

Buddhist Mysticism

A study based upon a comparison
with the mysticism of St. Theresa and Juliana of Norwich

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Hommage respectueux et reconnaissant.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.

PART I. — FUNDAMENTAL BUDDHIST TEACHINGS.

CHAPTER I. — The Individual.

CHAPTER II. — The Laws.

CHAPTER III. — The Contemplations.

PART II. — BUDDHIST MYSTICAL TEACHINGS.

CHAPTER I. — The Ariyan.

CHAPTER II. — Arahantship.

CHAPTER III. — Enlightenment.

PART III. — THE ARIYAN AND ST. THERESA.

CHAPTER I. — Introductory.

CHAPTER II. — St. Theresa's Life.

CHAPTER III. — St. Theresa's Mystical Experience.

CHAPTER IV. — St. Theresa's Mystical Experience. — Its First Feature.

CHAPTER V. — St. Theresa's Mystical Experience. — Its Second Feature.

CHAPTER VI. — St. Theresa's Mystical Experience. — Its Third Feature.

PART IV. — THE ARIYAN AND MOTHER JULIANA.

CHAPTER I. — Introductory.

CHAPTER II. — Juliana's Life.

CHAPTER III. — Juliana's Mystical Experience.

GENERAL CONCLUSION.



BUDDHIST MYSTICISM

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INTRODUCTION

Mysticism as a subject of organized study has been properly taken up only within recent years. A good amount of useful work has already been done during this short period. Different standpoints have been found, each based upon an important part of the material that is available, and by this means many facts have become known all of which are necessary in spite of their present contradictions. It is therefore certain that this work, even when it is not completely successful, is of great use in making us think of the matter scientifically, in showing us its extent, and also in putting before us the right sort of questions.

The last statement will have to be qualified, for it is perhaps not true to say that the study of mysticism is quickly becoming scientific in its methods and suggestions. At present this can at most be said of western mysticism. Here one touches its weak point, for it really is true that there will always be a weak point in the study of mysticism so long as it is not based upon the true and related experience of mystics in all countries, both in the East and in the West. Western mysticism with its several schools, christian and Neo-platonic. And others that are almost purely pantheistic, is certainly a most important source of our knowledge. It provides the student with sufficient

instances of the true mystical experience which is valid everywhere as such and which is after all the really important thing in mysticism. And as the West has the necessary means to analyse the experience and express it in proper psychological language it would be said that there is no need to seek for more data in the East, for there too the data must be the same mystical experience. I disagree with this position for two principal reasons.

Firstly such a position does not sufficiently distinguish between the mystic's experience and his account of that experience in objective terms. Now, the mystic has a certain experience, a state of soul which is of universal validity, that is to say, it is the same as that of other mystics of all times and of all countries. But then, this experience is known by the student of mysticism only through the mystic's account of it. Here arises the importance of differentiating, for the moment the mystic attempts to describe his experience he immediately interprets it, since all statements in language of any experience involves an interpretation. So we have two distinct facts to consider—the actual mystical experience which, let us say, forms the substance of the whole matter, and the language conveying it which is the " shell " containing that substance. The first fact, that of mystical experience, is always true and universal in the sense explained and so the East and the West meet there. But the second fact, that of the shell containing the experience, is not universal, for the mystic must always describe his experience in the language of his own individual thoughts. So that if the mystic says " I have had the experience of a union with God " he is giving us his mystical experience in the shell of his own special christian or theistic beliefs, namely, that there exist a God and a self which are in some sense distinct and at certain times separated. This is of course the rough and ready view of the ordinary christian who assumes a world containing selves and a God who is somehow behind or above it. But extreme vedantic mysticism does not make

this assumption. Such a mystic does not assume a world and a God. There is no world except as illusion (Maya), and I am God. Then again, buddhist mysticism would go even beyond this, and reject both God and the self, the two bases of the christian shell or account of the experience. The buddhist would speak of an " Unconditioned reality " instead of God, that is, a Reality not represented as an outer transcendent Being, who is the christian God, but as an entirely subjective state of harmony with universal law (Dhamma). So one finds the same ultimate mystical experience described by three mysticisms in three different ways. All these views are the shells, theories, individual interpretations of experience, but they must exist unless the mystic confines himself to saying " I have had an experience which is incommunicable and uninterpretable." In this case the mystic communicates nothing at all and the study of mysticism becomes impossible for want of data. This clearly establishes the importance of the shell as distinct from the mystical experience. And, as has been explained already, the shell unlike the experience, is always subject to the conditions of time and traditions, of race and mind and religious teachings, and therefore it must vary with these conditions. Thus arises the first reason against accepting the statement that mysticism as a study can be established on experience as felt and described by western mystics alone.

The second reason is that even if mysticism need only to study the substance which is mystical experience we have not entirely avoided the shell containing the experience. To say it again, all mystical experience has come down to us not only recorded in language involving an interpretation but also with a great deal of ontological assumptions. Thus the words " Union with God " imply the existence of a God and a self. The problem here is as to where the mystic's experience ends and where his interpretation begins. This dividing line must be found if only for the sake of a really pure and universal idea of mystical experience. The shell

must be known before it could be separated from the experience, and so again its study and proper understanding in every case becomes necessary.

I am therefore brought back to my original statement that the West in spite of its most excellent materials cannot by itself give us a complete study of mysticism. The East too has its mystics. They too have important things to say about the mystical life, for they also sought the Absolute and many of them are reported to have found It. " Aham Brahmasmi—I am Brahman, " says the vedantist quite early in his spiritual life. Also, " Indeed, I am Thou, O holy Deity, and Thou art I, O Deity. " Clearly this is an instance of mystical experience, and there are very many others more. So what is really needed in the study of mysticism is co-ordination, and the correcting of conclusions reached in western books with fresh materials from the East. My work here is an attempt at such kind of research, for I try to compare two types of mysticism, one a typical western form based on the most orthodox beliefs and the other a very old eastern mysticism which is found in some of the earliest Pali buddhist writings. I hope at least to point out the need for such kind of work.

As sources for the buddhist part of the study I shall use the Pali canon so that buddhist mysticism will here mean only what is canonical. I intend to limit myself to that definition faithfully, except in such few cases where explanations or additional definitions will be helpful. Then I shall use the commentaries of Buddhaghosa and Anuruddha, works which are of canonical authority in the southern buddhist countries. Even these will be used only to explain what is said too shortly or obscurely by the canonical writings. The study therefore remains purely that of the mysticism of the Pali canon and of its relationship to western mysticism. It is a step towards a wider understanding of mysticism as a whole.

PART I.

Fundamental Buddhist Teachings.

CHAPTER I

The individual.

The first question that is raised by the present undertaking is connected with the terms, concepts, and the material that will be used in it. That is to say, in trying to establish and define mysticism afresh upon a basis that will include the buddhist experience as well words will be used which may not suggest the same meaning to different minds; also there will be a good amount of material which will require to be thoroughly explained before it can be accepted for establishing something which is universally true. Taking as an instance the first requirement, we must understand the word mysticism itself, as to what it means to the mystic speaking from his own experience, and whether the same meaning exists in buddhism. There are many more words requiring to be explained in the same way. Then, as regards the buddhist material, its real equivalents to the already accepted mystical experience and practices must be known, explained, and placed in their proper relations. All this is a necessary beginning. Among the many requirements the first in logical order is an understanding of the fundamental buddhist teachings. Without that the mystical parts of buddhism cannot be properly estimated. So I shall begin with an outline of those teachings.

The point of departure—the individual.

1.—An account of buddhism should always start from the real Buddhist point of departure, namely, the individual and his experiences. This is extremely important, for it shows how buddhism differs in a singular manner from the other great religions which do not distinguish between the moral and the empirical affirmations of the consciousness. Thus, for instance, in the Buddha's own time, the vedantist began with the Absolute outside his experiences, and then worked downwards till he arrived at the problem of his own self. He then solved it by identifying this self with the Absolute (°).

