* To this day the admission of a neophyte is one of the most imposing of Buddhist rites.†

The number of inmates in some of the monasteries at the present day is enormous. Huc and Gabet found 4000 at Kounboun. When Father Bury saw the Chinese bonze tonsured, using the rosary, praying in an unknown tongue, and kneeling before images, he said, “There is not a piece of dress, not a sacerdotal function, not a ceremony of the court of Rome, which the devil has not copied in this country;” and the young De Beauvoir says, “What struck me was the outward resemblance of the religious ceremonies of the temples to those of our own religion. A bonze, surrounded with clouds of incense, and dressed in a

* Dhap. xxxiv.

† The rules of the order are translated in Beal’s “Catena,” p. 240. The initiation is described by Rhys Davids in “Buddhism,” p. 161. The 250 Monastic rules were translated into Chinese from the Sanskrit about 70 A.D., and are therefore anterior to Christian Monasticism (“Catena,” p. 189).

chasuble of red silk, officiated with great pomp.”* The rock-cut Buddhist temples of India, which date 200 years before our era, have a nave, side aisles, and an apse round which the aisle is carried, resembling in form the early Christian churches. The rock-cut monasteries are also earlier in date than the Christian; there are between 700 and 800 in India, dating from 200 B.C. to 500 A.D.

The wife of Buddha and their son were among the first admitted into the conventual orders; others quickly followed. We read of a young man whom Buddha called: “Follow me, Yasa.” The youth passed on; but by night he returned secretly, and was so won over by the loving character of the Master, that he became his disciple. He ordained fifty-four of Yasa’s friends with the formula, “Follow me.” One day a rich young man came to Buddha clothed in costly garments and riding in a sumptuous chariot; he wished to become a disciple. Buddha, looking on him, bid him return home and selling all that he had, bestow his wealth in charity, so as to fit himself to become a disciple.† Some joyous youths, seeking in a wood for a dancing-girl, who had left them after a night’s debauch, lighted on Buddha seated under a tree, and asked him if had seen the girl, he answered, “Listen to me, O youths! I will ask you a question. Whether is it better, think you, to find yourselves, or to find the woman whom ye seek?” They replied, “It would certainly be better to find ourselves.” Then Buddha invited them to sit down, and he taught them the way of salvation, and they became his disciples. He placed the highest ideal of purity before his disciples:—“Say to yourself, ‘I am placed in this sinful world; let me be as the spotless lily, unsoiled by the mud in which it grows.’ The heart is the busy contriver of lust; compose the heart, and those evil thoughts will all be still.”

To all men Buddha taught the laws which ought to govern the life of man. We will mention a few of these.

One day Buddha found his disciples in fierce anger because the Master had been reviled by a priest. Gently does he rebuke them: “Beloved! if others speak against me, or against the truth, be not displeased with them, or you will not be able to judge whether they speak truly or not.”

There was no limit to the forgiveness of injuries. Among the parting words he spoke on the evening of his death are these: “If a man should do you such injury as to chop your body in pieces limb for limb, yet you ought to keep your heart in perfect control; no anger or resentment should affect you, nor a word of reproach escape your lips; for if you once give way to a bitter

* “Voyage,” Japan, p. 151.

† “Rom. Hist.” 378.

thought, you have erred from the right way." "To a man who foolishly does me wrong, I will return my ungrudging love; the more evil comes from him to me, the more good shall return from me to him." He explains to a young nobleman named Chamah the four aspects under which patience exhibits itself in a son of Buddha: "When reviled, he revileth not again; when smitten, he bears the blow without resentment; when treated with anger and passion, he returns love and good-will; when threatened with death, he bears no malice." * "Liberality, courtesy, kindness, and unselfishness are to society what the linch-pin is to the chariot."

He was singularly sympathetic, and could be touched by every tale of sorrow. The only child of a young mother died, and she carried the little cold body in her bosom, and going from house to house, entreated all she met to give her medicine to cure the child. Among others she met Buddha. "Lord and master," she said, "give me some medicine for my child." He bid her bring a handful of mustard from a house in which no child, parent, wife, husband, or slave, had died. She went to search; but she found that in every home death had entered, all said to her gently, "Lady, the living are few, the dead are many." Then at last, when she found no house free from death, the truth broke gently upon her. She laid down her baby-boy and returned to Buddha, who, when he saw her, said, "You thought that you alone had lost a son; the law of death is among all living creatures; there is nothing that abides." She became his disciple.

He set no limit to the power of faith. One day as Buddha was preaching by the side of a deep and rapid river, a man appeared on the other bank and walked across upon the surface of the water. The villagers, astonished, asked him by what power he did so marvellous a feat, he answered, "I asked the people on the other side if I might cross without a boat, they said, 'Yes, you can cross without fear;' then I walked over because I believed. Simple faith and nothing more enabled me to do so." Buddha said, "It is well spoken! well spoken! Faith like yours alone can save the world; such faith alone can enable men to walk across dryshod to the other shore." "Faith with obedience is the path of wisdom." †

"As flowers, when waved to and fro by the wind, scatter their scent far and wide, so wide is the renown of the accumulated merits of him who once is born and lives as he ought."

* "Letter to Dr. Rost," p. 5.

† Dhap. iv. The Dhammapada dates about 100 B.C.; it was translated into Chinese about 149 A.D., by An-shi-ko, a Prince-Royal of the Parthians (An-si), who left his kingdom, became a Buddhist monk, and went as a missionary to China.

Buddha once sent Ananda to ask an old man of eighty years, why he had pulled down his old house and built a larger one, when death was so near. The man gave his reason, and stated the purposes of his numerous chambers. Buddha said, “‘I have children and wealth,’ such is the constant thought of the fool. He is not even master of himself; what then are his children and his money? The fool who says he is wise is foolish indeed.” On the old man returning to his dwelling he suddenly fell dead from a blow.*

He was very tender and loving towards children. A child one day came beside him as he sat at a feast, and covered himself over with his robe. The disciples wished to drive him away, but “the World-honoured One forbade them, and said, Let him stay, and let him hide himself in my robes.’”

V. *The Missionaries*.—The salvation of all men was a new thought in the world. It necessitated another thought equally new, viz., the duty of preaching the way of salvation to the world. The spirit of the true missionary inspired the soul of Buddha. As soon as he had sixty disciples, he said to them, “There is laid on us, who know the truth and who have been thereby made free, the duty of giving mankind the priceless blessing of salvation: go ye and visit the towns and villages throughout the land, preach the excellent law, and teach men to believe in the triple gem, Buddha, the law, and the church. Go ye, prepare the way for my coming; I will retire for a time into solitude.” “Two by two” he sent them forth, and bid them take “only one robe, and one alms-bowl,” for they were vowed to poverty. Poverty was their bride, Charity their sister. As an earlier Buddha, Wassabhu Tathagata, had said, “As the butterfly alights on the flower and destroys not its form or its sweetness, but sipping forthwith departs, so the mendicant follower of Buddha takes not nor hurts another’s possessions.”† When he was left alone Buddha reflected, “These disciples of mine are gone to convert the world. Delivered from sin and at peace, they can now deliver others.” “I will not die until this holy religion becomes known to many people, and is grown great, and is universally published among men.” He then went into the solitudes of Uravilva, and prepared himself by fasting and meditation for the conversion of the fire-worshipper Kasyapa and his brothers. This missionary plan he carried out every year. In the rainy season he gathered round him his disciples for instruction, and in the dry season he sent them forth to preach the way of salvation and to make disciples.

The history of these missionaries is full of interest. The spirit that animated them may be gathered from the story of one who

* Dhap. xiii.

