

III

THE ZEN SECT OF BUDDHISM

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FOREWORD.

DURING the twenty centuries of development in the Far East Buddhism has been differentiated into many sects, which are so far distinct from their original Hindu types that we are justified in designating Far-Eastern Buddhism by a special name. Though, as a matter of course, all these different sects trace back their final authority to the Indian founder, and were introduced by Indian missionaries into the lands where they have been thriving throughout their long history, they would not have reached the present stage of perfection unless they had been elaborated by Chinese and Japanese geniuses. Students of Buddhism, therefore, cannot well afford to ignore or neglect the study of Chinese and Japanese Buddhism, not only in its historical aspect, but also as a living and still growing spiritual force.

Among the many sects of Buddhism that developed in the Far East we find a unique order, which claims to transmit the essence and spirit of Buddhism directly from its author, and this not in a form of any written document or literary legacy. Its scholastic name is the Sect of Buddha-Heart, but it is popularly known as Zen Sect (*Jhāna* in Pali, *Shan* in Chinese and *Dhyāna* in Sanskrit).

This sect is unique, not only in Buddhism itself, but, I believe, also in the history of religion generally. Its doctrines, broadly speaking, are those of a speculative mysti-

cism, and they are so peculiarly—sometimes poetically and sometimes almost enigmatically—represented and demonstrated, that only those who have actually gained an insight into them and been trained in the system can see their ultimate signification. What the Zen Sect, therefore, most emphatically insists on is one's inner spiritual enlightenment. It does not find any intrinsic importance in the sacred sūtras, or their expositions by the wise and learned. Subjectivism and individualism are strongly set against traditional authority and objective revelation, and, as the most efficient method of attaining spiritual enlightenment, the followers of the Zen Sect propose the practice of Dhyāna (*zenna* in Japanese, and *shanna* in Chinese)—that is, contemplation or meditation.* Hence the name 'Zen,' which is an abbreviation.

HISTORY OF THE ZEN SECT.

INDIA.

According to Zen scholars, their history is considered to have started from the time when the Buddha showed a nosegay of some beautiful golden-coloured flowers to a congregation of his disciples on the Mount of the Holy Vulture. The incident is related in a sūtra entitled 'Dialogue of the Buddha and Mahāpitaka Brahmarāja' † as follows :

* Dhyāna, according to Zen scholars, is not exactly meditation or contemplation. A man can meditate on a religious or philosophical subject while disciplining himself in Zen, but that is only incidental. What Zen practice aims to attain is to keep one's mind always well balanced, and not to allow any impetuous thought to disturb its serenity.

† The exact title of the sūtra is 'Sūtra on the Questions of Mahāpitaka Brahmarāja' ('*Ta tsang fan wang shuo wên ching*' in Chinese). I am at present unable to verify the statement made in the text, for Nanjo's Catalogue, as well as that by S. Fujii (Kyôto, 1898), do not contain any sūtra corresponding to that title. My statement of the incident is a traditional one as related by Zen scholars, who are generally indifferent in matters like this, and who will not trouble themselves to verify the authority for a statement. I have a strong

'The Brahmarâja came to a congregation of Buddhists on the Mount of the Holy Vulture, and offering a bouquet of palâça (?) flowers to the Buddha, prostrated himself on the ground and reverently asked the Master to preach the Dharma for the benefit of sentient beings. The Buddha ascended the seat, and brought forth the flowers before the congregation of gods and men. But none of them could comprehend the meaning of this act on the part of the Buddha, except the venerable Mahâkâshyapa, who softly smiled and nodded. Then exclaimed the Buddha: "I am the owner of the Eye of the Good Law, which is Nirvana, the Mind, the mystery of reality and non-reality, and the gate of transcendental Dharma. I now hand it over to Mahâkâshyapa."'

Mahâkâshyapa transmitted this Eye, which looks into the deeps of the Dharma, to his successor, Ânanda, and the transmission is recorded to have taken place in the following manner:

Ânanda asked Kâshyapa: 'What was it that thou hast received from the Buddha besides the robe and the bowl?' Kâshyapa called: 'O Ânanda.' Ânanda replied: 'Ay.' Thereupon Kâshyapa said: 'Wilt thou take down the flag-pole at the gate?' Upon receiving this order, a spiritual illumination came over the mind of Ânanda, and the 'Seal of Spirit' was handed over by Mahâkâshyapa to this junior disciple.

The Zen Sect acknowledges the following twenty-eight patriarchs after the Buddha, who successfully transmitted the 'Seal' down to Bodhidharma, who came to China in the year 520 A.D.: (1) Mahâkâshyapa; (2) Ânanda; (3) Çânavâsa; (4) Upagupta; (5) Dhrtaka; (6) Micchaka; (7) Vasumitra; (8) Buddhânanda; (9) Buddhamitra; (10) Parçva; (11) Punyayasha; (12) Açvaghosha; (13) Kapimâla; (14) Nâgârjuna; (15) Kanadeva; (16) Rahu-

suspicion that the incident was fabricated by early Chinese Zen teachers, probably when they were challenged by rival sects to produce their historical authority to justify their claim for orthodoxy. But this awaits further investigation.

rata ; (17) Sanghânanda ; (18) Kayaçata ; (19) Kumârata ; (20) Jñâyata ; (21) Vasubandhu ; (22) Manura ; (23) Haklena ; (24) Simha ; (25) Bhaghasita ; (26) Punyamitra ; (27) Prajñâtara ; (28) Bodhidharma (usually abbreviated Dharma).*

CHINA.

Bodhidharma, the twenty-eighth patriarch in India and the first in China, was the third son of the King of Hsiang Chih (Kasi ?) in Southern India. He became monk after he had reached manhood, and studied Buddhism under Prajñâtara for some forty years, it is said. After the death of his teacher, he assumed the patriarchal authority of the Dhyâna school, and energetically fought for sixty years or more against heterodox schools. After this, in obedience to the instruction which he had received from Prajñâtara, he sailed for China, spending three years on the way. In the year 520 he at last landed at Kuang Chou, in Southern China. The Emperor Wu, of the Liang dynasty, at once invited him to proceed to his capital, Chin Liang (modern Nanking). The Emperor was a most devoted Buddhist, and did everything to promote the interests of his religion, but this not without a personal consideration. Therefore, as soon as his reverend guest from the West was settled in his palace, his first question was : 'I have built so many temples and monasteries, I have copied so many sacred books of Buddha, I have converted so many Bhikshus and Bhikshunis; now what merit does your reverence think I have thus accumulated?' To this, however, the founder of the Zen Sect in China coldly and curtly replied : 'Your Majesty, no merit whatever.'

The Emperor Wu asked him again : 'What is considered by your reverence to be the first principle of the Holy Doctrine?' Said Dharma : 'Vast emptiness, and nothing

* How the transmission took place among these patriarchs, as in the case between Mahâkâshyapa and Ânanda, is related in the Chinese work entitled 'Chuan têng lu' (Transmission-lamp-records).

holy therein.' The Emperor could not comprehend the signification of this answer, and made another query: 'Who is he, then, that now confronts me?'

By this he perhaps meant that, if there were nothing but vast emptiness and absolute transcendentality in the first principle of existence, why, then, do we have here a world of contrasts and relations? Are not some of us regarded as holy and others wicked? And Bodhidharma, who stands at this moment before the Emperor, belongs to the first class. How is it that his answer seems to contradict the facts of experience? Hence the question: 'Who is he, then, that now confronts me?' It is interesting to notice the similarity between this conversation and the first talk between the Greek King Milinda and Nâgasena (Rhys Davids, 'Questions of King Milinda,' vol. i., pp. 40-45).