The buddhist on the other hand limits his whole religious thought to himself and his experiences, that is, to self as something opposed to exterior objects (°). Nothing outside troubles him. Thus the whole "Dhamma" of buddhism (°) is directly a conclusion from facts of individual experience. The word "Dhamma" itself is applied prominently to three teachings. 1.—It is used in connection with the four ariyan truths which are the real doctrinal substance of buddhism—suffering, its cause, its end, and the way leading to that end. They all deal with the commonest fact of everyday individual experience, suffering, or rather ill, disease, just as it is in every creature's life. The Buddha himself is made to say it plainly—"Both then and now just this do I reveal, suffering, and the ending of suffering" (°). So everything is seen in relation to one experience, namely, suffering and its healing. It is now easy to understand

(1) Max Muller's 'Vedantic Philosophy', pp. 87, 92, 101, 105. This is the Advaiti theory of non-Dualism; also see Monier Williams, *Hinduism*, p. 83.

(2) Pali—Ajjhattika. This is entirely different from 'Atteniya' which is the soul or ontological self. The latter is of course rejected by the buddhist.

(3) Here used as doctrine in its most important sense.

(4) *Majjhima*, I., 140; *Samyutta*, IV., 384.

why the metaphor of the healer and his art is the most popular in the buddhist writings (°); also why Nibbana itself, which is the highest Buddhist achievement, often means simply "health" (°). 2.—Dhamma as a teaching also refers to the analysis of the self and its sense-perceptions, "Listen, Bikkhu, I will teach you Dhamma," says the Buddha to a monk (°), and he then explains the constituents of man. The disciples themselves often understood the Dhamma only psychologically, that is, as a study of the composite human body—"The Dhamma he taught to me—the factors, organs, basis of the self" (°). 3.—Dhamma refers to a third teaching, which is the law of cause and happening, sometimes called the Wheel of Causation. "I will teach you the Dhamma, that being present, this becomes; from the arising of that, this arises. That being absent, this does not become; from the cessation of that, this ceases" (°). This is the most ultimate law in buddhism, explaining all things. Here too we get a conclusion reached from individual experience, for the law discovers the cause of all things in individual ignorance (avijja), and the furthest results it reaches are also facts of individual experience, birth, old age, death, the whole body of fleshly ills (°). So these three uses of the word show that the whole Dhamma of the Buddha deals with man's actual individual experiences, with life as he knows it in the midst of ordinary circumstances, that is, as something troubled, ignorant, and sorrowful; with the law which was the natural conclusion from those experiences; and with reducing that law to a way of salvation. This was the whole of the Buddha's "enlightenment" under

(1) Refer C.A.F. Rhys Davids, *Buddhist Psychology*, p. 82.

(2) *Majjhima*, I., 509. *Sutta-Nipata*, verse 749.

(3) *Majjhima*, *Sutta*, No. 140, called 'The Analysis of Elements.'

(4) *Samyutta*, I., 196.

(5) *Majjhima*, *Sutta*, 75; also *Majjhima*, I., 191; *Digha*, III., 275.

(6) *Samyutta*, V., 338; *Maha-Vagga*, I., 1; *Digha*, *Maha-Nidana-Sutta*.

the Bo-tree, for it came to him as a revelation of ultimate law, especially as seen in its most important results, which are the four noble truths concerning suffering—all, as I have explained, conclusions from individual experience (1).

The reason is now clear why ontology in its real sense does not exist in the canonical writings. All questions are raised and answered entirely within the area of man's perceptions, the work of his six senses. Here is the Buddha's actual answer—" I will teach you the arising and the passing away of the world... What are they ? Because of eye and visible form arises visual consciousness, the encounter of the three in contact... thence feeling, thence craving, from the extinction of which comes extinction of grasping, and the extinction of this whole mass of ill. " " I say that the end of the world is not to be learnt, to be got to, by going to the end of this world... " " Tis even in this fathom long carcase, percipient, intelligent, that I declare to be the genesis of the world, the ceasing of the world and the way towards the ceasing of the world " (2). These passages explain themselves when read together, for what they mean is that man is only concerned with facts of his own experiences and so everything is known to him purely as such facts, he having nothing to do with them objectively. Again, when the buddhist discusses the subject of ultimates, he mentions four categories of what he calls ultimate concepts, namely, mind, factors of consciousness, the body, and Nibbana (3). They are very different from the categories of other religions, like God and the soul, or the vedantist's Being and Non-Being. Three of the buddhist categories are constituents of the individual, actual sense-organs according to buddhist psychology ; the fourth is a pure subjective state. In this way

(1) Refer. Maha-Vagga, I., i., 3; Jataka, I., 68-76.

(2) Samyutta, IV., 87, 93; I., 62; Anguttara, II., 48.

(3) Chitta, Chetasika, rupa, nibbana-refer. 'Compendium of Philosophy.'

the buddhist clears his mind of all ontological difficulties, finding all the answer he requires to them in himself and his experiences. Anything that takes him outside of those bounds is clearly condemned as being unprofitable and not leading to his happiness—"The jungle, the desert, the puppet-show, the writhing, the entanglement of such speculations is accompanied by sorrow, wrangling, resentment, the fever of excitement. It conduces neither to detachment of heart, nor to freedom from lust, nor to tranquility, nor to peace, nor to wisdom, nor to the insight of the higher stages of the path, nor to Nibbana" (?). So it becomes clear that the Buddha begins and ends all his teachings, as such, with the individual and his experiences.

The above is the real point of departure in buddhism, and it explains all that is singular in its teachings, life, and ideal. For instance, in the ordinary rules of morality, all buddhist values are based upon primary sense-factors, that is, feelings of pleasure and pain, as being the commonest facts of experience (?). Many Western critics have misunderstood this, some even calling it for that reason a pure utilitarianism. But remembering the buddhist point of departure its explanation becomes simple. The Buddha decided to consider only individual experience; and so, consistently, he made use of that experience not only for establishing the several parts of his teachings, but also for showing the consequences of life within and without them. In selecting his material the

(1) *Majjhima*, I., 431-415; *Suttas*, 63 to 72; *Samyutta*, III., 57; *Ti-Vuttakā*, p. 444. Buddha's only reply to such questions was a list of Indeterminates, that is, questions forbidden from being asked.—They are,

1 to 2—Whether the world is eternal or not.

3 to 4—Whether the world is infinite or not.

5 to 6—Whether the soul is the same of the body or not.

7 to 10—Whether a man exists in any way, or not, after death.

For a very full statement on it with references see 'Dialogues of the Buddha,' vol. I., pp. 186, ff.

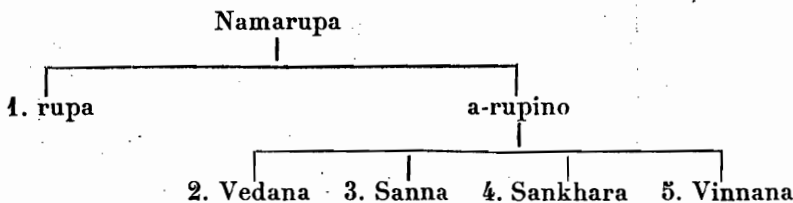
(2) *Majjhima*, I., 415; *Anguttara*, I., 190.

Buddha used the dialectical method of all great teachers, that is to say, he selected just what his hearers would understand, primary experiences like feelings of pleasure and pain for people with a primary religious consciousness, and the experience of a pure transcendence for those able to understand it more.

The point of departure explained—its psychology.

2.—Having established the point of departure it must be explained according to buddhist psychology.

The individual is not a permanent entity called “atta” or soul, but an ever-changing complex flow or succession of states. In a useful western phrase, there is no being but only a becoming (°). Every person is therefore only a compound of several constituents, namely, the five khandhas or groups (°), which are collectively called Nama-Rupa.



The English meaning of these five will be (1) material qualities, (2) feeling (3) sense-perception (4) complexes of consciousness (5) consciousness (°). For their explanation

(1) Here my task is to explain the composition of the individual, giving its different constituents according to Buddhist psychological analysis. The no-soul theory will be explained later, in its proper place.

(2) Samyutta, III., 86, ff; Majjhima, I., 292, ff; Visuddhi-Magga, chs. XIV to XVIII; Milinda-Panha, 25-27.

(3) I here adopt Mrs. Rhys Davids rendering of the terms as the most approximate, For other renderings see Rhys Davids, Buddhism, p. 80, ff; Childers, Pali Dictionary.

I shall quote chiefly from Mrs. Rhys Davids, the best known English writer on buddhist psychology (1).

(1) Rupa.—“ More generally, it means those material qualities, both of, and external to the individual, through movements and changes in which he becomes aware, receives impressions of sense... Instead of any static thing or things there is here defined a type of process, an incessantly changing modifiable flux, expressed in terms of sentience...