† “Catena,” p. 159.

asked leave to preach to his relations. “‘The people of that place,’ said Buddha, ‘are exceedingly violent. If they revile you, what will you do?’—‘I will not revile again.’—‘If they strike you?’—‘I will not strike in return.’—‘If they try to kill you?’—‘Death is no evil in itself; I shall try neither to hasten nor to delay my departure.’” When threatened by an infuriated mob, one of the missionaries of later times confronted them with the words, “If the whole world were to come to terrify me, they could not cause me to be afraid.” Then when he had persuaded the people to listen, he dismissed them with the simple words, “Do not hereafter give way to anger; do not destroy the crops, for all men love happiness. Show mercy to all living beings, and let men dwell in peace.” * Missionary zeal carried on the work after Buddha’s death, whose disciples went forth into all lands; and it received a great impulse after the Council of Asoka. The names of the missionaries mentioned by the chronicler are inscribed on the relics found at some of the stations.† The old chronicler closes his first chapter on missions with the words, “Who would demur when the salvation of the world is at stake!”

The success of Buddhist missionaries is shown by the fact that after more than two thousand years “Buddhism rules supreme in Central, Northern, Eastern, and Southern Asia, and it gradually absorbs whatever there is left of aboriginal heathenism in that vast and populous area.” ‡

VI. *Buddha’s Death*.—When Buddha was eighty years of age he felt death coming on. He lay down under some sal trees, and calling his favourite disciples round him, he conversed with them long and earnestly. “It was now the middle of the night,” says the Sûtra; “all was perfectly quiet and still.” For the sake of his disciples he gave a brief summary of the law. We will quote a few passages: “Beloved, after my death keep my word with reverence, as the poor man the pearl of great price which he has found. . . . Keep the body temperate in all things. . . . By self-control and upright thought aim at emancipation. Conceal none of your faults, but confess them before the congregation. . . . Be content with such things as are allotted you. Keep your senses within bound, just as a shepherd with his crook prevents the sheep from straying into the neighbouring pastures. . . . The heart is lord of the senses, govern therefore your heart well, for it is like a venomous snake, a wild beast, a cruel robber, a great

* Max Müller, “Chips,” vol. iv. p. 257.

† Köppen, “Die Religion des Buddha,” p. 188.

‡ “Chips,” vol. iv. p. 265.

fire. . . . Restrain therefore and keep in subjection your heart ; let it not get the mastery. Above all things, let modesty govern every thought and every word of your daily life. It is characteristic of truly great men to keep the rules of moral restraint without wavering, and to exercise patience without tiring. Strive after wisdom, for it is a lamp shining in darkness, a medicine for all diseases, a hatchet to cut down the tree of sorrow, a strong and trustworthy boat to cross the sea of old age, disease, and death. Continual perseverance is like a little fire that keeps on burning, but he who tires in the practice of religion is like a fire that goes out. Never forget self-examination and meditation ; for if you neglect them, all perseverance is at an end. In the practice of these you put on a helmet of defence, so that no sword can hurt you, and no enemy get the advantage over you. Think only of the words I have given you ; meditate on them on the mountain-pass and in the depths of the valley, in the congregation and in the solitary cell. I, as the good physician, knowing the disease which affects you, give this as a medicine fit for the case ; without this you die. Like the guide that knows the way, I direct you whither to go and what path to follow ; without this you perish."

As Socrates in the "*Phædo*"* asks his friends if they have any doubts respecting the future life, so Buddha asks his disciples if they have doubts concerning the Four Noble Truths which are the foundation of his teaching. They answer, that their only thought is "one of grief that the World-honoured One is about to depart and enter Nirvâna, just when we have entered on the practice of the law,—as in the night a flash of lightning lights up the way for the weary traveller and is gone, and he left to wander in the dark." He said, "Lament not my departure. If I continued in the world it would do no good ; those who were to be saved are saved ; those who are not saved shall be saved by the seeds of truth I have sown. The word I have preached is everlasting and imperishable. The world is fast bound in fetters and oppressed with affliction ; I now give it deliverance, a physician who brings heavenly wisdom." His favourite disciple, Ananda, here turned aside to weep.† "I am not yet perfect, and my master is passing away." Buddha called him : "O Ananda ! do not weep, let not your heart be troubled. Sooner or later we must part from all we hold most dear."

Then to all his disciples : "When I have passed away, and am no longer with you in bodily presence, do not think that the Buddha has left you, and is not still in your midst. You have my words, my explanations of the deep things

* "*Phædo*," 84.

† *Cf.* "*Phædo*," 59, 117.



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Buddhas who have preceded him, and who will follow. His teaching was higher and nobler than the teaching of those who came before him; the teaching of the Buddhas who will in the course of the ages follow will be greater and more divine than was his. Therefore he bade men look forward to and hail their advent.* The next Buddha will be Maitreya, the Buddha of charity.†

It is difficult to fix the exact date of Buddha's death; it may have been as early as 477,‡ or as late as 412 B.C.§ Upon his death, Kasyapa claimed to be leader of the assembly, because Buddha had said to him, "Thou shalt wear my hempen robes." Therefore Kasyapa, fearing lest the words of Buddha should be forgotten, summoned an assembly of five hundred disciples; and the young Ananda, Buddha's beloved disciple, recited aloud the Sûtras. Missionaries carried the words abroad to all lands; the religion spread over India, and King Aśoka made it the state religion of his dominions about the year 250 B.C. He promulgated decrees which remain to this day inscribed on stone pillars and cut in the living rock, enjoining morality and toleration, justice and charity, on his subjects; commanding the foundation of hospitals; || appointing a minister of religion, who should preserve the purity of the faith and protect the aborigines and subject nations, and a minister of education, who should promote the instruction of the women in the harems and elsewhere in the principles of the religion of Buddha. The son and daughter of Aśoka introduced it into Ceylon, where it still retains its purity. Missionaries carried it into Kashmir in the first century A.D., and into Burmah in the fifth century, and thence into Siam in the seventh century. In the golden age of India, the state religion was Buddhist. We catch glimpses of its influence in the travels of the Chinese pilgrims Fa-hian in 400 A.D., of Sung-Yun in 518, and of Hiouen-Tsang in 629-648 A.D.¶ For a thousand years it maintained its supremacy. In the eighth or ninth century A.D., there seems to have been a reaction against it in favour of Brahmanism, and a persecution to have taken place, which was so thorough that there is now scarcely a Buddhist in India. In this it resembles the history of Christianity; the Aryan race from whose bosom it sprang cast it forth, and it became the religion of a race entirely different, the Turanian.

VII. Christians of all shades of opinion have spoken with

* Cf. "Phædo," 78; "Alcibiades," II. 13.

† Maitreya, possessed of love, (root *Maitra*, love or charity.) Fa-hian, p. 20 n.

‡ Max Müller, "Chips," i. 311.

§ Rhys David's "Ancient Coins and Measures of Ceylon."

|| *Westminster Review*, New Series, civ., p. 435.