But Dharma was the apostle of mysticism, and scholastic discussion did not appeal to him. His reply was quite terse: 'I know not, your majesty.'

Being convinced that his august patron was not qualified to embrace his faith, Dharma left the State of Liang and went to the State of Northern Wei, where he retired into the Shao Lin monastery. It is said that he spent all his time, during a period of nine years there, silently sitting against the wall and deeply absorbed in meditation, and for this singular habit he is said to have earned the title of 'the wall-gazing brahmin.'

Finally, there came to him a former Confucian scholar, named Shên Kuang, who, not being satisfied with the teaching of his native teacher, decided to follow the faith of Dharma. The latter, however, seemed to have altogether ignored this man, for he did not pay any attention to the earnest supplications of this seeker of truth. We are told that Shên Kuang in the face of this cold reception stood in the snow on the same spot throughout seven days and nights. At last he cut one of his arms with the sword he was carrying in his girdle, and presenting this before the imperturbable Dharma, he said: 'This is a token of my sincere desire to be instructed in your faith. I have been seeking peace of mind these

many years, but to no purpose. Pray, your reverence, have my soul pacified.'

Dharma then answered: 'Where is your soul? Bring it out before me, and I shall have it pacified.' Shên Kuang said: 'The very reason of my trouble is that I am unable to find the soul.' Whereupon Dharma exclaimed: 'I have pacified your soul.' And Shên Kuang all at once attained spiritual enlightenment, which removed all his doubts and put an end to all his struggles.

Dharma died in the year 528, at the age, according to tradition, of about 150. Shên Kuang (485-593) was given by Bodhidharma the Buddhist name Hui K'o, and became the second patriarch of the Zen Sect in China.

Hui K'o handed over the 'Seal of Buddha-Heart' to his foremost disciple, Sêng Ts'an (died 606), who was successively followed by Tao Hsin (died 651) and Hung Jên (died 675). After Hung Jên the Sect was divided into two schools, Southern and Northern. The latter, representing heterodoxy, had no issue, and made no further development; but the Southern School, which was led by Hui Nêng, the sixth patriarch, continued the orthodox line of transmission, which, though long inactive and really dead in its land of birth, is still flourishing in Japan.*

The sixth patriarch, Hui Nêng, was a great religious genius, and his life marks an epoch in the history of the Zen Sect in the Far East. It was due to him that his Sect, hitherto comparatively inactive and rather tending to ascetic quietism, now assumed a more energetic rôle in the demonstration of its peculiar features, and began to make its influence more and more felt, especially among the thoughtful class of people.

* In the Zen Sect succession is considered very important in the transmission of its faith. Each Zen master must be sanctioned and authorized by his predecessor, without which he represents heterodoxy. His interpretation of the spiritual experience may differ from that of his predecessors, or he may be inclined to emphasize a certain phase of his faith which he thinks was neglected, but his authority to do so must be acknowledged by his teacher.

His missionary activities began immediately after the death of his predecessor, Hung Jên—that is, in the year 675. He gathered about himself many able disciples, through whom the Sect made rapid development, dividing itself into several schools, which enjoyed prosperity throughout the T'ang (618-905) and the Sung (960-1278) dynasties, which were the golden age of the Zen Sect. A collection of the sermons of the sixth patriarch, known as '*Fa pao t'an ching*,' was incorporated in the Chinese collection of the Buddhist sacred books, and is considered one of the most authoritative works of the Zen Sect. (We shall have a quotation from this book later on.)

An interesting story is told of the sixth patriarch, Hui Nêng—how he came to succeed Hung Jên in his religious authority. The fifth patriarch wished to select his spiritual heir among his many disciples, and one day made the announcement that anyone who could prove his thorough comprehension of the religion would be given the patriarchal robe, and proclaimed as his legitimate successor. According to this, one of his disciples, who was very learned and thoroughly versed in the lore of his religion, and who was therefore considered by his brethren in faith to be in possession of an unqualified right to the honour, composed a stanza expressing his view, and posted it on the outside wall of the meditation hall, which read :

' This body is the Bodhi-tree ;
The soul is like a mirror bright :
Take heed to keep it always clean,
And let not dust collect on it.'

All those who read these lines were greatly impressed, and secretly cherished the idea that the author of the gâthâ would surely be awarded the prize. But when they awoke next morning, they were surprised to see another written alongside of it, which ran as follows :

' The Bodhi is not like the tree ;
The mirror bright is nowhere shining :
As there is nothing from the first,
Where can the dust itself collect ?'

The writer of these lines was an insignificant monk, who spent most of his time in pounding rice for the brotherhood. He had such an unassuming air that nobody ever thought much of him, and therefore the entire monastery was now set astir to see this bold challenge made upon its recognized authority. But the fifth patriarch saw in this unpretentious monk a future leader of mankind, and decided to transfer to him the mantle of his office. He had, however, some misgivings concerning the matter, for the majority of his disciples were not enlightened enough to see anything of deep religious intuition in the lines composed by the rice-pounder, Hui Nêng; and if he were awarded the prize they might do him violence. So the fifth patriarch gave a secret sign to Hui Nêng to come to his room at midnight, when the rest of the brotherhood was fast asleep. Then he gave him the bowl and robe as insignia of his patriarchal authority in appreciation of his unsurpassable spiritual attainment, and with the assurance that the future of their faith would be brighter than ever. The patriarch then advised him that it would be wise for him to hide his own light under a bushel, until the proper time arrived for his public appearance and active propaganda.

Before the day broke, however, the news of what had happened in secret became noised abroad throughout the monastery, and a party of indignant monks, headed by one named Ming, pursued the fugitive, Hui Nêng, who, in accordance with his master's instruction, was secretly leaving the brotherhood. When he was overtaken by the pursuers while crossing a mountain-pass not far away from the monastery, he laid down his robe and bowl on a rock near by, and said to the monk Ming: 'This robe symbolizes our patriarchal faith, and is not to be carried away by force. Take it along with thee, however, if thou so desirest.'

Ming tried to lift it, but it was as heavy as a mountain. He halted, hesitated, and trembled with awe. At last he said: 'I come here to obtain the faith and not the robe. O my brother monk, pray dispel my ignorance.'

Said the sixth patriarch: 'If thou comest for the faith,

stop all thy hankerings. Thinkest thou not of good, thinkest thou not of evil, and see what at this moment thy own face doth look like, which thou hadst even prior to the birth of thy parents?’

Being thus questioned, Ming at once perceived the fundamental reason of things, which he had hitherto sought in things without. He now understood everything, as if he had taken a cupful of cold water and tasted it to his own satisfaction. Out of the immensity of his feeling, he was literally bathed in tears and perspiration, and most reverently approaching the patriarch he saluted him, and asked: ‘Beside this hidden sense as embodied in those significant words, is there any other thing which is secret?’

The patriarch answered: ‘In what I have shown to thee there is nothing hidden. If thou reflectest within thyself and recognizest thy own face, which was before the world, secrecy is in thyself.’

Under Hui Nêng, who died 713, the Sect was divided into two schools, represented by two of his foremost disciples, Nan Yo and Ch’ing Yuan. Hui Nêng was the last in the patriarchal line of the Zen Sect. He did not hand down his official insignia to his successors, for he feared that it might cause unnecessary strife and undesirable schism, as illustrated in his own case. With him, therefore, the history of the Zen Sect must be said to turn over a new leaf, not only externally but inwardly. The patriarchal system was destroyed, the question of heterodoxy and orthodoxy was no more; and any leader who was duly trained under a recognized master, and received his sanction for his spiritual attainment, was at liberty to develop the faith and practice of the Zen Sect in any manner best suited to his individuality. Nan Yo (died 744) and Ch’ing Yuan (died 740) equally represented the orthodox line of their common faith, the difference between the two schools being that one emphasized one aspect and the other another.