(2) Vedana.—“ The Hedonistic content of the term requires the word feeling... Feeling in its strictly hedonistic sense, cannot be expressed in more intimate terms. It means more essentially state of the subject, or subjective state than any other phase of consciousness.

(3) Sanna.—“ It is not limited to sense-perception, but includes perceiving of all kinds... We have the content of any consciousness, in so far as there is awareness with recognition, this being expressed by naming.

(4) Sankhara.—Here I will quote a Burmese mystic. “ It is a collective name given to the fifty mental properties which make up consciousness. They are named sankharas because they perform their respective functions in combination, as one whole, of act, speech, or thought. ”

(5) Vinnana.—“ This we are assured on good Buddhist authority, is of more general import than any one phase of consciousness. It includes and involves the other three mental aggregates... It, in fact, being a term of such general import, may stand for any ' awareness ' of mind. ”

This is the substance of the buddhist analysis of the self.

(1) *Buddhist Psychology*, pp. 43-54.

CHAPTER II

The Laws.

The law of becoming—the essential truth.

1.—The point of departure is therefore established as the individual. Now follows the body of the real religious teachings which is buddhism.

The substance of all that the Buddha has taught is the truth of becoming. It declares that all things are only a becoming, an arising, a dividing, and then a passing away according to the law of cause and happening (1). Consequently everything is a continual flow, just like a river or a dream that is ceaselessly changing. The Buddha reached this first and most important truth by dwelling upon certain aspects of individual experience, such as clinging which is followed by the sorrow of loss, of dissolution, and the fact that "form... sensation... perception... the predispositions... consciousness are transitory" (2), so that there is nothing which abides. All these are empirical in character. The conclusion drawn from them is however declared to be universally true, and it gives rise to the whole body of doctrines. Becoming is seen at the root of whatever exists, and it also explains all. It is called the dhamma itself, the new middle way that the Buddha preached in opposition to the extremes of the other religions, as he teaches

(1) Anguttara, I., 152.

(2) Samyutta, ch. XXII.

—“ The world for the most part, Kaccana, holds either to a belief in being or to a belief in non-being. But for one who by the highest wisdom sees as it really is how the world comes to pass, there is no non-being in the world. Everything is not : this is the second extreme view. Avoiding both these extremes, the Buddha teaches the dhamma of the middle way ” (1). The middle way is then given as the wheel which is the embodiment of the truth of becoming. In this manner the new path avoids the belief in being and in non-being and declares that everything is a becoming which takes place under the law of cause and happening.

The above truth is then in essence the whole buddhist teaching. However it does not remain by itself, but appears at the very moment it is known in the form of two doctrines. Becoming is as it were the substance which is inseparable from the teachings themselves, for these are its body. The buddhist at once lays hold of it in two ways, thus obtaining the two doctrines which are to be explained now. In the first he sees the truth as a theory, a law, which is the law of cause and happening or the wheel of becoming. It makes becoming a chain of causes and results *as witnessed in life*, that is as facts of individual experience, of which the furthest known cause is ignorance and the furthest result is suffering. Next the buddhist sees the same truth as a life, a way of salvation, which he formulates into the four ariyan truths concerning suffering and its causes and end. For suffering, the one problem of life, must have a cause and an end; and so, clearly, the only way to destroy it is by removing the cause. In this way a way of salvation arises and life is led according to the light of becoming.

Buddhism therefore arrives at two immediate deductions

(1) Samyutta, II., 17; III., 135.

from the truth it begins with, one is a theory and the other a way of life. They are, as mentioned already, the law of cause and happening, and the four ariyan truths.

The law of cause and happening.

2.—The law of cause and happening is described as a wheel because its action is continuous and connected, one cause being always followed by its result which in turn becomes itself a cause and produces other results ; and this goes on without end, like the turning of a wheel.

The wheel has twelve parts or bases, which are as follows :—

- Because of ignorance, actions ;
- Because of actions, consciousness (causing rebirth) ;
- Because of consciousness (new), mind and body ;
- Because of mind and body, sense organs ;
- Because of sense organs, contact ;
- Because of contact, feeling ;
- Because of feeling, craving ;
- Because of craving, grasping ;
- Because of grasping, becoming ;
- Because of becoming, rebirth ;
- Because of rebirth, decay, grief, mourning, pain, sorrow, and despair.

Such is the coming to pass of this entire mass of suffering (').

Here then is the great truth of becoming given as a definite theory to explain every fact in life, the latter term meaning not one but all lives, past, present, and future. In the constant flow of change and happening everything is seen to exist because of a cause going before. Of all the

(1) Digha, Maha-Nidana-Sutta. The formula occurs, in 96 Suttas.

causes that which is at the beginning, *from the standpoint of individual experience* which alone counts in buddhism, is ignorance, that is, of the truth that everything is becoming and its endless corollaries. At the end there is suffering, the last result in the wheel because it is the one fact of life to be explained. And so the explanation ends with it. The understanding of this law which is the *theory* of the truth of becoming is said to be wisdom itself, for the whole dhamma is in it. " He who discerns origin by way of cause, he discerns the dhamma; he who discerns the dhamma he discerns origin by way of cause. "

The four ariyan truths.

3.—Next, there are the four ariyan truths, which are (1) suffering, (2) the cause of suffering, (3) the end of suffering, (4) the way leading to the end of suffering. They are so very important that it is best to give the actual text containing them. Every word in it helps us to understand the meaning better.

" Now this is the noble Truth as to suffering. Birth is attended with pain, decay is painful, disease is painful, death is painful. Union with the unpleasant is painful, painful is separation from the pleasant; and any craving unsatisfied, that, too, is painful. In brief, the five aggregates of clinging, that is, the conditions of individuality, are painful.

" Now this is the noble Truth as to the origin of suffering. Verily, it is the craving thirst that causes the renewal of becomings, that is accompanied by sensual delights, and seeks satisfaction, now here, now there—that is to say, the craving for the gratification of the senses, or the craving for a future life, or the craving for prosperity.

" Now this is the noble Truth as to the passing away of suffering. Verily, it is the passing away so that no passion

remains, the giving up, the getting rid of, the emancipation from the harbouring no longer of this craving thirst.

“ Now this is the noble Truth as to the way that leads to the passing away of suffering. Verily, it is this Ariyan eightfold path, that is to say, Right views, Right Aspirations. Right speech, conduct and mode of livelihood, Right effort, Right mindfulness, and Right rapture. ”

These four truths, as has been said, are the practical aspect of the truth of becoming, the *application* of that truth to the question of life, conduct, the escape from suffering, and the way for doing so. Suffering, which has all throughout been regarded as the most actual thing in life as we know and live it, is now taken in hand with the help of the new truth. The result is that a cause of the suffering is discovered, and then an end, and, most important of all, the way leading to that end. It is in elucidating these several points that buddhism really becomes a religion, that is to say, a belief which is also a rule of conduct in life. Before the formula of the four ariyan truths is reached buddhism is at most a philosophy, for it contains only a great universal truth, and a resulting theory. For these reasons it can be truly said that the new formula contains the whole of the Buddha's *religious* teaching. It is the dhamma, for it is more than anything else the *gospel* of the buddhas.

Now, if the four ariyan truths are arranged in three parts, and each part connected with the teaching which is meant to explain it, buddhism as a religion is stated with sufficient fulness.

The following will be the arrangement :—

- | | | |
|---------|--|--|
| | The four Truths | — Connected Formula. |
| PART a. | 1) Suffering | — The 3 signs of impermanence, suffering, to soullessness. |
| PART b. | 2) The Cause of suffering | — The doctrine of Kamma. |
| | 3) The End of suffering | |
| PART c. | 4) The Way to the end of Suffering | — The eightfold noble path and its ideal of Nibbana. |

Each part will be explained separately.

a) *The three signs.*

The first part according to the above division is the truth of suffering. It is fully developed by what are known as the three signs of impermanence, suffering, and soulessness (?). These undertake to show the one fact in its many aspects in order that it may be thoroughly understood as belonging to the nature of things. (1) First of all there is impermanence. The truth of becoming is here repeated as in everything else, for impermanence means that whatever exists is a continual happening, a flow which changes and passes away every moment. The best example of it is the individual, since buddhism always goes to the individual and its experiences for material. (2) So next appears the second sign, that of soullessness which is historically one of the most important of all teachings. There is no soul as an abiding entity. The whole of man is impermanent, like a flowing river that is never the same at two consecutive moments. There are only the five khandhas, so that a man is only a putting together, a compound. "The words 'living entity' and 'self' are but a mode of expression for the presence of the five khandhas, but when we come to examine the elements of being one by one, we discover that in the absolute sense there is no living entity there to form a basis for such notions as 'I am' or 'I'; in other words, that in the absolute sense there is only name and form" (?). As for the mind it cannot possibly be confused with a permanent soul, for "that which is called consciousness, that is, mind, that is, intelligence, arises as one thing, ceases as another,

(1) See, Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhi-Magga*, ch. XXI. The Pali words are, *anicca, dukkha, anatta*.