¶ "Mémoires sur les Contrées Occidentales," par Hiouen-Tsang, en A.D. 648, St. Julien. Paris, 1857.

reverence of Buddha. The Venetian Marco Polo said, "Indeed had he been a Christian, he would have been a great saint of our Lord Jesus Christ, so good and pure was the life he led;" and he tells us how pilgrims came to Adam's Peak in Ceylon "from very long distances with great devotion, just as Christians go to the shrine of Messer Saint James in Gallicia."* M. St. Hilaire says, "Je n'hésite pas à ajouter que, sauf le Christ tout seul, il n'est point, parmi les fondateurs de religion, de figure plus pure ni plus touchante que celle de Bouddha. Sa vie n'a point de tache. Son constant héroïsme égale sa conviction; et si la théorie qu'il préconise est fausse, les exemples personnels qu'il donne sont irréprochable. Il est le modèle achevé de toutes les vertus qu'il prêcha."† Mr. Baring-Gould bears witness that "the ethic code of Buddha can hardly be ranked lower than that of Christianity; and it is immeasurably superior to every heathen system that the world has ever seen."‡

But, most remarkable of all, is the fact that Buddha is a canonised saint of the Christian Church. St. John of Damascus in the eighth century wrote a religious romance, of which the narrative is taken from the "*Lalita Vistara*," the story of Buddha's life. It became very popular in the Middle Ages, and the hero was canonised. He has his festal days in the Roman communion on 27th November, in the Eastern on 26th August, under the name of Josaphat, a corruption of Bodhisattva.§

In all times and in all places men have lived pure and holy lives, and have shown themselves Christians even "before Christ came in the flesh."|| Buddha, whose teaching approaches nearer than does that of any other founder of a religion to the teaching of Christ, has won, by the attractive beauty of his character, the unconscious homage of Christendom. He has been placed in the golden roll of Christian saints, side by side with St. Francis d'Assisi and other founders of religious orders, with St. Francis Xavier and other missionary heroes, and with St. Francis de Sales and other saintly men. Worthily does he stand among "the sons of God who were righteous in their lives."¶

"THEY WERE LOVELY AND PLEASANT IN THEIR LIVES,
AND IN THEIR DEATH THEY WERE NOT DIVIDED."

* Yule's ed., ii. 258. "He only is a pilgrim who goeth towards or forwards the house of St. James, . . . who journey unto the holy house of Gallicia."—*Dante, Vita Nuova*.

† "Le Bouddha et sa Religion," introd. v.

‡ "Development of Christianity," i. 357.

§ Max Müller, "Chips," iv. 174-189; Beal's "Fa-hian," p. 86, u.

|| Cf. St. Aug., "Retract.," i. 13.

¶ Plato, "Apology," 41.





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1

PRE-CHRISTIAN DISPENSARIES AND HOSPITALS.

Reprinted from the Westminster Review, October 1877.

THE great religions of the world have endeavoured to inculcate the love of Divine Goodness. Their ideal of Divine Goodness may have been different, but the love, and the striving after the ideal has always been the same.

This love of Divine Goodness has been expressed both in the theoretical teaching of priests and prophets and philosophers and in the practical working of their everyday life. The various points at which the scientific theology and the practical morality of the great world-religions touch and blend with each other, is one of the most interesting problems in the science of comparative religion.

The private characters of men like Rameses the Great in Egypt, David in Israel, Socrates in Greece, Buddha in India, Confucius in China, Epictetus the slave and M. Aurelius the Emperor in Rome; the national ideals of Egyptain morality, Hebrew righteousness, Greek culture, Buddhist self-sacrificing charity, and Roman love of law; are alike the result of the religious conscience of mankind in different ages and in divers civilisations. From this public and this private excellence of character there naturally flowed some practical results of national beneficence, such as orphanages, officers of health appointed by the state for the relief of the sick poor, dispensaries and hospitals. We might expect to find them, and we do find them.

The doctrines, the ideal and the actual lives, the national characteristics developed by the dominant religions, have been made a subject of inquiry in Europe and America; but, so far as I know, no one has suggested the importance of investigating public charitable institutions as a common heritage bequeathed to mankind by each religion in its manhood and its strength.

I have chosen as the subject of this paper Medical Officers, Dispensaries, and Hospitals. In the course of my research I came across some information relating to the early history of medicine, which I have inserted with the hope it may make the paper more interesting.

The great religions have so invariably inculcated Divine Goodness as an aim of life, that I have only briefly referred to it now and again, leaving its practical realisation to speak for itself, in the fact that medical officers, dispensaries, and hospitals are found wherever there has been high civilisation and cultured religion.

The hospital is simply the development of the dispensary, which is a necessary requirement of the medical officer appointed and paid by the state for the relief of the sick poor. Some room is required by the medical officer in which to see his patients and dispense the drugs, and this room naturally developed into the hospital ward, where the patients could be continuously under his eye, and be more carefully attended than in their own homes. It is therefore in the medical officer appointed and paid by the state that we are to find the earliest germ and first idea of the vast network of hospitals which has spread over the civilised countries of the world.

These medical officers were an institution in Egypt from a remote antiquity, for in the eleventh century B.C. there was a College of Physicians in the receipt of public pay, and regulated by law as to the nature and extent of their practice. At Athens, in the fifth century B.C., there were physicians elected and paid by the citizens; there were also dispensaries in which they received their patients, and we find mention made of one hospital. In the fourth century B.C. an edict was promulgated in India by King Asoka commanding the establishment of hospitals throughout his dominions; and we have direct proof that these hospitals were flourishing in the fifth and in the seventh centuries A.D. There was probably a leper-house outside the walls of Jerusalem; and medical officers were attached in early times to the Temple, and in later times to the synagogues. Among the Romans under the Empire, physicians were elected in every city in proportion to the number of inhabitants, and they received a salary from the public treasury. And the ancient Mexicans had hospitals in the principal cities "for the cure of the sick, and the permanent refuge of disabled soldiers." Army-surgeons are of very remote antiquity, for we

read of them in Homer ; and they won the admiration of Plato, because “they were heroes as well as physicians ;” but there is no notice of the military hospital before the reign of Hadrian. Hospitals exclusively for the treatment of the insane are of comparatively modern growth, and are first found among the Moham-medans ; they afterwards spread among Christian countries, *the earliest being found in Spain, the country most influenced by Mohammedan thought.**

It was around the temples that the early medical schools centred, for it was natural to regard the “divine art of healing” as a gift of the gods.† It is Brahma who writes the Ayur-Veda, the Science of Life ; it is Æsculapius who appears in human form at Epidaurus and extends his saving right hand over all the earth to heal the souls that are in error and the bodies that are diseased ;‡ and Prometheus in the midst of his sufferings declares that he has gifted mankind with the true science of medicine.§ The priests were the first physicians ; and on the walls of the temples of Egypt and of Greece were suspended the observations and the votive tablets of the cures they effected. These tablets are very curious, because they are a strange medley of rational medical treatment with the superstition of charms and incantations ; and they are most important, because they not unfrequently enable us to trace the rise of scepticism in the charm and incantation, and the struggle between the waning power of the priest and the increasing skill of the physician.

The Babylonians and Assyrians alone, among the great nations of antiquity, had no physicians. The sick man was laid on a couch in the public square, and the passers-by were required to ask him the nature of his disease, so that if they or any of their acquaintance had been similarly afflicted, they might advise him as to the remedies he should adopt.|| This custom commended itself to Herodotus, who thought it almost as wise as their other custom of selling the girls of the village in marriage, so that the “fairer maidens portioned off the plainer.” As a consequence, incantations to drive out the evil spirit of disease were in much request, and the nature of their operation may be gathered from the following tablet:—

“God shall stand by his bedside ; those seven evil spirits He

* Desmaisons, *Des Asiles d'Aliénés en Espagne*, Paris, 1859. W. E. H. Lecky, *Hist. of European Morals*, ii. 85 sq.

† Cicero, *Tusc. Dis.*, iii. 1. Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xxix. 1.

‡ Emp. Julian contr. Christ.