From the time of Nan Yo and Ch’ing Yuan onwards the Zen Sect made steady progress, and gained greater

influence among all classes of people, but especially among the educated. During the T'ang dynasty, under which Chinese culture and civilization may be said to have reached its consummation, was the time when Buddhism became thoroughly naturalized in China. It discarded its Hindu garb, borrowed and ill-fitting, and began to weave its own, entirely with native materials and in accord with Chinese taste. Though the doctrinal phase of Buddhism was not yet quite assimilated by the Chinese mind, the Zen Sect developed along its own peculiar line, and became thoroughly Chinese. (This will be more clearly recognized when we treat later of the faith and practice of the Zen Sect.) The greatest masters of Zen were almost all the product of this age, covering a space of about 800 years—that is roughly, from the middle of the T'ang dynasty to the end of the Sung. Many eminent scholars, poets, statesmen, and artists rapped at the monastery door, and greatly enjoyed conversation with the Zen masters. Influence on Chinese culture given by those lay disciples of the sect was considerable. Almost all the important temples and monasteries now existing in the Middle Kingdom belong to the Zen Sect, though the Sect as a living faith is as dead as everything else in that old tottering country. And from this it can be inferred how great must have been the influence the Zen sect exercised when at the zenith of its prosperity in the latter part of the T'ang, and throughout the Sung dynasty.

JAPAN.

In Japan at present we have two schools of the Zen Sect, Sodo and Rinzai. The former traces back its long ancestral line to the Ch'ing Yuan school, and the latter originated with Rinzai (Lin Tsai in Chinese; died 867), who flourished during the middle period of the T'ang dynasty, and who succeeded the line represented by Nan Yo under the sixth patriarch. The Sodo school was introduced into Japan by Dogen, A.D. 1233, who went over to China early in the thirteenth century, and was duly authorized by his master,

T'ien-T'ung Jü-Ching (died 1228), of the Ch'ing Yuan line. The Rinzai school was officially established in the year 1191 by Yesai. The Hojo family, which was the real head of the Government at that time, greatly encouraged the dissemination of Zen teaching. This resulted in frequent communication between the Chinese and the Japanese masters. And a large number of capable leaders who arose one after another kept up the vitality of Zen faith throughout the succeeding three or four hundred years.

At present the two schools of the Zen Sect in Japan are more or less sharing in the common fate of Buddhism in the twentieth century—that is, it is in a stage of transition from a medieval, dogmatic, and conservative spirit to one of progress, enlightenment, and liberalism. The Rinzai school is more speculative and intellectual, while the Sodo tends towards quietism. The latter is numerically strong, and the former qualitatively so. The recent war in the Far East has served to reawaken the old spirit of nationalism, and young Japan is anxiously investigating the moral and spiritual legacy, the wealth and significance of which it has only recently begun to appreciate.

PRINCIPLES OF THE ZEN SECT.

FACTS AND NOT WORDS.

The Zen Sect is what Western scholars might call mysticism, though its characteristic development and its practical method of discipline are as different from Christian mysticism as Buddhism generally is from Christianity. The latter has always endeavoured to acknowledge the objective existence of a Supreme Being, or the transcendentality of a universal reason. The German school of mysticism, indeed, almost converted Christianity into pantheism, and tried to find God within one's own being. But there is no denying the fact that the Christian mystics were deviating from the original path of Jewish monotheism, which is really the most prominent feature of Christianity.

Buddhism, on the other hand, has shown a pantheistic tendency from the beginning of its history, and though at a certain stage of its development it was disposed towards ethical positivism, it has always encouraged the practice of Dhyâna as a means of enlightenment. It is no wonder that this special discipline came to be emphasized above all others as a saving power, when the Buddhist faith began to wither under the baneful influence of scholasticism. Though mysticism has been frequently misinterpreted and condemned, there is no doubt that it is the soul of the religious life, that it is what gives to a faith its vitality, fascination, sublimity and stability. Without mysticism the religious life has nothing to be distinguished from the moral life, and, therefore, whenever a faith becomes conventionalized, and devoid, for some reason or other, of its original enthusiasm, mysticism invariably comes to its rescue. The recrudescence of Buddhist mysticism in India, and its introduction into China and Japan, is also due to this law of the human mind.

Quite in accordance with this view, the Zen Sect teaches us to disregard or discard the entire treasure of Buddhist lore as something superfluous, for it is no more than a secondhand commentary on the mind, which is the source of enlightenment and the proper subject of study. Zen labels itself as 'a special transmission outside the canonical teaching of the Buddha,' and its practical method of salvation is 'directly to grasp the mind and attain Buddhahood.' It does not rely upon the sūtras or abhidharmas, however exalted and enlightened be the authors of these sacred books. For the ultimate authority of Zen faith is within one's self, and not without. A finger may be needed to point at the moon, but ignorant must they be who take the pointer for the real object, and altogether forget the final aim of the religious life. The sacred books are useful as far as they indicate the direction where our spiritual efforts are to be applied, and their utility goes no further. The Zen, therefore, proposes to deal with concrete living facts, and not with dead letters and theories.

NO SŪTRAS, NO BOOKS.

The Zen Sect thus has no particular canonical books considered as the final authority for its teachings, nor has it any ready-made set of tenets which have to be embraced by its followers as essential to their spiritual welfare. What it claims to have transmitted from the Buddha is his spirit—that is, his enlightened subjectivity, through which he was able to produce so many sacred books. It was this same spirit of the founder of Buddhism that Dharma wanted to instil into the people of the Middle Kingdom. When he was passing away from this world, he wished to see if his disciples understood his spirit. One of the disciples, in response to his question, said: ‘As I understand, the essence of Buddhism is vast emptiness.’

Dharma said: ‘You have obtained only my skin.’

The other replied: ‘As I understand, I give just one glance at it, and it is never repeated.’

Dharma said: ‘You have reached as far as my bone.’

He then asked Hui K’o what was his view of Buddhism, and the latter folded his hands against his breast and stood in his place without a word. Dharma then said: ‘You have truly grasped my spirit,’ and the patriarchal authority was given to him.*

In such wise the Zen masters handled their religion. They were boldly original, and were not hampered by any traditional teachings of the Buddha. Indeed, the Buddha himself had frequently to suffer a rather unkindly treatment at the hand of his Zen followers. Rinzai, for instance, the founder of the Rinzai school, exclaims: ‘O ye, my disciples, think not that the Buddha was the consummation of being. I consider him no more than the dumping-ground. The Bodhisattvas and Arhats, they are all yokes and manacles that constrain people. Therefore, Mañjuçri wanted to kill Gautama with his sword; Añgulimāla tried to injure the

* This incident, as stated here from memory, may not be quite accurate, but it is in the main correct. No work from which to verify it is accessible to me at this moment.