(2) *Visuddhi*, ch. XVIII.

both by day and by night " (1). (3) So the conclusion of the whole matter is suffering, the third sign, for the general condition of change and passing away is just what makes life difficult to bear, seeing that there is only a meeting and a parting, loving and losing that which is loved—" painful is separation from the pleasant; and any desire unsatisfied, that too is painful. "

These three signs therefore present the same essential truth of becoming in a next form which concentrates more on the fact that there is suffering as an outcome. While doing so the attention gets shifted to a new view of becoming; it is seen not only as a general principle nor even as the cause of suffering, but most of all in one particular instance, that of man's ceaselessly changing identity and the sorrows which arise as a result. This was found to be a better because more intimate way of looking at the truth. Soon the doctrine of soullessness became the most insisted upon of all, and buddhism was even understood to be before anything else an attack on the illusion and evil of self. This was so true that the formula actually containing the attack namely the three signs, was considered in latter days as the most important for the buddhist. For instance Buddhaghosa, the greatest buddhist commentater, refers to its knowledge as the starting point of deliverence. He says, " Now this knowledge, existing as the three-fold insight, becomes by the predominance of three qualities, the three-fold starting point of deliverence " (2). For this reason it is, so long as it is rightly understood, true to say that " the knowledge of I as not-I, the anatta-idea, is the great, the only knowledge par excellence, the buddha-

(1) Samyutta, II., 94. This and Majjhima, I., 256, ff to 138 contain the whole buddhist theory of mind. All contemporary views about the soul are completely, categorically denied. The Buddha devotes his very first sermon to it.

(2) Visuddhi-Magga, ch. XXI, also Compendium of Philosophy. Which is still a later commentary says the same. At the present day a buddhist of the southern countries tells his beads only to those these words-anicca, dukkha, anatta.

knowledge, because at one stroke abolishing both sorrow and life " (1). As said, it must be rightly understood or otherwise it would be an exaggeration. The meaning will be as follows. Life which is always sorrowful, is the result of a clinging, upadana or the lust of life. This clinging is itself the result of ignorance, that is, of becoming as seen particularly in the I-illusion. When ignorance is dispelled by true knowledge the man understands that the self is not real but like everything else only a flow of successive states, according to the law of becoming. As soon as this appears a new life necessarily builds itself round it, free from the old factors, such as clinging, the self, its desires and sufferings, and even the usual concepts of good and evil, for all these are the results of ignorance. This is how the buddhist salvation is a form of knowledge, or, more relevantly, the knowledge of the three signs of impermanence, suffering, and soullessness.

Kamma.

The second part of the division concerns the cause and the end of suffering, and in connection with them buddhism teaches the doctrine of kamma. The doctrine itself is a very old one in India. Simply stated, it means that a person's present circumstances are the result of his actions in previous lives. It happens by the fact that the past actions have travelled through all those previous lives increasing in number and therefore in weight, nothing however small being lost, but everything steadily piling up and following the person to the moment of his death. And when he dies, there having never been any doer but only the deed, all that accumulated mass, powerful to act

(1) P. Dalke, *Buddhist Essays*, p. 75.

either for good or for evil, for happiness or for suffering, passes into the heritage of a newly born being who is from the beginning the direct consequence of that heritage awaiting him. In this manner buddhism explains very morally and to its perfect satisfaction the inequalities in life which are so perplexing ; and at the same time it avoids the old notion of the transmigration of a soul, a doer. There is transmigration, for kamma means essentially this, but it is the deed that transmigrates and not any doer :—

No doer is there does the deed,
Nor is there one who feels the fruit;
Constituent parts alone roll on;
This view alone is orthodox.

And thus the deed, and thus the fruit
Roll on and on, each from its cause;
As of the round of tree and seed,
No one can tell when they began...

Not in its fruit is found the deed,
Nor in the deed finds one the fruit;
Of each the other is devoid,
Yet there's no fruit without the deed.

Just as no store, of fire is found
In jewel, cow-dung, or the sun,
Nor separate from these exists
Yet short of fuel no fire is known (1).

The above verses explain well what buddhism has contributed to the theory of kamma. There are only deeds which carry their own fruits into succeeding lives. It explains the cause of suffering ; it also explains how suffering will end.

(1) Visuddhi, ch. XIX.

The ariyan eight fold path.

The third part is the Truth of the way leading to the end of suffering. It is the ariyan eightfold path and its ideal of arahantship, which is the attainment of Nibbana.

" And now, O bhikku, what is that way leading to the end of suffering ?

" It is this noble eightfold path, to wit, right belief, right resolve, right speech, right behaviour, right occupation, right effort, right contemplation, right concentration " (1).

All the words in that simple passage are used in a special way, standing there as so many points of crystallisation, more or less, for a great amount of thoughts and meanings that are not apparent. I shall explain them in a simpler order.

(1) Right belief is the beginning. Chiefly, it means believing in the four ariyan truths. It has been seen how the formula of the three signs is connected with those truths. So right belief also very often means believing in the three signs, especially the sign of soullessness.

Then comes right resolve. It is best to illustrate it with examples given by the writings themselves. They are the resolve for emancipation from sensuality, for a more complete love for others, the resolve not to injure any living thing, the resolve to fight against wrong, and to encourage right dispositions in one's own heart; and so on (2).

(2) Right speech, right behaviour, right occupation, coming in the middle of the path, show the new life of the man in its daily circumstances. They are the results, as seen in daily virtues, of the new psychological basis he has laid by means of right belief and right resolve in the first two stages.

(3) The last three are for the mature in the path. Right

(1) *Digha, Sutta*, 22.

(2) *Majjhima*, III., 251; cf. *Samyutta*, V, 8.

effort is practically fruit-bearing in the path, or at least the beginning of it. The man develops an ever watchful and quick mind. Its importance consists in destroying ignorance, which is one of the three bases of evil in buddhism (1).

Right contemplation is the practice of a set of exercises in contemplation. They form a very elaborate and arduous cause of holy living and thinking, most of which is mystical (2). For instance, the disciple, whatever he does, whether going forth or coming back, standing or walking, speaking or silent, eating or drinking, is to keep clearly in mind all that it means, the temporary nature of the act, and that behind the act there is no actor who is an eternally abiding self.

Right concentration is the climax of these difficult exercises, and the last stage in the path. As such it means the highest states of contemplation, the four ecstasies (jhanas) and those that follow them. With them individual consciousness passes away in a realization for which buddhism has found no real terms. This is the noble eightfold path leading to the end of suffering. " There is a middle path discovered by the Tathagatha—a path which opens the eyes, and gives understanding, which leads to peace, to insight, to the higher wisdom, to Nibbana. " So its ideal is Nibbana, and attaining that ideal is arahantship.

I have attempted to give as simply as possible the substance of buddhism according to the early Pali writings and have put the whole in a natural order consisting of the point of departure; the truth reached from that point as a universal fact of experience ; the formulating of that truth in two principle doctrines, one of which is a theory and the other a practice ; and lastly three more teachings which are more or less an elaboration of the new practice.

(1) The three are greed, anger, and ignorance.

(2) Digha, II., 290-315; Majjhima, I., 55, ff.; Dialogues, p. 81.

CHAPTER II (*Continuation.*)

Buddhist discipline outside the ariyan path.

In the account that has been given buddhist discipline was found to be the ariyan eightfold path. This requires to be explained further, in order to avoid a misunderstanding. The fact is, the eightfold path is not the only course of buddhist discipline, for there are two others (1). So buddhism, in the actual life of its followers, really has three courses of discipline, namely, (1) Lay discipline; (2) Priestly discipline; (3) the ariyan eightfold path which is the highest and most selective of the three. Only the third, the eightfold path, has been explained; so now I shall deal with the first and the second.