§ Æsch., *Prometheus*, 476 sq.

|| Herod. i. 197, iii. 129. Strabo, xvi. c. 1.

shall root out and expel from his body ; those seven shall never return to the sick man." *

(1.) Egypt claimed the invention of medicine.† This claim is partially recognised in Homer, when Polydamna gives medicinal herbs to Helen in Egypt, "a country producing an infinite number of drugs, and where the physician possesses knowledge above all other men ;" ‡ and is fully endorsed by M. Chabas after a careful comparison of the medical papyrus at Berlin with the best medical works of Greece and Rome.§

The extreme antiquity of medical science in Egypt may be inferred from the fact that the medical papyrus at Berlin, fourteenth century B.C., contains the copy of a treatise on inflammation (*ouchet*) which was found "written in *ancient* writing, rolled up in a coffer under the feet of an Anubis in the town of Sokhem (Letopolis), in the time of his sacred Majesty Thot the Righteous. After his death it was handed on to King Snat on account of its importance. It was then restored to its place under the feet of the statue, and sealed up by the sacred scribe and wise chief of the physicians." ||

Medical science attained so high a degree of perfection in Egypt, that there were specialists in the different branches of the art, and the physician was only allowed to practise in his own branch. There were oculists and dentists, those who treated mental disorders, and those who investigated obscure diseases—*οἱ δὲ τῶν ἀφανέων νούσων*.¶ There are medical papyri which treat of these several diseases. In the Hermaic books a whole chapter is devoted to diseases of the eye, and mummies have been found in Thebes with their teeth stopped in gold.** Athothos, son and successor to Menes, the first King of Egypt, wrote a book on anatomy.†† The medical papyrus at Berlin contains a treatise on midwifery, and not less than 170 prescriptions for the cure of diseases, of which the diagnosis is carefully recorded.‡‡ In these treatises diseases are regarded as enemies, not simply to be cured, but to be attacked, destroyed, driven forth ;§§ a vestige, apparently,

* H.F. Talbot, 'Assyrian Talismans and Exorcisms. Cf. St. Matthew, xii. 45.

† Pliny, Nat. Hist., vii. 56.

‡ Od., iv. 229.

§ *Mélanges Egypt.*, La Médecine des Anciens Égyptiens. || Ibid.

¶ Herod., ii. 84. See Sir G. Wilkinson's valuable note ; also *Ancient Egyptians*, iii. 388–397.

** Sir G. Wilkinson states that he saw gold in the teeth of a mummy, "not gold-leaf, but thin gold." Mr Bonomi saw "teeth formed of wood" in a mummy. *Trans. Odontol. Soc.* vol. vii. p. 7. A skeleton was found at Quito with false teeth secured with gold-wire.—Bollaert, *Antiquities of N. Granada*, p. 83.

†† Manetho, quoted in Brugsch, *Histoire d'Égypte*.

‡‡ Translated by Brugsch, *Notice raisonnée d'un Traité médical datant du xivme Siècle avant notre ère* ; and Chabas, *Mélanges Egypt.*, i.

§§ Chabas, i. 79.

of the ancient superstition that diseases were devils which possessed the patient.

To guard the people against quacks and the rash experiments of young doctors, the Egyptian physicians were required to follow the rules laid down in the medical treatises preserved in the principal temple of each city; the idea being that the old must be better than the new.* Aristotle, however, says that they were allowed to alter the orthodox treatment; yet if they did so, it was at their peril, as their own lives were forfeit for the life of the patient.† This rule, when followed, secured the physicians of Egypt from the accusation which Pliny brings against the profession in his day: It is at the expense of our perils that they learn, and they experimentalize by putting us to death. The physician is the only person allowed to kill with impunity, the blame being thrown on the sick man who is dead and gone.‡

In Egypt, about the eleventh century B.C., there was a College of Physicians,§ who seem to have belonged to the sacerdotal caste, as did also the embalmers who are styled “physicians” in Genesis. They were not confined to one sex; the sculptures confirm Exodus i. 15 that women practised medicine.

The physicians were the paid officers of the state, and we may therefore conclude that they were required to treat the poor gratuitously; || and as they were not likely to attend the sick in their own houses, except in extreme cases, we may further assume that, as in the case of Athens, there were official houses to which the sick poor repaired at fixed times, which correspond to our medical dispensaries. Although paid by the state, they were allowed to receive fees.¶ This care for the sick poor is a trait of character we might naturally expect from a people on whose sarcophagi we meet with inscriptions which tell how the deceased “succoured the afflicted, gave bread to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, clothes to the naked, shelter to the outcast; that he opened his doors to the stranger, and was a father to the afflicted.”

In the time of Herodotus “every place in Egypt was full of doctors,” whence Pliny concluded that no country was so unhealthy; yet Herodotus says that few countries were so salubrious, which he attributes to the uniformity of the climate.**

Although the older papyri show that the medical treatment of disease was rational, *post-mortems* even being made to discover the source of disease,†† yet charms and incantations were by no

* Diod. Sic., i. 82.

† Nat. Hist., xxix. 1.

|| Sir G. Wilkinson in Herod., *loc. cit.*

** Herod., ii. 84.

† Pol., iii. 11.

§ Brugsch, Hist. d'Égypte, c. ix.

¶ Diod., i. 82.

†† Pliny, xix. 5.

means excluded ; and dreams were granted to devout souls who had consulted physicians in vain, and the votive offerings of arms, ears, eyes, &c., which still adorn the ancient temples,* show how readily the superstitious element found its place in Egypt, as it afterwards did in Greece and Rome,† and as it does to this day in many European Christian countries.

There is a curious inscription in the temple of the god Chonson at Thebes, which points to a struggle between reason and faith, between the skill of the physician and the prayer of the priest. Ramses XII. summons before him the "Scribe of the Houses of Life," and orders him to select one who shall be "a man of an intelligent heart and skilful fingers," that he may be sent to cure the young Princess of Bouchten. She is the "little sister" of the royal wife, and bears the Semitic name Bentrash. The physician fails to cure the damsel, for she is possessed with an evil spirit. Then the god Chonson is sent from Thebes to Bouchten in a great barge, escorted by five smaller barges on the river, and by nobles, with the god's chariot and horses, along the banks. When the god arrives, he communicates to the Princess "his virtue of life," and the evil spirit comes forth.‡ We, unfortunately, only possess the priests' version of the story ; but it points to a rivalry between the rational science of the physicians and the superstitious faith of the priests.

The fame of the medicine of Egypt spread to all lands. Cyrus the Persian hears of it, and sends to King Amasis of Egypt for an oculist.§ Darius the Great had at his court "certain Egyptian physicians, whom he reckoned the best-skilled physicians in the world."|| The Hebrew prophet Jeremiah says, "O virgin daughter of Egypt, in vain shalt thou use many medicines; thou shalt not be cured."¶ It lasted until the time of the Antonines, so that Galen, the "wonder-worker," thought it no small gain to have studied in the schools of Alexandria ;** and it is preserved to our own day, wrapped up like one of its own mummies, in the words *chemistry*, *alchemy*, which tell us that the cradle of medical science was in the land of the great god Chemmis, who had given to Egypt its ancient name, Chemi.††

(2.) A story told by Herodotus of the Egyptian physicians at the court of Darius will serve to carry us from the school of

* Wilkinson gives some of these *ex votos* in vol. iii. p. 395.

† Friedländer, iv. 239.

‡ Brugsch, *Hist. d'Egypte*, c. ix., Berlin, 1859. § Herod., iii. 1.

|| Herod., iii. 131, 132. ¶ Jer. xlv. 11. ** Friedländer, lib. ii. c. 4.