Sakya monk with his weapon. O ye, my disciples, there is no such being as a Buddha, on whom we could lay a hand. The Buddhist doctrines such as relate to the triple vehicle, the five classes of converts, or the Perfect and the Abrupt, are no more than a temporary remedy intended for the diseased, and, in fact, have no intrinsic significance. If they have any at all, it is merely symbolic. The Buddha is like other plain bald-headed monks, and those who seek enlightenment through him are grievously mistaken. For seek your Buddha and he is lost to you; seek your way and it is lost to you; seek your patriarch and he is lost to you. Therefore, O my disciples, commit not this blunder.*

It is apparent, then, that what Zen teachers endeavoured most energetically to put forward in their missionary work was to make their disciples as original and independent as possible, not only in their interpretation of traditional Buddhism, but in regard to their ways of thinking. If there was one thing with which they were intensely disgusted, it was blind acceptance of an outside authority and a meek submission to conventionality. They wanted life and individuality and inspiration. They gave perfect freedom to the self-unfolding of the mind within one's self, which was not to be obstructed by any artificial instruments of torture, such as worshipping the Buddha as a saviour, a blind belief in the sacred books, or an unconditioned reliance upon an outside authority. They advised their followers not to accept anything until it was proved by themselves to be true. Everything, holy or profane, had to be rejected as not belonging to one's inner reason. Do not cling to the senses, do not cling to intellection; do not rely upon dualism, nor upon monism; do not be carried away by the noumenal or by the phenomenal, but be yourself even as you are, and you shall be as vast as space, as free as the bird in the air or the fish in water, and your spirit will be as transparent as the mirror. Buddha or no Buddha, God or

* In this passage Rinzai seems to refer to the Buddha indiscriminately as a historical personage and as an idealized being.

no God, they are a mere quibbling in words which have no real signification.

KO-AN.

The Dhyâna masters thus naturally had no stereotyped method of instructing their disciples, nor had the latter any regular routine work to go through. The teachers gave instruction offhand whenever and wherever they pleased, and the pupils came to them when they had something to ask them. In the monastery each of them had his own share of work, for the building, grounds, farm, kitchen, daily religious services, and other miscellaneous affairs, had to be attended to by the monks. If they had nothing special to come to the teacher for, and were satisfied with their lot as a monk, they stayed there, quietly observing all the rules relative to the monkish life. They seem to have all acted upon their own initiative in the study of Zen.

The following incident in the life of Rinzai (Lin Tsai), who lived in the first half of the ninth century, well illustrates the monastery life which was prevalent in China then and later.

When Rinzai was assiduously applying himself to Zen discipline under Obak (Huang Po in Chinese, who died 850), the head monk recognized his genius. One day the monk asked him how long he had been in the monastery, to which Rinzai replied: 'Three years.' The elder said: 'Have you ever approached the master and asked his instruction in Buddhism?' Rinzai said: 'I have never done this, for I did not know what to ask.' 'Why, you might go to the master and ask him, "What is the essence of Buddhism?"'

Rinzai, according to this advice, approached Obak and repeated the question, but before he finished the master gave him a slap.

When Rinzai came back, the elder asked how the interview went. Said Rinzai: 'Before I could finish my questioning, the master slapped me, but I fail to grasp its meaning.' The elder said: 'You go to him again and ask

the same question.' When he did so, he received the same response from the master. But Rinzai was urged again to try it for the third time, but the outcome did not improve.

He at last went to the elder, and said: 'In obedience to your kind suggestion, I have repeated my question three times, and been slapped three times. I deeply regret that, owing to my stupidity, I am unable to comprehend the hidden meaning of all this. I shall leave this place and go somewhere else.' Said the elder: 'If you wish to depart, do not fail to go and see the master to bid him farewell.'

Immediately after this, the elder saw the master, and said: 'That young novice who asked about Buddhism three times is a remarkable fellow. When he comes to take leave of you, be so gracious as to direct him properly. After a hard training he will prove to be a great master, and, like a huge tree, he will give a refreshing shelter to the world.'

When Rinzai came to see the master, the latter advised him not to go anywhere else but to Daigu (Tai Yü), of Kao-An, for he would be able to instruct him in the faith.

Rinzai went to Daigu, who asked him whence he came. Being informed that he was from Obak, Daigu further inquired what instruction he had under the master. Rinzai answered: 'I asked him three times about the essence of Buddhism, and he slapped me three times. But I am yet unable to see whether I had any fault or not.' Daigu said: 'Obak was tender-hearted even as a dotard, and you are not warranted at all to come over here and ask me whether anything was faulty with you.'

Being thus reprimanded, the signification of the whole affair suddenly dawned upon the mind of Rinzai, and he exclaimed: 'There is not much, after all, in the Buddhism of Obak.' Whereupon Daigu took hold of him, and said: 'This ghostly good-for-nothing creature! A few minutes ago you came to me and complainingly asked what was wrong with you, and now boldly declare that there is not much in the Buddhism of Obak. What is the reason of all

this? Speak out quick, speak out quick!' In response to this, Rinzai softly struck three times with his fist at the ribs of Daigu. The latter then released him, saying: 'Your teacher is Obak, and I will have nothing to do with you.'

Rinzai took leave of Daigu and came back to Obak, who, on seeing him come, exclaimed: 'Foolish fellow! what does it avail you to come and go all the time like this?' Rinzai said: 'It is all due to your doting kindness.'

When, after the usual salutation, Rinzai stood by the side of Obak, the latter asked him whence he had come this time. Rinzai answered: 'In obedience to your kind instruction, I was with Daigu. Thence am I come.' And he related, being asked for further information, all that had happened there.

Obak said: 'As soon as that fellow shows himself up here, I shall have to give him a good thrashing.'

'You need not wait for him to come; have it right this moment,' was the reply; and with this Rinzai gave his master a slap on the back.

Obak said: 'How dares this lunatic come into my presence and play with a tiger's whiskers!'

Rinzai then burst out into a *Ho*,* and Obak said: 'Attendant, come and carry this lunatic away to his cell.†'

All such incidents as this became soon known throughout the country, for the monks were constantly travelling from

* This is a sort of loud cry, and is made frequently by Zen masters in their religious discourse. *Ho* is Chinese pronunciation; in Japanese it is *katsu* or *kwatsu*, the ultimate vowel of which is only slightly audible.

† This is one of the most noted 'cases' (*Ko-an*) in the history of the Zen Sect. So far as its literary account goes, there seems nothing particularly religious or philosophical or illuminative of the Zen faith. On the other hand, the uninitiated may consider the whole affair a farce, devoid of any import, religious or otherwise. But Zen teachers think that they who understand this 'case' understand everything under and above the sun. To give a typical instance of Zen teaching, I have here reproduced this incident almost as fully as in the original text, 'Rinzai Rok' ('Lin tsai lu' in Chinese).

one monastery to another, and they were made subjects of their religious discussion. They are technically known as 'ko-an' (*kung-an* in Chinese), literally meaning 'official record,' or a judicial case which has to be examined before a tribunal of the Zen jurists. Later in the history of the Zen Sect these records were shown by the master to his pupils, as the means of attaining spiritual enlightenment and comprehending the inner spirit of Buddhism. A few instances are given here to let our readers have a general idea as to the Zen teaching.

1. A monk asked Dozan (Tung Shan, 806-869): 'Who is the Buddha?' And the master replied: 'Three pounds of flax.'*

* On this the well-known author of the 'Heki-gan Shu' ('Pi Yen Chi') comments: 'This "judicial case" is very much misunderstood by some of the masters, as they do not know how to masticate and digest and appreciate it. Why? Because it is insipid and devoid of taste. Many answers have already been given to the query, What is the Buddha? Some say, "He is in the sanctum;" others, "He is the one with the thirty-two marks;" and still others, "He is a bamboo-whip made at Chang Lin Hill." But Dozan's answer, "Three pounds of flax," goes far beyond all these, and puts the old masters to silence. Those who do not understand him imagine that he was at the time in the kitchen weighing the flax, when a monk approached and asked him about the Buddha, and that he gave the answer as reported. Some think that Dozan is ironical, for when he says east he means west. Some say that as the inquisitive monk, not knowing himself who was a Buddha, came to Dozan and asked the question, so the master answered him in a roundabout way. Oh, these palsy-stricken commentators!