(1) Lay discipline.—Obviously this is meant for lay followers, for men and women who are still living the worldly life and yet are willing to be buddhists. A separate discipline is drawn up for such persons, something in keeping with the duties of their daily circumstances and at the same time faithful to the real teaching. It takes the form of eight precepts, as follows.

“ Now I tell you of the life which a householder should lead, of the manner in which a disciple should conduct

(1) Rhys Davids gives three others, altogether making four. But I find no clear text for this. It seems to me that he has mixed up the Buddhist disciplines with a very old and pre-buddhist one that the Buddha refers to for the purpose of arriving at his own conclusions. See ‘ Dialogues of the Buddha, ’ vol. I., p. 190, ff., also Sammana Phala Sutta.

himself well. Such duties as are peculiar to the priests cannot be fulfilled by one who has a family...

- 1) One should not destroy life ;
- 2) One should not take that which is not given ;
- 3) One should not tell lies ;
- 4) One should not become a drinker of intoxicating drinks ;
- 5) One should not have unlawful sexual intercourse, an ignoble thing ;
- 6) One should not eat untimely food at nights ;
- 7) One should not use flowers and sweet scents ;
- 8) One should avoid too-high sleeping places.

Such, they say, is the eightfold sacred formula declared by the Buddha who came to put an end to suffering " (1). According to the reading of this passage by buddhists the first five precepts are binding on all, and are therefore a compulsory moral discipline. But the other three are not so; they are only strongly recommended for the gaining of more merits and for a better life in general. The choice is altogether with the man. But there are special holy days (2) when all the eight precepts become compulsory. The results of this lay discipline are naturally just those things most greatly desired by the general lay followers. For instance, the character will be made noble and pure, much misfortune will be avoided, much social honour will be its reward in this world; and after death, the man will go to more delightful worlds where he shall become like the brighter gods feeding on joy (3).

(1) Dhammika-Sutta, in Sutta-Nipata, ch. CVII., vv. 18-25. Also for explanations, Mangala-Sutta, in Sutta-Nipata. Nidhikanda-Sutta; Amagandha-Sutta, 7-11. Dhammapada, V., XIII., 26-29, etc.; Kimsila-Sutta, V., etc.

(2) Uposatha days, corresponding in a way to christian fast days.

(3) Dhammapada, v. 200.

Let him speak the truth ; let him not yield to anger.
Let him give when asked, even from his small amount.
By these three things he will enter the presence of the gods (1).

(2) Priestly discipline.—This is a higher course and is for those whose faith has persuaded them to give up the worldly life and join the order of yellow-robed priests. It is called the vow of the ten precepts. The first eight are the same as those of the lay discipline; the other two are :—

1.—To abstain from dancing, music, singing, and stage-plays ;

2.—To abstain from the use of gold and silver (2).

The results of the priestly discipline are nearer to achieving the real ideal, that is, Nibbana. If the priestly life is well led it will take the man into the eightfold path leading to Nibbana.

That priest whose life is love,
Whose joy the teachings of the Buddha,
He will enter the tranquil lot,
Nibbana's life... (3).

But the only real way to that realization is the ariyan eightfold path, the third and highest buddhist discipline. It is the only path mentioned by the Buddha in connection with Nibbana, and it means something more than being a

(1) Dhammapada, v. 234. Practically the whole Dhammapada gives the rules and benefits of the first two disciplines.

(2) For full account see Dhammika-Sutta, in Sutta-Nipata, ch. I-VII., vv. 10-17. Also refer Moni-Sutta, 15 ; Dhammacariya-Sutta, 3 ; Samma-paribbajaniya-Sutta, 2 ; and Dhammapada, 360-399, etc. For an interesting account of an actual ordination service and the taking of the vows, see Rhys Davids's " Buddhism," p. 158, ff. It also describes the usual life of a buddhist priest very simply.

(3) Dhammapada, v. 368.

buddhist, a different spiritual level altogether from the ordinary buddhist life. It is something open to all followers in the other two paths, both laymen and priests, although naturally the latter are nearer to it. But the writings show several instances of laymen entering the path (1), that is of course the eightfold path, and two instances of their entering into Nibbana itself (2).

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- (1) An example is Kisagotami, the young girl mother whose story is told in 'Buddhaghoshas Parables', ch. X. This work is a translation from the Burmese by Captain Rogers.
- (2) Suddhodana, Buddha's father, reached Nibbana on his deathbed. And Santati a prime minister, also reached it. See Jataka Commentary, p. 64. And Dhammapada Commentary, p. 308.
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CHAPTER III

The contemplations.

In the ariyan eightfold path mention was made of right contemplation. There is another way of dividing the ariyan progress according to which there are three stages, namely, conduct, contemplation, and wisdom. It makes conduct or the moral purification of the self the basis of the new life. Then follows the two other stages which are in practice, as Buddhaghosa explains, really an extension of one discipline, for wisdom includes the highest form of contemplative ecstasy and is in fact the result of contemplation. Thus the above divisions show how important contemplation is as a training for the ariyan. In this matter it continues the tradition which existed in India before buddhism, for most of the exercises practised by the ariyan are in many ways the same as those of the Indian mystics. Buddhism took them because they had already proved to be profitable in the sense that they led to peace, holiness, and clear thinking. But it also made some additions as we shall see. The fact to be understood here is that buddhism adopted the principal contemplative exercises that already existed among the mystics in India ; more than that, it gave them an important place in the ariyan's life, making wisdom itself its result. In connection with one set of these exercises the Buddha says, " O monks, there is but one way open to mortals for the attainment of purity, for the overcoming of sorrow and

lamentation, for the abolition of misery and grief, for the acquisition of the correct rule of conduct, for the realisation of Nibbana, and that is the four Intent Contemplations " (1).

The subject is too wide to be dealt with in detail. All that can be done in this place is to give a general idea of its extent and divisions, and then to explain the different parts in proportion to their importance.

The usual name for the series of contemplations which were practised even before buddhism is the forty kammathanas or occupations. They include the following.

(1) The four brahmaviharas or sublime occupations which are as it were a training of the emotions.

(2) The ten asubhas or the contemplation of a dead body in different ways.

(3) The ten anussati or recollections. Of these the best known are the four intent contemplations.

(4) The ten kasinas or objects used for the practice of concentration.

(5) The four jhanas and the four super-jhanas. Strictly speaking the latter four only are included in the forty operations. But they are, as Kern explains, inseparable from the ordinary jhanas, so the two parts might be kept together.

Sometimes the ordinary jhanas are said to be five instead of four. This is because the second jhana is made into two. The substance is the same in both cases.

(1) The four sublime occupations meant the exercises of love, pity, sympathetic joy, and indifference, in the given order. The exercise in each case consisted in the continual expansion of the particular sentiment, from a individual to a community, and then gradually to the whole world and

(1) Digha, Sutta, 22.

all that exist in it. As an instance, the following is the way in which love is exercised : O monks after having driven out the five hindrances and attenuating the defilements by insight, abide ye in the suffusing of one region of earth with a consciousness accompanied by love ; thence the second region, thence the third, fourth. And thus aloft, below, across, the entire world and all that are therein do ye continue to suffuse with a loving consciousness abounding, lofty, infinite, without anger or ill-will (1). The same process takes place in the case of the rest. These exercises were popular both outside and within buddhism. They were believed to be a good training for the emotions under the control of intellect, for always they ended in indifference.

(2) The ten ways of contemplating a dead body refer to the latter in different stages of decay, first of all a few days after death, then as exposed to crows and vultures, then quickly becoming a skeleton, next as a skeleton and so on. The actual names of these stages are bloated, blackish, festering, fissured from decay, gnawed by animals, scattered, injured, and scattered, bloody, full of worms, bones (2). The lesson that is always learnt is given in the words, " Verily, my body also has this nature, this destiny, and is not exempt " (3).

(3) The ten recollections are on the Buddha, the dhamma, the priesthood, morality, liberality, the gods, death, the body, the regulation of inspiration and expiration, and quietude (4).

As has been said it is to this group that the four intent contemplations are usually attached. These are a most strenuous form of concentrating the mind on every thought

(1) Samyutta, V., 115 f. ; Anguttara, II, 130..

(2) Dhamma-Sangani, 264 ; see Kern, Manual of Indian Buddhism, 55 ; Visuddhi, ch. III.