†† Chabas, *Papyrus Hierogl.*, p. 55. For some time in England there were two ill-omened days in each month called "Egyptian days," supposed to be prescribed by the Egyptians as unwholesome for bleeding (Dean Stanley's *Westminster Abbey*, p. 53 n.).



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lingering death." * Plato might laugh at Herodicus, nevertheless he was the master of Hippocrates, the "Father of Medicine"—fifth century B.C.

All medical science before the time of Hippocrates was, says Pliny, "lost in the densest night; he was the first to compile a code of medical precepts," † derived partly from the traditions of the family of the Asclepiadæ to which he belonged, ‡ and partly from the study of the votive tablets in the great temple at Cos. § Dion Cassius says that Democedes of Crotona and Hippocrates of Cos were the two most distinguished physicians of antiquity. || Galen tells us that the Asclepiadæ founded the three great medical schools of Rhodes, Cnidos, and Cos. These were Doric settlements, ¶ and we find that their influence survived as late as the fifth century B.C. by the use of the Doric dialect both in medical conversation and prescriptions, ** and also in the prose oracles given at Delphi, which were so largely consulted by the sick. ††

At Athens, in the time of Plato, we find that some of the physicians were elected by the people and paid from the public treasury. Socrates, for instance, speaks of one "desiring to obtain a medical appointment from the Government" (ἰατρικὸν ἔργον), †† and there was a technical term applied especially to physicians who practised with a public salary, δημοσιεύειν. §§ These state physicians, after they had been elected in the Ecclesia or other assembly, ||| appear to have appointed slave doctors under them to attend on the poor, while they attended on the rich, and either by their own or the eloquence of some friendly rhetorician ¶¶ persuaded the patient to drink the medicine or to submit to the knife and the hot iron. Indeed this system of *persuasion* as a part of the medical art became at last ridiculous: "Foolish fellow! you are not healing the sick man, you are educating him; and he does not want to be made a doctor, but to get well;" *** and in the next generation it was completely exploded; for, as Aristotle says, the duty of a physician is simply to prescribe. †††

Very different is the offhand manner in which the slave doctors treated their patients; they waste no words with them, but run about from one patient to another, and dose them as they

* Rep., iii. 406, ed. Jowett. Cf. the Jewish saying, "Death is better than a continual sickness."—Ecclus. xxx. 17.

† Nat. Hist., xxix. 2, xxvi. 6. ‡ Littré, *Ouvres d'Hippocrate*, introd.

§ Strabo, xiv. ii. 19. Cf. viii. vi. 15. || Dion Cassius, xxxviii. 18.

¶ C. Müller, *The Dorians*, i. 114. The Rhodians spoke Doric in the time of Tiberius.—Sueton., Tib., 56.

** "Medicos dorice loquentes."—Meineke, *Frag. Com. Græc.*, ii. 249.

†† C. Müller, *On the Doric Dialect*, ii. 439.

‡‡ Xen., *Mem.*, iv. ii. 5. §§ Liddell and Scott, *Lex.*

||| Gorg., 456. ¶¶ Ibid. *** Laws., 857. ††† Pol., iv. 2.

think proper; or they “wait for them *in their dispensaries*,” ἐν τ. ἰατρείοις.* This passage clearly shows that there were at Athens, in the fifth century B.C., dispensaries to which the sick poor repaired to be treated for their diseases; not indeed by the most skilful physicians, but by physicians paid by the state to look after their ailments. These dispensaries varied in number according to the prevalence of disease: “Where diseases increase in a state, then ἰατρεῖα are always being opened.”†

The temples of Asclepius were, however, the schools in which the students who had taken the noble Hippocratic oath studied, partly from the votive tablets, and partly from the treatment of the patients who resorted thither. That patients did resort to the temples is evident from the amusing scene described by the slave who attended Plutus when he went to the temple to be cured of his blindness. When night came on, all were commanded to keep silence, and not to move should they hear the god passing before the altars. The slave peeps through a hole in his threadbare cloak, and sees the priest “consecrate into a sack” the offerings of cakes and dried figs made by the sick.‡ Afterwards there followed the mixing of the drugs with the pestle and mortar, and the anointing the eyes with the ointment. The patients were of both sexes, for it was an old woman whose savoury posset excited the cupidity of the slave Cario.§

There is one, though we regret to say only one, hospital (παιώνιον) mentioned in Greek literature, and that only by one author, the comic poet Crates, middle of fifth century B.C. It was situated probably in the Piræus—ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης. ||

The state physicians did not receive private fees, but their state emoluments may be guessed by the pay of Democedes before he was carried prisoner to the kingdom of Darius. He fled from his father, who was a celebrated physician of his day at Crotona, and came to Ægina, where his skill caused the state to hire him at £243, 15s. a year; in the next year the Athenians engaged him at £406, 15s.; in the next, Polycrates obtained him for £487, 10s.¶ The first payment made to him by Darius was a pair of golden fetters, to remind him, perhaps, that although he would now be laden with honours and wealth, yet he was to remain a prisoner, exiled from his native land.

(3.) Hitherto we have met only with state physicians and dis-

* Laws., 720.

† Rep., 405.

‡ Cf. Hist. of Bel and the Dragon, c. i.

§ Aristophanes, Plutus.

|| Meineke, Comic. Græc. Frag. Θηρ. ii. “Hujus nosocomei publica fortasse auctoritate constituti, nullus præterea scriptor memoriam servavit” (vol. ii. p. 239).

¶ Boeckh, Public Economy of Athens, i. 160, London, 1828.

pensaries, and but one hospital ; it is to India we must turn to see a system of hospitals spreading over the country.

When Brahma took compassion on the weakness and suffering of mankind, and wrote for them the commentary on the Vedas, he devoted one treatise to the science of medicine. Hence it was that the ancient Hindus ascribed to the medical art a divine origin and that the Brahmans were the first physicians. Fragments only of this *Ayur-Veda* remain, but they are sufficient to show an advanced knowledge of the art, in that they treat both of surgery and the practice of medicine.*

Soon after the conquests of Alexander the Great, Megasthenes the Greek was sent on an embassy to the court of Sandrocothes, where he resided for some years. Among his notes, preserved by Strabo, we find that "next in honour to the Sramans were the physicians, for they apply philosophy to the study of the nature of man; . . . they cure diseases by diet rather than by medicinal remedies."† The grandson of Sandrocothes was the celebrated King Asoka, 325–282 B.C., one of the greatest monarchs who ever graced a throne. He embraced the religion of Buddha, and almost immediately afterwards promulgated a series of edicts, some score of which still exist inscribed on pillars and graven in the living rock. Among these there occurs the following, as translated by Mr. Prinsep :—"Everywhere within the province of Piyadasi (Asoka), the beloved of heaven, as well as in the parts occupied by the faithful, . . . and moreover within the dominion of Antiochus the Greek [the Bactrian kingdom], . . . everywhere the heaven-beloved Piyadasi's double system of medical aid is established—both medical aid for men and medical aid for animals—together with medicaments of all sorts which are suitable; . . . and where they are not, they are to be prepared, and to be planted, both root-drugs and herbs."‡ There is also a legend that Asoka seeing how people often died from diseases and sores which were at first simple and easily cured, established public dispensaries at the four gates of Patna.§ In the year 400 A.D., seven hundred years after Asoka's edict, the Chinese pilgrim, Fa-Hian, visited India, and casually mentions in his Travels that he found hospitals in complete working order at Asoka's own city of Patna : "The nobles and landowners of this country have founded hospitals in the city, to which the poor of all countries, the destitute, the cripples, the diseased, may repair for shelter. They receive every kind of requisite help gratuitously. Physicians inspect their diseases, and according to their cases

* T. A. Wise, Review of the History of Medicine, vol. i., London, 1867.