'There is another class of scholars who say that those three pounds of flax are no more than the Buddha himself. How far off the track they are! If they labour to unravel Dozan's words in this manner, they will not be able even to dream of the proper solution, though they might work till the end of eternity.

'Why? Because words are a mere vessel in which the reason is carried. If you comprehend not the spirit of the master, but only want to grope in the dark maze of words, you would never catch a glimpse of the spirit. Says an ancient sage: "Reason as such has no expressions, but it is through expressions that it becomes manifest; and when we know the reason we neglect expressions." Only they that have penetrated the veil reach the first fact.

2. A monk asked Suibi (T'sui Wei) what is the significance of the first patriarch's coming over to China. (This is considered generally to be tantamount to asking the first principle of Buddhism.) Suibi said: 'Wait till nobody is around here, and I shall tell you of it.' They entered into the garden, when the monk said: 'There is nobody about here. I pray you tell me.' Suibi then pointed at the bamboo, saying: 'This bamboo has grown so high, and that one rather short.'*

3. Rinzai once delivered a sermon before a gathering of his disciples, in which he said: 'Upon this mass of red-coloured flesh there abideth an untitled true man. He constantly cometh out and in from your sense-gates.† Those who have not yet testified this, behold, behold!' A monk came out of the rank, and asked: 'Who is this untitled true man?' The master then descended from the chair and took hold of this monk, saying: 'Speak, speak.' The monk faltered, whereupon, releasing him, remarked Rinzai: 'What a worthless stuff is this untitled true man!' And he returned to his room.

As is seen in these 'judicial cases,' what Zen masters aim to attain is not a secret communion with a Supreme Being, or a hypnotic absorption in the absolute, or the dreaming of a divine vision, or forgetting one's self in a vast emptiness, where all marks of particularity vanish, leaving only the blankness of the unconscious. Their efforts seem to be to come in contact with the universal

'This case of "three pounds of flax" is like the public highway leading to Chang An (capital): each step, up and down, is easy and smooth.'

* A similar story is told of Mok-hyo (Mu Ping), who was asked by a monk what was the first principle of Buddhism. Hyo said: 'What a large melon is this!'

When another master was asked whether Buddhism could be found in a lonely, desolate, unfrequented region among craggy mountains, the master said: 'Yes.' Being further asked how that was, he said: 'Rocks and boulders there are: larger ones are large and smaller ones small.'

† Literally, face-gates.

reason or life which animates all things, and personally to feel its pulsation, as when the eye comes in touch with the ethereal waves it at once recognizes it as light. When one has this actual inner feeling, which might be called intuition or immediate knowledge, as Western philosophers would have it, Zen teachers designate such a one a Buddha, or Bodhisattva, or Daizen Chishiki (great, good, wise man).

NOT ASCETICISM.

Those who are only acquainted with the ascetic phase, or the pessimistic phase of Buddhism may think that the Zen Sect shares it too; but the fact is that the Zen is one of the most positivistic and energetic sects of Buddhism. Be only in accord, it teaches, with the reason of the universe, and the enlightened do not see anything in the world of the senses to be condemned or shunned, as is done by ascetics or pessimists. In this respect the Zen Sect is like other Mahâyânists—that is, they regard sympathy and loving-kindness as the very foundation of their religion. For they refuse to remain in their exalted spiritual position and to leave all their fellow-creatures suffering in ignorance. They come down into this world of particulars, as it were, from their ideal universality. They live like the masses; they suffer, endure, and hope. But their inner life is not disturbed by any tribulation of this world. The process of spiritual development of a Zen follower is pictorially illustrated in the popular book called 'Jûni Gyû no Zu'—that is, 'Twelve Oxen Pictures'—in which the spiritual training of the Zen Sect is likened to the taming of an ox. Were it not for lack of space, those pictures are well worth reproducing.

PHILOSOPHY OF ZEN.

No attempt will here be made to expound the philosophy of Zen which underlies those enigmatic 'ko-an,' a few samples of which have been given above, but I shall limit myself to giving to the reader a translation of certain passages in the

‘Sermons of the Sixth Patriarch’ (‘Fa pao tan ching’), which was really an epoch-making work in the history of the Zen Sect. The book seems to have been compiled by his disciples from their notebooks.*

‘Have your hearts thoroughly purified, and think of the Mahâ-Prajñâ-Pâramitâ. O my good and intelligent brethren, all beings are from the beginning in possession of the Bodhi-Prajñâ (intelligence or wisdom), and the reason why they are unable to realize it is due to their confused subjectivity. You should, therefore, exert yourselves according to the instruction of a great enlightened teacher, and have an insight into the nature of being. The Buddha-nature is the same in the ignorant as in the intelligent; but as there is a difference between enlightenment and confusion, some are called benighted, while others are enlightened. I shall now speak about the doctrine of Mahâ-Prajñâ-Pâramitâ, and lead you to the way of intelligence. Listen to me with hearts true and sincere, as I speak unto you.

‘O my good and intelligent brethren, people are talking all the time about Prajñâ, but they do not comprehend the Prajñâ of their own being. It is like unto talking about food, which does not satisfy the appetite. If they keep on only talking about the supraphenomenal, there will never be a time when they actually have an insight into it. Mere talking is of no avail.

‘O my good and intelligent brethren, Mahâ-Prajñâ-Pâramitâ is a Sanskrit term, and means in our language “the great intelligence that leads to the other shore.” This should be practised in your own heart, and not be talked about with your lips. If talked about and not practised, it is like unto a mirage, phantom, dew, or light-

* The translation of this kind of work is full of difficulties, especially when the writer does not lay claim to philosophical accuracy. The sentences are loosely connected, and important terms are used without definition. The translator hopes that the reader will be satisfied if the general drift of the text has been made sufficiently intelligible in what follows.

ning. If talked about as well as practised, the heart and the mouth are in harmony.

‘The Buddha is the essence of your being; outside of it there is no Buddha.

‘What is Mahâ? Mahâ means “great.” The vastness of the mind is like unto space: it has no limits, it is neither square nor circular, it is neither large nor small. It has no colour, such as blue, yellow, red, or white. It has also no magnitude, such as high or low, long or short. It is, again, free from anger and joy; it is above yes and no, good and evil. It has no tail or head.

‘The land of all the Buddhas is like unto vast space. The very essence of our being is from the first devoid of determinations, and there is nothing particular which could be taken hold of like an object of sense. When I speak of the absolute emptiness of our essence, it should be understood in this sense. O my good and intelligent brethren, take heed, however, not to cling to emptiness when I speak thus. This is most important—not to cling to emptiness (or indeterminations). For those who sit quietly absorbed in the contemplation of the absolute (that is, empty) are sinking in blank nothingness.

‘O my good and intelligent brethren, space, as we see it about us, embraces all material forms, such as the sun, moon, stars, and constellations, mountains, rivers, and the great earth, the bubbling springs and the murmuring rivulets, grasses, trees, woods and thickets, good men as well as bad, heaven as well as hell, and all the great oceans and all the mountains of Sumeru. Do they not all exist in space? When I speak of the emptiness of one’s essence, it should be understood in the same way.