(3) Digha, Sutta, 22.

(4) Anguttara, I., 42.

and act of the person. The four contemplations have a very long mystical history in India (1). The Buddha, we have seen, spoke of them as being the only way for the realisation of Nibbana.

The four contemplations are of the body, the sensations, the mind, and the being (2). The chief duty in each of them is to be constantly aware of every movement, every thought, to seize it, to ponder over and control it until a perfect mastery is attained over one's self from those four standpoints. This was done without ceasing, whether the person walked or stood or simply sat and breathed. The result was, to keep to the case of the body, " the person lives either in himself, as respects the body, observant of the body, or both in his own person and in other persons, as respects the body observant of the body; either observant of origination in the body, or observant of destruction of the body, or observant of both origination and destruction in the body ; and the recognition of the body of his intent contemplation is merely to the extent of this knowledge, merely to the extent of this contemplation, and he lives unattached, nor clings to anything in th world " (3). Each of the four contemplations ends with a similar result.

(4) The ten kasinas refer to the concentration of the attention on a specially chosen object. The objects are earth, water, fire, air, blue, yellow, red, white, light, ether or space (4). What takes place is a form of self-hypnotism. The mind concentrated wholly on the definite object soon becomes emptied of everything else while at the same time the image of the object fills the emptiness until at last it becomes the only reality. The image then escapes the concreteness of the object and become a pure thought, then

(1) See Majjhima, I., 425; Viniya, III., 70.

(2) Digha, Sutta, 22.

(3) Digha, Sutta, 22.

(4) Majjhima, I., 423; Visuddhi-Magga, ch. III. Childer's Dictionary S.V. Kasino.

a radiance, vague yet illuminating. At the end, under certain circumstances, the radiance leads to the jhana trances and when that happens it grows into the perfect illumination of arahantship (1). The following is an instance—“ He who adopts the earth-kasina obtains the mental reflex through the instrumentality of earth that is either prepared or else not prepared, and with limits not without limits, with termination not without terminations, with boundary lines not without boundary lines, with a rim not without a rim and of the size of a winnowing basket or of a dish. This mental reflex he firmly seizes and carefully examines and defines. And when he has firmly seized and carefully examined and defined that mental reflex, he sees the blessings to be derived from it, and what a valuable thing it is; and holding it in high esteem and becoming much devoted to it, he fastens his mind firmly to that object, thinking, Verily by this procedure I shall become released from old age and death. And he, having isolated himself from demeritorious traits, and still exercising reasoning, still exercising reflections, enters upon the first trance, which is produced by isolation and characterised by joy and happiness ” (2).

(5) Lastly, then, comes the jhanas. As a rule they follow the kasina practices so that they can be called a continuation of those practices. It has been remarked that “ no branch of mental culture appears oftener in the canonical writings than this, or is more frequently prescribed for all serious study ” (3). It is at most times mentioned in the following manner.

“ Whenever, O priests, a priest, having isolated himself from sensual pleasures, having isolated himself from demeritorious traits, and still exercising reasoning, still

(1) Cf. *Compendium of Philosophy*, 55.

(2) *Visuddhi*, ch. IV.; trans. Warren, 193.

(3) Mrs. Rhys Davids, *Buddhist Psychology*, 107.

exercising reflection, enters upon the first trance, which is produced by isolation and characterised by joy and happiness; when, through the subsidence of reasoning and reflection, and still retaining joy and happiness, he enters upon the second trance, which is an interior tranquilization and intentness of thoughts, and is produced by concentration; when, through the paling of joy, indifferent, contemplative, conscious, and in the experience of bodily happiness—that state which the ariyans describe when they say, Indifferent, contemplative, and living happily—he enters upon the third trance; when, through the abandonment of happiness, through the abandonment of misery, through the disappearance of all antecedent gladness and grief, he enters upon the fourth trance, which has neither misery nor happiness, but is contemplation as refined by indifference, this, O priests, is the discipline in elevated concentration ” (1).

Then the four super-jhanas follow.

“ A priest, by passing beyond the consciousness of form, by putting an end to sense of resistance, by paying no heed to the idea of distinctions, at the thought Space is infinite! attains to and abides in the conceptual sphere of space as infinite. For him his previous consciousness of things visible passes away, and there arises in him then the blissful consciousness, subtle yet actual, of an infinite sensation of space.

“ Again, a priest having wholly transcended the sensation of infinite space, at the thought, Infinite is consciousness! attains to and abides in the conceptual sphere of consciousness as infinite. For him the previous consciousness, subtle yet actual, of a conceptual sphere of space as infinite passes away. And he then becomes conscious only of a concept, subtle yet actual, of consciousness as infinite.

(1) *Anguttara*, I., 237; trans. Warren, 288.

“ Again, having wholly transcended the conceptual sphere of consciousness as infinite, at the thought, There is nothing! he attains to and abides in the conceptual sphere of nothingness. For him the previous consciousness, subtle yet actual, of a conceptual sphere of consciousness as infinite passes away. And he then becomes conscious only of a concept, subtle yet actual, of infinite nothingness.

“ Having transcended the sphere of nothingness, he attains to and abides in the sphere of neither perception nor yet non-perception ” (1).

Up to this point the eight stages of jhana are what buddhism took from the earlier mystics. But it did not stop there, for the Buddha claims as his unique experience to have gone beyond even the sphere of neither perception nor yet non-perception to the highest attainable, namely the trance of cessation where he realised Nibbana. It forms the ninth trance.

As a conclusion I can do nothing better than give the following very able attempt to explain the jhana states psychologically. “ First, the attention by way of sense-cognition is hypnotically stimulated and concentrated, till mind working through sense, is arrested. Then intellectual zest or keen interest dies away ; and then mind as happy, easeful emotion ceases, and a sort of zero-point is attained, leaving the vague consciousness of wide abstraction, infinity of space; next, infinity of receptive consciousness, a potentiality of sensation and emotion, but with no actuality; then as it were a negative consciousness, or awareness that the preceding stage, so far from revealing any persistent entity, was nothing whatever. Finally a stage is reached described as neither conscious nor unconscious, faint and delicate mentality fading into complete trance” (2).

(1) Digha, trans. Dialogues, I., 249 f.; II., 118 f.

(2) Mrs. Rhys Davids, Buddhism, 214-215.

PART II.

Buddhist Mystical Teachings.

CHAPTER I

The Ariyan.

1.—All that is mystical in buddhism is contained in the third and highest discipline, which is the ariyan eightfold path, and its ideal of arahantship or the attaining of Nibbana. It has been found that a high stage in the ariyan path is contemplation, and that the latter includes many exercises which were already a part of Indian mysticism. They came to be taught and practised regularly, by the Buddha as well as by the ariyans. As for the ideal of the path it is in its truest meaning a realisation. These facts make it evident that for the study of buddhist mysticism all the materials which can be useful will be found gathered around the ariyan path and the ariyan ideal.

2.—It will be clearer to begin with the word "Mystic" itself. In its original Greek sense of an "initiated" man, of one who dwells amidst mysteries, with closed eyes and lips, knowing all and yet silent about it all, the word has no equivalent in buddhism. There is not a single passage in the canonical writings to suggest a secret hidden cult for the few; in fact the Buddha himself is made to declare against such a possibility—"I have taught the law making no inner or outer," he says; "in respect of doctrine the Tathagata has not a teacher's fist, now opening now closing" (1). This has nothing to do with the difficulty of

(1) *Digha*, vol. II., 100; compare 'Dialogues of the Buddha' vol. II., p. 107.

the path he has revealed, for it is indeed extraordinarily difficult, and for that reason alone, the reward of only a small number of men, The point here is that the Buddha never taught a cult or a mystery-religion as the ancient Greeks did (1).

Instead of an equivalent for the original Greek idea of the mystic buddhism has two words to denote its highest type of the spiritual man. These are " Ariya " and " Yogacara. " The first is a canonical word occurring all throughout canon and commentary; the second is post-canonical. This second word, Yogacara, has no English equivalent. Literally rendered, it means a recluse who is devoted to yoga meditations. It appears for the first time in " Milinda Panna, " a post canonical work on certain buddhist psychological conceptions. Rhys Davids, in his translation of it, has the following note on the word— " Literally, it is ' he whose sphere, whose constant resort is yoga. ' Now Yoga is diligence, devotion, mental concentration... " (2). Its second occurrence in the same work is in the intensified form of " yogi-yogavacaro. " Here also Rhys Davids writes a note—" The rendering of these words is quite inadequate... Neither " yoga nor devotee " can be used, for they have acquired connotations contradictory to what was in our author's mind. He means the buddhist belonging to those bhikkus (by no means the majority) who had devoted themselves to a life of systematic effort according to the buddhist scheme of self-training " (3). Thus, in days after the closing of the canon, the new buddhist established church made a new word for men and women who devoted themselves entirely to the meditations set in the ariyan eightfold path (4).