† India, xv. i. 36.

‡ Edict II.

§ Spiers, Ancient India, p. 319.

order them food and drink, decoctions and medicines, everything, in fact, which may contribute to their ease. When cured, they depart at their own convenience.”*

Two hundred and fifty years later (648 A.D.), another Chinese pilgrim, Hiouen-Thsang, visited India, and mentions hospitals at several places. At the Port of the Ganges “les rois qui aiment à faire le bien, y ont établi une *maison de bienfaisance*, qui est pourvue de mets recherchés et de médicaments de tout genre, pour donner l’aumône aux veufs et aux veuves, et secourir les orphelins.” Elsewhere he says: “Les grands personnages des cinq Indes . . . ont établi des maisons de bienfaisance, où l’on distribue des boissons, des vivres, et des médicaments pour secourir les pauvres et les malades.” “Il y avait jadis dans ce royaume une multitude de maisons de bienfaisance, où l’on secourait les malheureux.”† These houses were *hospices* as well as hospitals at the time of Hiouen-Thsang’s visit.

At the commencement of the present century there still flourished at Surat a hospital set apart for the treatment of animals. It covered twenty-five acres, and was divided into courts and wards for the accommodation of the dumb patients. When an animal broke a limb, or was otherwise disabled, the owner brought it to the hospital, where it was received without regard to the caste or the nation of its master, and was treated with the greatest care; and, if need be, found a peaceful asylum for the infirmities of old age.‡ “If proper inquiry were directed to this building,” says Mr. Prinsep, “I daresay it would be discovered to be a living example—the only one that has braved twenty centuries—of the humane acts of Asoka, recorded at no great distance on a rock in Guzerat.”

Further investigation will doubtless bring to light many other instances of this wise and compassionate edict of Asoka having been put in force over the whole country; for, quite recently, Major Kittoe (1852) found, in the course of his excavations at Sarnath, “a large quadrangle or hospital, with pestles and mortars, &c.”§

The great interest of these hospitals lies not only in the large-hearted toleration which opened them “to the poor of all countries,” and in the liberality which supplied “help to all gratuitously,” first fruits of that noble-minded charity which knows no distinction of race or creed in the presence of suffering humanity, and

* Fa-Hian’s Travels from China to India, Beal’s transl., p. 107.

† Mémoires sur les Contrées Occidentales, par Hiouen-Thsang, en A.D. 648, translated by Stanislas Julien, ii. 231, 190; iii. 174, 215. Paris, 1857.

‡ Hamilton’s East India Gazetteer. Surat is a very ancient town, for it is mentioned in the Ramayana. Scavoneur, Voyages, ii. 489.

§ Cunningham’s Archl. Survey of India, i. 125.

which found so tender an illustration in Christ's story of the Good Samaritan, but also in the fact that these hospitals are an evolution such as we might naturally expect from the teaching of the religion of Buddha, which Asoka had adopted. The central point round which all the ethics of Buddhism revolve—the doctrine which imparts to it so great a vitality and strength—is the law of self-sacrifice carried to the point of complete devotion, so that a man should lay down his life for his fellow-men, and in certain extreme cases for the lower animals. Moreover, the problem of existence which Buddha endeavoured to solve is the way by which mankind may be saved from disease, decay, and death. The life of the founder was in itself the highest ideal of his religion, for Buddha was manifested in the form of man because his exceeding love moved him with compassion for the sons of men ; * and he left the home of his reputed father to live among the poor and wretched, in order that he might bring back those who have wandered from the right way, that he might enlighten those who are living in darkness and gloomy error, and that he might remove from the world all sources of pain and suffering and sorrow. †

(4.) On passing from the East to the extreme West, we find that the ancient Mexicans had hospitals in the principal cities, “for the cure of the sick, and for the permanent refuge of disabled soldiers.” Surgeons were placed over them, who were “so far better than those in Europe,” says the old chronicler Torquemada, “that they did not protract the cure in order to increase the pay.” ‡

This care for the sick and disabled might naturally be expected from a people who were accustomed to hear the form of absolution which followed on the confession of their sins close with the words : “Clothe the naked, feed the hungry, whatever privations it may cost thee ; for remember their flesh is like thine, and they are men like thee ;” § and who worshipped God as “The merciful and long-suffering, the enjoiner of charity.” ||

(5.) The history of medicine may be traced with tolerable clearness in the Hebrew nation.

So long as diseases were regarded as the direct and special acts of Jehovah, ¶ the priests, as His representatives, were the physicians to afflict and to cure. The fame of King Solomon as a physician still holds its place in the traditions of the

* Catena of Buddhist Scriptures, by Rev. S. Beal, p. 15.

† Romantic History of Buddha, Beal, p. 143.

‡ Prescott, History of Conquest of Mexico, i. 40.

§ Ibid.

|| Kingsborough, Antiquities of Mexico, ix. 179.

¶ In Exod. xv. 26. Carmoly translates, “L'Eternel est le médecin du peuple.”—Histoire des Médecins Juifs, Bruxelles, 1844.

East, and the Talmud assigns to him a "volume of cures." After his time, when the priestly power declined before the majesty of the prophetic, the influence which medical skill gives among a rude people was eagerly grasped by the prophets, and medicine was taught in their "schools." Their sacred scriptures record that the prophets struck men with two of the most terrible diseases of the nation, leprosy and blindness, and that they cured the sick, and even raised the dead to life. At a prophet's word a king's hand is withered as he stands before the altar surrounded by his court; at the same word the hand is restored to its former strength. The decline of the healing power among the priests is probably marked by the chronicler's lament that King Asa, in his disease, "sought not to Jehovah, but to the physicians."

On the return of the exiles from Babylon, the medical art passed into the hands of the new power in the state—the scribes. They raised the dignity of the physician to a high pinnacle, and the knowledge of medicine became an essential qualification for membership in the Great Sanhedrim: "Honour a physician with the honour due unto him for the use which ye may have of him; for the Lord hath created him. . . . He shall receive honour of the King." * The art reached its fullest development among the Essenes, a Jewish sect who lived an ascetic life, ruled by love to God and man. They studied the sacred books for the service of God, and medicine for the service of man.

The surgeon and the physician are treated as distinct functionaries in the Mishna.† We read of surgery in the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel, and curiously enough in connection with Egypt: "I have broken the arm of Pharaoh King of Egypt; it shall not be bound up to be healed, to put a roller to bind it." ‡ Rollers to bind are used to this day. The apothecary's trade is frequently mentioned; for instance, "The Lord hath created medicines out of the earth; . . . with such doth He heal men and taketh away their pains; of such doth the apothecary make a confection." § Josephus mentions female physicians.||

Physicians had from early times been a necessity to the nation. Manetho's account of the Hebrew slaves in Egypt is, that they were driven away by the king because they defiled the land with their leprosy. This disease became so identified with the nation, not only in their neighbours' eyes but in their own, that to the

* Ecclus. xxxviii. 1.

† R. J. Wunderbar, *Biblisch-Talmudische Medicin*, Leipzig, 1865.

‡ Exod. xxx. 21. Nothing can exceed the skill with which the limbs of the Egyptian mummies are bound.