‘O my good and intelligent brethren, the self-essence embraces all things, and on that account it is called “great.” All things exist in the essence of every sentient being. When you see good and evil existing in this world, do not cling to them, nor shun them, nor be defiled by them. The mind is like unto space, and it is called great—that is, Mahâ.

‘O my good and intelligent brethren, they that are confused talk with the mouth, while the wise practise in the heart. Again, they that are confused sometimes sit quietly and disturbed by no thoughts, and they think they are great. Such people as these are not worth mentioning, for their views are faulty.

‘O my good and intelligent brethren, the capacity of the mind is great, and there is not a spot in this universe where it does not prevail. When it is working it is manifest, and through this apparent working we come to the knowledge of all things. All is one and one is all. Coming or going, it knows no restraint; the mind is in its essence freedom, it is Prajñâ. O my good and intelligent brethren, all Prajñâ-wisdom grows out of your self-essence, and does not come from without. Take heed to avoid errors, for this is the free operation of your inner reason. Be true to yourselves, and everything else will come out true. The mind’s capacity is great and its working universal; it is not concerned with details. Do not commit yourselves to mere talking all day. If you do not practise this in your own hearts, you are like unto a man of low birth calling himself a king, which is unrealizable in him. Such persons cannot be called my disciples.

‘O my good and intelligent brethren, what is Prajñâ? Prajñâ means in our language “intelligence.” If in all places and at all times your every thought is not benighted, and you always put your intelligence into work, this is Prajñâchâra. When even a single thought of yours is benighted, Prajñâ is lost; when even a single thought of yours is enlightened, Prajñâ is manifest there. People are so benighted and confused that they do not perceive Prajñâ and yet speak of it. Even when the mind is not clear, they pretend to be perceiving Prajñâ. They talk all the time about emptiness, and know not what real emptiness means, for Prajñâ has no particular form, being the mind itself. One who understands in this wise knows what is Prajñâ intelligence.

‘What is Pâramitâ? It is the Western language, and

means in this land "to reach the other shore"—that is to say, to be free from birth and death. When you are fettered by the phenomenal, there is birth and death, as the waves are stirred in water, and that we call "this shore." When you are not attached to the phenomenal, there is no birth and death, as water eternally flowing, and that we call "the other shore," or Pâramitâ.

'O my good and intelligent brethren, confused are they that do mere talking, for at the moment of their thinking they have committed blunders and wrongs. To practise Prajñâ in every thought, this is in accord with your inner reason. Those who are enlightened in this matter understand Prajñâdharma, and those who discipline themselves in this principle are practising Prajñâchâra. They are common mortals who do not discipline themselves in this, while they are Buddhas who practise this in their thought.

'O my good and intelligent brethren, common mortals are Buddhas, and all the passions and desires are born of wisdom (*bodhi*). As long as your thoughts are confused you are common mortals, but at the very moment you are enlightened you are Buddhas. When your minds are fettered by sensuality, every desire you cherish is defiled; but as soon as your minds are freed from the bondage, every desire of yours is born of wisdom. O good and intelligent brethren, the Mahâ-Pârajñâ-Pâramitâ is to be most honoured, has no equal, and stands all alone. It does not depart, nor does it come, and all the Buddhas of the past, present, and future are born of it. By the operation of this great Prajñâ all the passions, desires, and sensualities are destroyed that arise from the five skandhas. By thus disciplining one's self, Buddhahood is attained, and the three venomous passions are converted into morality, tranquillity, and wisdom.

'O my good and intelligent brethren, from this spiritual gate of one Prajñâ there have issued 84,000 forms of wisdom. Why? Because 84,000 different forms of evil passions are possessed by sentient beings. If they were free from sensuality, wisdom, which is never independent

of one's inner reason, would be manifest all the time. They that are enlightened have no hankering, no repentance, no attachment. In them there is no hypocrisy awakened. Through the operation of one's own true inner reason, which is no more than Prajñā itself, reflect upon all things and illuminate them, and cling not to them nor shun them. This is the way in which reason is perceived and Buddhahood is attained.'

ZEN AND GENERAL CULTURE.

CHINA.

Apart from the general influence of Buddhism upon Chinese thought, Zen discipline seems to have been singularly acceptable to the Oriental people. Through the medium of the Zen Sect, Indian Buddhism can be said to have been thoroughly naturalized in the Middle Kingdom and also in Japan. It was not so elaborately speculative as some other Buddhist sects, such as the T'ien T'ai, the Avatamsaka, the Mādhyamika, or the Yoga, and this simplicity particularly suited the practical tendency of the Chinese mind. The Zen did not antagonize the doctrines of Confucius, as did Taoism, but instead tried to absorb them within itself as a part of its practical discipline, and this must have been very gratifying to the Confucians, who were fond of rituals and advocated formalism. Again, the Zen had something in it which savoured of Taoism, as it taught non-attachment to things worldly and a mystic appreciation of Nature, and this must have satisfied the Laotzean elements of the country. In short, the Zen was so elastic, so comprehensive, and so ready to reconcile itself to its environment that it finally came to contain within itself everything that was needed by the Chinese mind. No wonder, then, that its influence among the educated as well as the masses was almost phenomenal since its definite establishment in the middle part of the T'ang dynasty. If in those days the Zen Sect had not existed, the repeated

persecutions might have entirely wiped out all trace of Buddhist influence in China, and the resuscitation of Chinese speculative philosophy in the Sung dynasty and the Ming (1368-1628) might have been an impossibility.

Zen teachers of China used most popular and most forcible language instead of foreign, borrowed Sanskrit-Chinese, and this fact must be considered to have not a little contributed to its universal propagation. Almost all the noted monasteries in China at present belong to the Zen Sect, though the monks no more manifest the spirit of the ancient masters. A great majority of those Confucian scholars or cultured officials who are at all acquainted with Buddhism have gained their knowledge from Zen literature. From towards the end of the T'ang dynasty scholars and statesmen who were worthy of note went to the Zen monasteries, and either submitted themselves to the discipline, or delved deeply into its mysterious literature. The tradition seems to be still alive among the educated Chinese of the present day. And the strange fact is that, in spite of their denunciation of the literary demonstration of the faith, the Zen teachers have produced many writings with a style peculiarly their own.

JAPAN.

Into Japan the Zen Sect was introduced in its perfected form at the time when feudalism began to take hold of the country. Its simplicity, directness, and efficiency instantly won the heart of the warrior, and the samurais began to knock at the monastery gate. The Zen does not share those peculiarities of early Buddhism which were acceptable only to people of the leisurely class, nor has it anything to do with pessimism, passivity, or non-resistance. The military class of Japan, which had for long been seeking a religion to satisfy their spiritual needs, found at once their ideal in the teachings of Zen. The so-called Hojo period in the history of Japan, which is noted for able administration, simplicity of life, and the efficiency and energy of the military class, had thus successfully started the Zen Sect

in the land of the Rising Sun. The Zen monasteries, still extant in Kamakura, the ancient capital of the Hojo Government, are monuments of the devotion of its adherents.

The Ashikaga Shogunate that succeeded the Hojo, as well as the Imperial House of those days, greatly patronized Zen, which now thoroughly permeated every fibre of Japanese life and civilization. Not only emperors, statesmen and generals came to see Zen masters, but also men of letters, artists, singers, actors, wrestlers, merchants, masters of tea ceremony, and swordsmen. They could not withstand the overwhelming tide of the mystic discipline which was considered to hold the key to the secrets of life and the universe.