(1) It seems that a special esoteric mystical teaching developed in later times in Ceylon. See " Manual of Mystic ". Translation of a later Singhalese mystical work. Translator's Preface, p. 18.

(2) S.B.E., vol. XXXV., King Milinda, I., p. 68.

(3) S.B.E., vol. XXXV., King Milinda, II., p. 279.

(4) Thus the Singhalese mystical work is called ' Yogavacara (P.T.S., 1896).

The earlier and far more important word is " Ariyan. " Again Rhys Davids has a very helpful note on it. I shall quote from him—" The word Ariya is ambiguous. Already in the Vedas it means both ' of Ariyan race ' and ' gentle, noble, kindly. ' Some etymologists give different derivations for the different meanings. It is more probable that the second meaning is derived from the first, just as our word gentle meant originally of gentle birth. By the time of the rise of buddhism, the secondary meaning had become so fixed in the connotation of the word that it conveyed all the senses of belonging to the Aryan race, gentle and noble... I am inclined to think that at least one idea hinted at by the use of this epithet was, that the new system then promulgated was considered worthy of, suitable, for the free clansmen, for the man of Aryan race. The buddhist commentators, writing long afterwards, when the word had quite lost its racial sense, always interpret it as meaning " worthy of, suitable for Arahants. " And there are several passages in the old texts in which Ariyan and Arahant are used as synonymous terms (1). This is only one of many instances of a new, and as the speakers thought, a better, deeper meaning being put into older words, and may, therefore, have been intended by Gotama in this case also " (2). In another place, where Rhys Davids explains the word " Arahant " the new meaning becomes even more clear (3); in the form of " Arahant " it becomes associated with change of heart, emancipation, and all the higher things of the spirit. Another rendering of the word is " gentle, noble, specifically elect in the Dhamma " (4).

(1) For instance *Majjhima*, I., 280, cf. Mrs. Rhys Davids note on *Duka Pathana*, I., 366.

(2) *Early Buddhism*, p. 49-50.

(3) *Dialogues of the Buddha*, vol. III., 3-4, cf.; vol. II., 167.

(4) Mrs. Rhys Davids, *Buddhism*, p. 69.

Therefore, from the beginning, the word " Ariyan " quickly began to change its values, for it collected to itself all that was noble in buddhism, finally coming to be used for all its important teachings. There are first of all the four ariyan truths resting at the heart of the whole (°). The path belonging to these truths, the only real way of salvation, is the ariyan eightfold path—" And what, O priests, is the noble truth of the path leading to the end of suffering ? It is the Ariyan eightfold path... " (°). In another place (°) ariyan is applied also to things connected with the ariyan truths and the ariyan path, namely (1) ariyan insight, (2) ariyan resignation, (3) ariyan truth or Nibbana, (4) ariyan peace. In this manner the word has also been extended to persons belonging to the ariyan path, they being called ariyans. It is the last fact that is important here.

3.—According to buddhism there are twelve classes of intelligent beings—four of the ordinary class; and eight of the noble, elect, " ariyan " class (°). So here we get the word ariyan applied to certain elect persons as different from the ordinary classes. The ariyans consist of the Buddhas, the silent Buddhas (°), and earnest disciples (°); that is, all walking in the ariyan eightfold path in simple homeless living, discipline, spiritual exercise and mind culture (°). These came to form almost a religious aristocracy (°), claiming " vision " or insight as their special

(1) *Digha, Sutta, XXII.*; *Samyutta, II., 223, v. 420*; *Vinaya, I., 10, etc.*

(2) *Digha, Sutta, XXII.* Also others.

(3) *Majjhima, Sutta, CXL.* *Analysis of Elements, III., 245.*

(4) *Compendium of Philosophy, p. 49.*

(5) *Pacceka Buddhas.*

(6) *Buddha-Sāvaka*; see *Anguttara, I., 23-26.*

(7) According to the course of the lineage of the Ariyans as given in *Anguttara, II., 26.*
Also see *Compendium, Pt. IV., § 13, p. 135.*

(8) *Psalms of the Sisters, p. XXII.*

possession—the seeing into things as they really are which the buddhist called being awake (buddho) (1).

“ How should the woman’s nature hinder us ?
Whose hearts are firmly set, who ever more
With growing knowledge onward in the Path ?
What can that signify to one in whom
Insight doth truly comprehend the Norm ” (2).

“ Transcendental apperceptions are experienced only by ariyans ” says the most authoritative medieval compendium (3), and these “ apperceptions ” are the result of a transcendental consciousness which reaches beyond all conditioned things (4).

So here we have a most interesting fact. A certain body of “ elect ” men set themselves apart as the “ Ariyan breed ” (5), they lead a simple homeless holy life of study and contemplation according to the eightfold path ; and they claim a special vision as the prize of their high calling, something of the nature of an experience, the same as that which the greatest of them all had as he sat under the Bo-tree—“ And then, while the Bo-tree in homage rained red coral-like sprigs upon his priestly robes, he acquired in the first watch of the night the knowledge of previous existences; in the middle watch of the night the divine eye; and in the last watch of the night, his intellect fathomed dependent origination... When thus he had attained omniscience... he breathed forth that solemn utterance which has never been omitted by any of the Buddhas :—

O builder! I’ve discovered thee!
This fabric thou shalt ne’er rebuild!

(1) That is, “ have come to be,” Sabban yathabhutan disva; Samyutta, VI., 81-28, etc.; Psalms of the Brethren, p. 312.

(2) Psalms of the Sisters, p. 45, No. XXXVI.

(3) Compendium, Pt. IV., § 13, p. 135.

(4) Compendium, p. 12.

(5) Psalms of the Brethren, p. 262.

Thy rafters all are broken now,
And pointed roof demolished lies!
This mind has demolition reached,
And seen the last of all desire (1).

His title of Buddha itself signified the fact of awakening—
“ Hence brahmin, am I Buddha—one Awake. ” And the
new vision or awakening is the greatest of several gifts
held out to men. This is seen in the Buddha’s words to
a disciple—“ And it is for the putting away of these that
I teach the dhamma, according to which if you do walk,
the things that corrupt shall be put away, the things that
make for purity shall grow and flourish, and ye shall
attain to, and abide in, each one for himself even here and
now, the understanding and the realisation of full and
abounding insight ” (2).

For the purposes of this mystical study the whole of the
new life and vision of the ariyan is most important, and
requires to be properly understood. It is the history of a
mind’s evolution ; therefore the best way to understand it
is to follow the ariyan mind through its different stages,
to mark, study, and properly know them as explained by
those men themselves and also by buddhist psychology.
This is the only way to get at the real substance behind all
the accounts of them.

4.—It has already been said that buddhism divides intel-
ligent beings into twelve classes, four ordinary and eight
ariyan. This classification is put psychologically, as
divisions in consciousness, in the following way. Con-
sciousness, an ultimate fact in buddhism, is of two kinds :—

(1) Consciousness belonging to being, that is, lower con-
sciousness.

(1) Jataka, I., 75; Warren, p. 82; cf. Majjhima, III., 15.

(2) Digha, Sutta, XXV.; Dialogues, vol. III., p. 51-52.

(2) Consciousness belonging to thought, or higher consciousness.

The second kind of consciousness, that of thought, is again subdivided into four classes :—

(1) Kamma-citta—normal consciousness of the world of the senses.

(2) Rupa-citta—supernormal consciousness that still dwells in worlds of form and matter.

(3) Arupa-citta—supernormal consciousness without trace or form or matter.

(4) Lokuttara-citta—transcendental consciousness that has altogether gone beyond all worlds (lokas) (1).

Of these four classes of the consciousness of thought the first three belong to the four ordinary classes of intelligent beings ; the fourth or last, transcendental consciousness is the possession of the ariya classes (2). This is the psychological line of division between the ordinary and the ariyan classes. Transcendental consciousness is made to belong only to ariyans. Now, the exact point of transition from the first three consciousness to transcendental consciousness will be very interesting and important in explaining the nature of the change that takes place in the mind, the change which converts the ordinary into the ariyan mind. It could be called conversion; in buddhist phrase it is “ entering the path ”.