§ Ecclus. xxxviii. 4, 7, 8.

|| Vita, 37, ἡ *larplvη*, ed. Haverc.

question asked in the Talmud, "What is the name of the Messiah?" the answer is, "The Leper."* This singular identification of the Messiah with the characteristic disease of the people obtained a place among the Christian legends of the Middle Ages. When, for instance, St. Francis d'Assissi dismounts from his horse to succour a leper, he finds in the leper the Christ.† This strange idea was probably founded on the Vulgate rendering of Isaiah liii. 4, "Nos putavimus eum quasi leprosum." The ceremonial observances which required the lepers to "show themselves to the priest," assumes a knowledge of medicine in some officials connected with the priestly order. Accordingly we find that physicians were in later times attached not only to the temple but also to the synagogues. They were elected, as were the Greek state physicians, by the voice of the people, to whom they were responsible.‡ The physicians in all times, whether priests, prophets, or scribes, received fees §—in early times, "bread and cakes and honey" from the poor, camel-loads of stuffs, with gold and silver, from the rich; in later times, "such things as were commanded."

The contagious nature of leprosy required that the wretched patients should dwell apart from the abodes of men; so we read of them herded together in miserable groups, prowling about the outer gates of cities, or wandering over the country, always raising their weird cry, "Unclean, unclean!" and standing afar off when they saw their fellow-men approaching. It is possible that houses may have been erected for their accommodation outside the city walls of some of the larger towns. Of one such house we read, but as in the case of ancient Greece, of one only, the "several house" into which King Uzziah retired when the "leprosy mounted into his forehead," and the priests with indecent haste thrust out from the sacred precincts of the temple the sorrow-stricken leper, who himself "hasted to go out." Ewald, Gesenius, and other great scholars, see in this "several house," or "house of separation," or "free house," a hospital corresponding to the leper hospitals of later times. It may have been in this house of separation that some leper wrote the touching "Prayer of Grievous Complaint," in which he cries aloud to Jehovah: "I am counted with them that go down into the pit, free among the dead. Lover and friend hast Thou put from me, Thou hast made me an abomination unto them. I am shut up, I cannot come forth."||

* Pearson, Creed, iv. 266 n.

† Stephen's Eccl. Biog., p. 64.

‡ Rev. A. L. Green's letter to "Jewish World," October 1875.

§ In Exod. xxi. 9, the LXX. reads *larpeia*. May not this word which, as we have already seen, occurs in Plato, have reference to dispensaries, similar to those with which the Seventy were familiar in Alexandria?

|| Ps. lxxxviii.



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gains were so large, that skilled artisans—bootmakers, carpenters, tanners, and even gravediggers—became doctors, and unsuccessful doctors sank back into the humbler trades.

“Nuper erat medicus, nunc est vespillo Diaulus.
Quod vespillo facit, fecerat et medicus.” *

Their charlatanism, bad manners, and ignorance were so great, that Galen says the greater part of them could read only with difficulty, and he counsels his colleagues to be on their guard lest they should make grammatical blunders when conversing with their patients; and he moreover complains that at the bedside of the patient the rival doctors so far forget themselves that they abuse each other, put out their tongues, and even come to blows. † Pliny laments that there is no law to punish their ignorance, and he chuckles over the well-known epitaph, “Turbâ medicorum perii.” Under those circumstances, one is not surprised to find *ex votos* of arms and legs, ears and eyes, and tablets commemorative of successful dreams, adorning the temples both at Rome and in the provinces. One tablet reminds us of the story of the cure of the young Egyptian princess by the god after the failure of the physicians; it is the tablet of a blind slave at Rome to Minerva Medica, the “good goddess,” for the restoration of sight: “After he had been given up by the physicians, he was cured by the grace of our lady and the use of her medicines.” ‡ It was this superstitious element which caused the miraculous cures of the Emperor Vespasian at Alexandria to be attested by many among the great multitude who beheld them, even after the Flavian line had become extinct, and nothing was to be gained by falsehood. §

Physicians and surgeons followed each their own functions; and we read of specialists, oculists, dentists, aurists (*auricularii*), &c.; there were court physicians, among whom we read of one who was above the others (*supra medicos*); and women (*medicæ*) were employed for diseases of women and children.

In the time of the Antonines we read of a “chief of the physicians,” *ἀρχίατρος*. || *Archiatři populares* were provided for every city according to its size; they formed a College of Physicians, and seem to have held a sort of examination of persons qualified to practise. They were elected by a vote of the citizens, and received a salary from the public treasury. They were required to treat all the sick who came to them free of charge, but they were appointed primarily for the sake of the poor. ¶

* Martial.

† Com. in Hipp. iv. 9, quoted by Friedländer.

‡ Friedländer, iv. 235–241.

§ Tacitus, Hist., iv. 81.

|| A title which St. Jerome applies to Christ, Hom. in St. Luc., xiii.

¶ Dumas, Des Secours Publics en usage chez les Anciens, p. 136, Paris, 1813.

It is, however, at Epidaurus that we find a house which was one of the noblest expressions of the tender feeling and gentle sympathy with suffering humanity which in the second and third centuries of our era were becoming such marked characteristics of the cultivated Roman gentleman. Many cultured Romans took the same tour as that described by Livy: Æmilius Paulus went to Athens, "filled with the decayed relics of ancient grandeur;" thence to Corinth, with its beautiful views and busy modern life; and thence to Epidaurus, famous for its temple of Æsculapius, "then rich in offerings, which the wealthy had dedicated to the Deity in acknowledgment of the remedies which had restored them to health, but *now*," he adds sorrowfully, "filled only with their traces, showing whence they have been torn away." * As the tourist of the time of the Antonines approached the walls which surrounded the temple, the sacred grove, and the massive buildings (whose ruined mounds to this day attest their former magnificence †), he would see a house built before the entrance to the gate to shelter the aged, and the delicate women, who were forbidden to tarry within, lest the sacred precincts should be defiled by those who were entering and by those who were leaving life. That house had been erected by the Emperor Antoninus, who won from the Roman Senate and people that most touching of all the titles of antiquity, *The Pius*. ‡

(7.) We read of military surgeons as early as the time of Homer. "In those days," says Plato, "the sons of Asclepius were heroes as well as physicians; for when the arrow of Pandarus wounded Menelaus, they sucked the blood out of his wound, and sprinkled soothing remedies (Il. iv. 218): these remedies they thought to be enough to heal any man whose constitution was healthy and sound." § The state physicians of Egypt were forbidden to take fees when attached to the army in time of war. || Cyrus employed surgeons to march with his army; so did the Spartans. Among the Romans, soldiers dressed each other's wounds until the time of Augustus, when we first hear of military surgeons. The German wives and mothers "did not fear to search for and to count the gashes" of the wounded heroes whom they had accompanied to the battle. ¶

* Lib. lxxv. 27, 28.

† The sacred character is preserved in its name of *Hieron*, the sanctuary; and the village is called *Koroni*, evidently from Koronis, the mother of Asclepius.

‡ Pausanias, ii. 27. Champagny, *Les Antonins*, tom. ii. p. 183.

§ Rep., iii. 406.

|| Diod., i. 82. In the smaller temple at Abou Simbel, in Nubia, a surgeon is seen dressing a wound in the foot of a soldier.—Edwards, *A Thousand Miles up the Nile*, p. 438.

¶ Tacitus, *Germ.*, 7.

It is not, however, until the reign of Hadrian that we find the military hospital, which is called *valetudinarium*. It was under the control of the Prefect of the camp, whose duty it was to see that the surgeons visited their patients.* These *valetudinaria* were always attached to the winter quarters, and those generals who visit the sick and wounded are applauded.†

We have already seen that the ancient Mexicans had hospitals for the care of the sick, and as a refuge for disabled soldiers, institutions which may have foreshadowed our Chelsea Hospital and Les Invalides at Paris.