Bushido, which has come lately to be much talked of since the conclusion of the Russo-Japanese war, owes its development to a considerable extent to the Zen Sect. It is, in fact, a production of the three moral forces in Japan—Shintoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism. Each of them has contributed something to the formation of this code of the knighthood of Japan. According to the positions taken by different critics, the share of each of these contributing elements may be emphasized or underrated; but no fair observer will deny that Zen had a great deal to do with the religious and spiritual aspect of Bushido. For the *Lebensanschauung* of Bushido is no more nor less than that of Zen. The calmness and even joyfulness of heart at the moment of death which is conspicuously observable in the Japanese; the intrepidity which is generally shown by the Japanese soldier in the face of an overwhelming enemy; and the fairness of play to an opponent, so strongly taught by Bushido—all these come from the spirit of the Zen training, and not from any such blind, fatalistic conception as is sometimes thought to be a trait peculiar to Orientals.

ZEN DISCIPLINE.

Zen teachers train their pupils in two ways—intellectual and conative or affective. To develop the speculative power of the pupil, a 'ko-an' or judicial case, which was discussed or constructed by the old masters, is given to him as an object of reflection. The teacher may request the pupil to present his views on such cases as these: 'What is your original face which you have even before your parents were born?' or 'The object of Buddhist discipline is to have an insight into the nature of the mind, and thus to attain Buddhahood. Where, now, do you locate your mind?' or 'All things are said to return to One. Where, then, is the ultimate home of this One?' or 'When an ancient master of Zen was asked what was the essence of Buddhism, he said: "The oak-tree in my garden." What is the signification of this?'

When these questions are given, the pupil will try his best to solve them. He may think that the 'original face' means the ultimate reason of existence, or that the 'One to which all things return' is the absolute ground of things, and has nowhere else to return but to itself. According to these views, he will approach the teacher, displaying before him all his precious stock of philosophical and religious knowledge. But such demonstrations will call forth but a cold reception at the hand of the Zen teacher, though they might be in accord with a conventional interpretation of Buddhist theology. For Zen is not to demonstrate or to interpret or to discuss, but to present the fact of faith as it is. Those who are generally addicted to talking on things which they have never experienced personally, who have taken symbols for things and intellectual representations for realities, will for the first time in their lives realize, when they are so bluntly treated by Zen teachers, how superficial and confused their minds were, and how unsteady was the foundation of their faith. They will thus, under the Zen training, learn to define their notions of things

clearly and accurately ; they will also be induced to reflect within themselves, as well as on things outside, from a point of view quite different from those they had held. Even if they are unable to grasp the signification of the 'ko-an,' this reflective habit which they are going to acquire (though this is not the main object of Zen) will considerably help the pupils in their moral training.

When one case is settled, another and perhaps more complicated one will be given, so that the pupil will be able to see the prevalence of one principle in all cases, and this will be continued as long as he desires.

The conative or affective phase of Zen discipline is accomplished by the means of *zazen* (dhyâna). In this the pupil is required to sit quietly for a certain length of time, during which he will think of the 'ko-an' given to him. Zazen can be practised by the pupil alone or in company of others in a hall especially built.

Zazen is not meant to induce a trance or a state of self-hypnotization. It aims at keeping the mind well poised and directing attention on any point one wills. Most people, especially in these days of commercial and industrial rush, are so given up to excitements, impulses, and sensationalism that they often prematurely exhaust their nervous energy, and finally lose equilibrium of mind. Zen professes to remedy this useless waste of energy on the one hand, and to increase, as it were, a reserve stock of mentality.

In conclusion, it may be of interest to our readers to see what a Zen teacher of modern times has to say about the practice of Zen, and here I give some extracts from the Reverend Soyen Shaku's work entitled 'Sermons of a Buddhist Abbot,' which is a collection of some of his addresses delivered during his recent visit to America. He occupies a very prominent position in the Zen hierarchy in Japan, and is the Lord Abbot of the historical monasteries of Kamakura, where the Zen Sect of Japan first laid down its foundation.

'What is dhyâna ? Dhyâna literally means, in Sanskrit,

pacification, equilibration, or tranquillization, but as religious discipline it is rather self-examination or introspection. It is not necessarily to cogitate on the deep subjects of metaphysics, nor is it to contemplate the virtues of a deity, or the transitoriness of mundane life. To define its import in Buddhism, roughly and practically, it is the habit of withdrawing occasionally from the turbulence of worldliness and of devoting some time to a quiet inspection of one's own consciousness. When this habit is thoroughly established, a man can keep serenity of mind and cheerfulness of disposition, even in the midst of his whirlwind-like course of daily life. Dhyâna is, then, a discipline in tranquillization. It aims at giving to the mind the time for deliberation, and saving it from running wild; it directs the vain and vulgar to the path of earnestness and reality; it makes us feel interest in higher things which are above the senses; it discovers the presence in us of a spiritual faculty which bridges the chasm between the finite and the infinite; and it finally delivers us from the bondage and torture of ignorance, safely leading us to the other shore of Nirvâna.

'Dhyâna is sometimes made a synonym for *samatha* and *samâdhi* and *samâpatti*. *Samatha* is tranquillity and practically the same as dhyâna, though the latter is much more frequently in use than the former. *Samâpatti* literally is "put together evenly" or "balanced," and means the equilibrium of consciousness in which takes place neither wakefulness nor apathy, but in which the mind is calmly concentrated on the thought under consideration. *Samâdhi* is a perfect absorption, voluntary or involuntary, of thought in the object of contemplation. A mind is sometimes said to be in a state of *samâdhi* when it identifies itself with the ultimate reason of existence and is only conscious of the unification. In this case, dhyâna is the method or process that brings us finally to *samâdhi*.

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'Now, the benefits arising from the exercise of dhyâna are more than one, and are not only practical but moral and spiritual. Nobody will deny the most practical advan-

tage gained through presence of mind, moderation of temper, control of feelings, and mastery of one's self. A passion may be so violent at the time of its agitation that it will fairly consume itself to utter destruction, but a cool-headed man knows well how to give it the necessary psychological time of rest and deliberation, and thus to save himself from plunging headlong into the Charybdis of emotion. And this cool-headedness, though in some measure due to heredity, is attainable through the exercise of dhyâna.

'Intellectually, dhyâna will keep the head clear and lucid, and, whenever necessary, make it concentrate itself on the subject at issue. Logical accuracy depends greatly on the dispassionateness of the arguing mind, and scientific investigation gains much from the steadiness of the observing eye. Whatever be a man's intellectual development, he has surely nothing to lose, but a great deal to gain, by training himself in the habit of tranquillization.

'In these days of industrial and commercial civilization, multitudes of people have very little time to devote themselves to spiritual culture. They are not altogether ignorant of the existence of things which are of permanent value, but their minds are so engrossed in details of everyday life that they find it extremely difficult to avoid their constant obtrusion. Even when they retire from their routine work at night, they are bent on something exciting which will tax their already overstretched nervous system to the utmost. If they do not die prematurely, they become nervous wrecks. They seem not to know the blessings of relaxation. They seem to be unable to live within themselves and find there the source of eternal cheerfulness. Life is for them more or less a heavy burden, and their task consists in the carrying of the burden. The gospel of dhyâna, therefore, must prove to them a heaven-sent boon when they conscientiously practise it.

'Dhyâna is physiologically the accumulation of nervous energy; it is a sort of spiritual storage battery in which an enormous amount of latent force is sealed—a force which

will, whenever demand is made, manifest itself with tremendous potency. A mind trained in dhyâna will never waste its energy, causing its untimely exhaustion. It may appear at times, when superficially observed, dull, uninteresting, and dreamy, but it will work wonders when the occasion arises; while a mind ordinarily addicted to dissipation succumbs to the intensity of an impulse or a stimulus without much struggling, which ends in complete collapse, for it has no energy in reserve. Here, let me remark incidentally, can be seen one of the many characteristic differences between Orientalism and Occidentalism. In all departments of Oriental culture a strong emphasis is placed upon the necessity of preserving the latent nervous energy, and of keeping the source of spiritual strength well fed and nourished. Young minds are trained to store up within, and not to make any wasteful display of their prowess and knowledge and virtue. It is only shallow waters, they would say, that make a noisy, restless stream, while a deep whirlpool goes on silently. The Occidentals, as far as I can judge, seem to be fond of making a full display of their possessions with the frankness of a child; and they are prone to a strenuous and dissipating life, which will soon drain all the nervous force at their command. They seem not to keep anything in reserve which they can make use of later on at their leisure. They have indeed candid and open-hearted traits, which sometimes seem wanting in the Orientals; but they certainly lack the profound depth of the latter, who never seem to be enthusiastic, clamorous, or irrepressible. The teaching of Lao-tze or that of the "Bhagavadgâtâ" was not surely intended for the Western nations. Of course, there are exceptions in the West as well as in the East. Generally speaking, however, the West is energetic and the East mystical; for the latter's ideal is to be incomprehensible, immeasurable, and undemonstrative even as absolute being. And the practice of dhyâna may be considered in a way one of the methods of realizing this ideal.

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‘In the “Chandradîpa-samâdhi Sûtra,” the benefits of dhyâna practice are enumerated as follows: (1) When a man practises dhyâna according to the regulation, all his senses become calm and serene, and, without knowing it on his part, he begins to enjoy the habit. (2) Loving-kindness will take possession of his heart, which then, freeing itself from sinfulness, looks upon all sentient beings as his brothers and sisters. (3) Such poisonous and harassing passions as anger, infatuation, avarice, etc., gradually retire from the field of consciousness. (4) Having a close watch over all the senses, dhyâna guards them against the intrusion of evils. (5) Being pure in heart and serene in disposition, the practiser of dhyâna feels no inordinate appetite in lower passions. (6) The mind being concentrated on higher thoughts, all sorts of temptation and attachment and egoism are kept away. (7) Though he well knows the emptiness of vanity, he does not fall into the snare of nihilism. (8) However entangling the nets of birth and death, he is well aware of the way to deliverance therefrom. (9) Having fathomed the deepest depths of the Dharma, he abides in the wisdom of Buddha. (10) As he is not disturbed by any temptation, he feels like an eagle that, having escaped from imprisonment, freely wings his flight through the air.

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‘The practice of dhyâna is often confounded with a trance or self-hypnotism—a grave error which I here propose to refute. The difference between the two is patent to every clear-sighted mind, for a trance is a pathological disturbance of consciousness, while dhyâna is a perfectly normal state of it. Trance is a kind of self-illusion, which is entirely subjective and cannot be objectively verified; but dhyâna is a state of consciousness in which all mental powers are kept in equilibrium, so that no one thought or faculty is made predominant over others. It is like the pacification of turbulent waters by pouring oil over them. In a smooth, glossy mirror of immense dimension no waves are roaring, no foam is boiling, no splashes

are spattering. And it is in this perfect mirror of consciousness that myriads of reflections, as it were, come and go without ever disturbing its serenity. In trances certain mental and physiological functions are unduly accelerated, while others are kept altogether in abeyance, the whole system of consciousness thus being thrown into disorder ; and its outcome is the loss of equilibrium in the organism, which is very opposite to what is attained through the practice of dhyâna.

‘Again, some superficial critics think that Buddhist dhyâna is a sort of intense meditation on some highly abstracted thoughts, and that the concentration, which works in the same way as self-hypnotism, leads the mind to the state of a trance, called Nirvâna. This is a very grievous error committed by those who have never comprehended the essence of religious consciousness, for Buddhist dhyâna has nothing to do with abstraction or hypnotization. What it proposes to accomplish is to make our consciousness realize the inner reason of the universe which abides in our minds. Dhyâna strives to make us acquainted with the most concrete and, withal, the most universal fact of life. It is the philosopher’s business to deal with dry, lifeless, uninteresting generalizations. Buddhists are not concerned with things like that. They want to see the fact directly, and not through the medium of philosophical abstractions. There may be a god who created heaven and earth, or there may not ; we might be saved by simply believing in his goodness, or we might not ; the destination of evil-doers may be hell and that of good men paradise, or this may be reversed. True Buddhists do not trouble themselves with such propositions as these. Let them well alone ; Buddhists are not so idle and superficial as to waste their time in pondering over the questions which have no vital concern with our religious life. Buddhists through dhyâna endeavour to reach the bottom of things, and there to grasp with their own hands the very life of the universe, which makes the sun rise in the morning, makes the bird cheerfully sing in the balmy spring breeze, and also makes

the biped called man hunger for love, righteousness, liberty, truth, and goodness. In dhyâna, therefore, there is nothing abstract, nothing dry as a bone and cold as a corpse, but all animation, all activity and eternal revelation.

‘Some Hindu philosophers, however, seem to have considered hallucinations and self-suggested states of mind as real, and the attainment of them as the aim of dhyâna practice. Their conception of the eightfold dhyâna-heaven in which all sorts of angels are living is evidence of it. When the mythical beings in those regions practise dhyâna, they enter into different stages of samâdhi. They (1) come to think that they are lifted up in the air like a cloud; (2) they feel the presence of some indescribable luminosity; (3) they experience a supernatural joy; (4) their minds become so clarified and transparent as to reflect all the worlds like a very brilliant mirror; (5) they feel as if the soul has escaped bodily confinement and expanded itself to the immensity of space; (6) they now come back to a definite state of consciousness, in which all mental functions are presented, and the past and present and future reveal themselves; (7) they then have the feeling of absolute nothingness, in which not a ripple of mentation stirs; (8) lastly, they are not conscious of anything particular, nor have they lost consciousness, and here they are said to have reached the highest stage of samâdhi.

‘But, according to Buddhism, all these visionary phenomena as the outcome of dhyâna are rejected, for they have nothing to do with the realization of the religious life. In the “S’urāngama Sûtra” fifty abnormal conditions of consciousness are mentioned against which the practiser of dhyâna has to guard himself, and among them we find those psychical aberrations mentioned above.’

LITERATURE.

The Zen Sect is very prolific in writings, though it is an avowed enemy of literature, and it has produced many learned scholars, to whom we are indebted for our ability

to trace its history and development almost to its every step. Among many books treating of the history of the Zen Sect, 'Ching teh chuan têng lu' and 'Hsü chuan têng lu' ('Records of the Transmission of the Light,' all in sixty-six fascicles) are to be recommended. For the earliest treatises of the philosophy of Zen, the reader is referred to the short metrical exposition by the third Zen patriarch of China, entitled 'Hsin hsin ming' ('On Faith'), and the 'Sermons of the Sixth Patriarch' ('Lu tsu tan ching'). Among later Zen literature, illustrative of its full development in a way peculiar to the Far Eastern mind, we may mention 'Lin tsai lu' ('Records of Lin-Tsai') and 'Pi yen chi' ('Collections of Pi-Yen'). For the practice of dhyâna, see 'Fu kwan zazen gi' and 'Zazen yôjin ki.' 'Shôbô genzo' ('The Eye of the Good Law') and 'Shûmon mujin tô ron' ('The Eternal Lamp of the Zen Sect'), both by Japanese Zen teachers, may be very profitably consulted by the uninitiated, though they may feel occasionally as if looking at the moon through a veil.