The most remarkable instance of a military hospital was one in Ireland. The palace of Emania was founded about 300 B.C. by the Princess Macha of the Golden Hair, and continued to be the chief royal residence of Ulster until 332 A.D., when it was destroyed. To this palace were attached two houses,—one the house in which the Red Branch Knights hung up their arms and trophies; the other, in which the sick were cared for and the wounded healed; this latter was called by the expressive name, *Broin Bearg*, the House of Sorrow.‡ The institution of the House of Sorrow spread through Ireland under the influence of Christianity, and the ancient Laws sanction the right of distress to provide for the sick “a physician, food, proper bed-furniture, and a *proper house*.§

(8.) Such was the progress made by some of the great nations in the noble effort to ameliorate the condition of the sick and suffering, when, towards the close of the fourth century after Christ, Christianity inspired the world with the enthusiasm of humanity. A noble Roman lady, Fabiola, devoted her princely patrimony to build, in a salubrious quarter near the city, a house for the reception of the sick and the infirm who were found homeless and without shelter in the streets. This, says St. Jerome, was the first *νοσοκομείον*.|| The fame of this institution spread throughout the Roman Empire, “from the Egyptians and the Parthians to the isles of Britain.” The work was carried on by St. Basil, who built outside the walls of Cæsarea in Cappadocia, probably on the site of an earlier hospital,¶ the massive pile of buildings which, says St. Gregory Nazianzen, “rose to view like a second city, the abode of charity, the treasury into which the rich poured of their wealth and the poor of their poverty. Here disease is investigated

* Fl. Vegetius, *De re Milit.*, ii. 10.

† Dumas, *Des Secours Publics*, iv. 1.

‡ Sir W. Wilde, *Note on Census for Ireland*, Part iii., *Parl. Papers* 1854, vol. lviii.

§ Sanchus Mor, p. 123, Dublin, Thom, 1865.

|| Ep. 77, c. 6 (“*prima omnium νοσοκομείον instituit*”).

¶ See Ep. 94, *ad Heliam*.

(φιλοσοφεῖται) and sympathy proved." No building of antiquity seemed to him to equal this hospital, not even "Thebes with its hundred gates, nor the walls of Babylon, nor the pyramids of Egypt, nor the Colossus of Rhodes, nor the tomb of Mausoleus." "My brother's hospital, he says, is a tabernacle of witness to the world, like unto that of Moses." *

St. John Chrysostom found at least one hospital already existing when he went to Constantinople, and he built many more on the plan of the *Basiliæ*. We may form some idea of the number of hospitals at Alexandria from a law of Honorius which mentions no less than six hundred nurses, *parabolani*,† who were placed at the disposal of the bishop for the nursing of the sick—"ad curanda debiliū ægra corpora."

Noble ladies like Fabiola gave themselves up to the work of nursing the sick. The Empress Placilla visited the sick in their own homes and in the public hospitals, she stood at the bedside, she tasted the broth, handed the food, washed the cups, and performed other offices with her own hands, such as the meanest servants ordinarily did.‡ The aged Bishop of Carthage, Deogratias, having sold the church-plate to ransom the captive Christians, lodged them in two large churches, and every hour by night and day he visited them, with the physicians, and went from bed to bed to know of what each stood most in need.§ In the great plague at Alexandria (A.D. 260–268) many of the brethren nursed the sick in the height of the disease; they saved many by their care, who rose from their beds to life, while they themselves fell struck by the plague unto the death: "They saved others, themselves they could not save." || This work of the Christians excited the emulation of the Emperor Julian: "These impious Galileans give themselves to this kind of humanity;" and although he thought their motive base,¶ yet he orders Arsacius to "establish abundance of hospitals in every city, that our kindness may be enjoyed by strangers, not only of our own people but of those who are in need." **

To the great hospital at Cæsarea there was attached a "house of separation" for the lepers, of whose wretched condition St. Gregory of Nyssa gives such an appalling account. They wandered in troops over Cappadocia in search of food, and exposed to the inclemency of the seasons. They resembled corpses before death.

* Orat. 20, ed. Colon.

† Cod. Just., i. 3, 18. Strictly speaking, nurses in infectious diseases, for they *cast themselves* into hazard of their lives with a recklessness which is divine.

‡ Theod., Hist. Eccl., v. 18.

§ Victor. Utic., De Pers. Vand.

|| Euseb., Hist. Eccl., vii. 22. Cave, Primitive Christianity, III. ii. 390.

¶ Frag. 305, Rheinwald, Kirchliche Archäologie. ** Epist., 49.

Clothed in rags, supported by a staff fastened with a string, not to the hands, which had been eaten away by disease, but to the stumps of the arms which were left, driven from the towns and the assemblies of men, tracked as hunters track wild beasts, they did not dare even to approach the wells and fountains on the roadside to quench their burning thirst. "Basil it was who persuaded men not to scorn men, nor to dishonour Christ the Head of all by their inhumanity towards human beings." *

Most if not all of these early Christian institutions were *hospices* as well as hospitals—the home of the stranger no less than the home of the sick. It is interesting to note the difficulty of finding a word to express these new buildings. St. Jerome uses a Greek word, *νοσοκομείον*, for the house built by the gentle lady who herself *cared for the sick* whom she received. St. Basil evidently felt a difficulty in finding a name for his institution. In one letter he speaks of it as the support of the poor, *πτωχοτροφείον*,† in another as a place of lodging, *καταγώγιον*,‡ open to strangers passing through the country, and to those who need (*θεραπείας*) peculiar treatment by reason of the state of their health; while Sozomen falls back upon its popular name, *Basilias*, "that most famous lodging for the poor founded by Basil, from whom it received the appellation which it still retains." § It was reserved for later times to take one of the most sacred ideas of ancient days, hospitality, and inspiring it with the spirit of Christianity to enshrine it for future ages in the home which is open to all who are suffering from sickness and from pain: "Go out into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind, . . . that my house may be filled."

Thus we see that the glory of Christianity does not lie in having originated the idea of hospitals, but in having seized it, like the runners the torch in the ancient games, and carried it forward with brighter flame and more intense enthusiasm. The fame of Fabiola and St. Basil has been immortalised by St. Jerome and the Gregorys; the edict of Asoka is graven with a pen of iron in the rock, a living witness to the noble thoughts of his kingly mind; the House of Sorrow, which was built within the ancient *rath* that exists to this day, speaks of the tenderness of the Princess Macha; but no trace remains of the names and titles of the men and women who built the solitary hospital on the sea-shore in the Piræus, who founded the house-of-separation for the lepers in Judæa, and the home for the disabled soldiers in Mexico; or of

* A. Tollemer, *Des Origines de la Charité Catholique*, Paris, 1863.
 Martin-Doisy, *Histoire de la Charité*, Paris, 1848.

† Ep. 176.

‡ Ep. 94.

§ Hist. Eccl., vi. 34.

those, even more illustrious, who in ancient Egypt conceived the idea of the physician paid by the state to tend the poor—an idea which contains the germ that has borne fruit in the vast network of hospitals which are rapidly spreading over the continents of Europe and America. Their names may be forgotten, but their deeds are immortal ; they have joined

“That choir invisible
Whose music is the gladness of the world.”

A Jewish legend, preserved in the Haggadah, tells us that Abraham wore upon his breast a jewel “whose light raised those who were bowed down and healed the sick ;” and that when he died, it was placed in heaven where it shone among the stars. Countless as the stars of heaven and as the sand on the sea-shore are the men and women of all countries and of all creeds who have worn next their heart the patriarch’s jewel of light.