5.—Let us see what buddhist psychology has to say about this point of transition. According to it, the mind, at this point of entering into the transcendental consciousness, passes through four different stages.

(1) Lokuttara.—Literally beyond the worlds ; Compendium, Pt. I., § 12, p. 91.
Cf. Buddhist Psychology, p. 82-97. Where it is rendered as Thought engaged upon the higher Ideal.

(2) Compendium, Pt. I., § 1, p. 15.

(1) Preparation (°).—The preliminary moment, when the mind realises its task. The alert-minded can dispense with this stage.

(2) Access (°).—The mind now approximates to the new consciousness.

(3) Adaptation (°).—The mind is completely ready for it.

(4) Adoption (°).—The actual moment of transition or conversion when the mind enters the eightfold path and achieves transcendental consciousness (°).

The fourth moment, Adoption or *Gotrabhu*, is the real point of interest. Literally, the Pali word means “becoming one of the clan or lineage.” As the translators of the medieval compendium explain it, the word signifies the complete cutting off of the heritage of the ordinary average person and the evolution of the lineage of the transcendental (°), the moment when kinship with the world comes to an end in a new kinship with the ariyans (°). All these derivations and notes help to bring out the chief fact, that “conversion” as the ariyan understood it, meant a change psychologically so complete that it really and literally meant a new being, a new clan and lineage, a new consciousness itself, namely the transcendental, by which the mind is lifted away into an altogether new transcendental world, beyond time, beyond space, that is, beyond all the three world-systems of buddhist cosmogony. There is the testimony of the greatest ariyans to this belief in a completely new rebuilding of the individual. Thus, *Upasana*, an early ariyan, is said to have thought to himself, “I will

(1) *Parikamma*.

(2) *Upacara*.

(3) *Anuloma*.

(4) *Gotrabhu*.

(5) *Compendium*, p. 129, 215, 55.

(6) *Compendium*, p. 68.

(7) *Compendium*, Pt. IX., § 7, p. 215.

multiply the breed of the ariyans " (1). Also a commentary tells us that Sariputta, the Buddha's greatest disciple, " in becoming an ariyan, became of like birth or caste (jati) with the Tathagata " (2). A woman-ariyan bears witness even to the victory over sex.—It is Suma who is singing :—

How should the woman's nature hinder us ?

.....

To one for whom the question doth arise,

Am I a woman in these matters, or

Am I a man, or what not am I, then ?

To such a one is Mara fit to talk (3).

Clearly, this is no ordinary case of religious conversion; for even apart from its extraordinary psychology, it takes place late in the ordinary religious life, and every emphasis in speech and writing is laid on its selective quality, the fact that only a very few even among true believers can have the experience.

As to whether it is that other form of conversion known as mystical awakening the following passages may help to decide. I give them because they present a good comparison on a point which is material. Miss Underhill describes the mystical awakening in these words—" It is a disturbance of the equilibrium of the self, *which results in the shifting of the field of consciousness from lower to higher levels*, with a consequent removal of the centre of interest from the subject to an object newly brought into view : *the necessary beginning of any process of transcendence*. It must not, however, be confused or identified with religious conversion as ordinarily understood, the sudden and emotional acceptance of theological beliefs

(1) Psalms of the Brethren, p. 202.

(2) Psalms of the Brethren, p. 312; Cf. Anguttara, I., 23, about Sariputta, p. 16.

(3) Psalms of the Sisters, Ps. XXXVI.; also p. 181; cf. Samyutta. Bkikkuni-Samyutta. Mara is the satan of Bundhist popular belief.

which the self had previously either rejected or treated as conventions dwelling upon the margin of consciousness and having no meaning for her actual life " (1). The account is interesting because it nearly succeeds in giving the chief parts of the gothabhu experience in spite of the fact that many words it uses are uncertain. Firstly, the shifting of the field of consciousness from lower to higher levels describes the buddhist passing from the super-normal consciousness to the transcendental. Secondly, like the gothrabhu experience, it is the necessary beginning of any process of transcendence ; and thirdly, " it belongs to a higher order of reality " (2), or as the buddhist puts it, " Gotrabhu implies an evolution which transcends the conditioned and has for its object Nibbana " (3) or the buddhist ultimate Reality.

Take another writer. " Conversion " says Starbuck, " is the larger world-consciousness now pressing in on the individual consciousness. Often it breaks in suddenly and becomes a new revelation " (4). This account too gives the gothrabhu new and transcendental consciousness revealing things beyond the usual consciousness, and therefore a new revelation. Now, as for the mystics themselves, I shall give the case of St Francis of Assisi as quoted by Miss Underhill. " He was vaguely dissatisfied. In the midst of festivities, he would have sudden fits of abstraction, *abortive attempts of the growing transcendental consciousness*, still imprisoned below the threshold but aware of and in touch with the Real... it happened one day that he was walking in the country outside the gates of Assisi, and passed the little

(1) Mysticism, p. 213.

(2) Mysticism, p. 214.

(3) Compendium, p. 68.

(4) The Psychology, of Religion, chapter. XII.; cf. Maha-Vagga, I., 23. The conversion of Saraputta and Moggallana. " There arose in the mid of Saraputta, a clean and distinct perception of the doctrine of cause and happening, " a new sudden revelation.

church of S. Damiano... he went in to pray ; and he fell down before the Crucifix in devout supplication, and having been smitten by unwonted visitations, found himself another man than he who had gone in " (1). Its the same thing again, a new transcendental consciousness growing, a psychological complete rebuilding of the individual, and he finds himself another man, and becomes one of a new clan or lineage. " It is very certain that for St. Francis an utterly new life did literally begin at this point " (2). But so it does for the gotrabhu too ; for him too " there is a complete cutting off of the heritage of the ordinary average person and the evolution of the lineage of the transcendental " (3). Uttera, an early ariyan, describes this experience :—

Detached from all that wordly aims command,
Of the intoxicants have I now made an end (4).

So, again, its the same new life, leading to the same new transcendental consciousness. In these two important points the christian mystical awakening and the buddhist gotrabhu experience are perfectly the same. It does not matter in the least that they should belong to different religious disciplines.

(1) Mysticism, p. 217-218.

(2) Underhill, Mysticism, p. 200.

(3) Compendium, p. 68.

(4) Psalms of the Brethren, p. 110.

CHAPTER II

Arahantship.

1.—The ariyan, after conversion or “ entering the path, ” lives in the new discipline, that is the ariyan eightfold path, and its new world of transcendental consciousness. His progress is then divided into four smaller paths with four corresponding fruits (°), as follows :—

- (1) Path and Fruit of Stream-attainment (°).
- (2) Path and Fruit of Once-returning (°).
- (3) Path and Fruit of Never-returning (°).
- (4) Path and Fruit of Arahantship (°).

(1) Stream-attainment.—Directly after conversion the ariyan enters into this first path. While in it he does two things :—

a) He destroys the first three of the category of ten fetters or sins—delusion of self, doubtings about the Buddha and his teaching, and belief in the usefulness of ceremonies and sacrifices (°).

(1) Now it becomes clear why in the 12 classes of intelligent beings 8 belong to the ariya classes. The paths and fruits are altogether 8. So that each corresponds with one particular ariyan class.

(2) Sotapatti.—He who reaches the first path.

(3) Sakadagami.—He who will be born once more on earth, after which he will pass away into Nibbana.

(4) Anagami.—Called never-returning because the man attaining it will never any more be born in the normal worlds, but will, after death, go to the pure abodes, the Brahma heavens.

(5) Literally, worthy of gifts.

(6) The ten fetters are called Sanyojana. See Compendium, Pl. VII., § 2; Rhys Davids, Buddhism, p. 109.

b) He reduces by self-training the number of times he will be reborn in the world of sense perceptions to only seven more.

At this stage, the ariyan is, according to Ledi Sadaw, like a buried struggling man whose head has been freed from the earth and become established in the new light of the sky. The cultivation of the path is immediately followed by two or three moments of its fruition, the fruit of the path, before consciousness lapses again. This happens after every one of the four paths; the fruits come immediately after their corresponding paths, as an ecstasy or a vision lasting only for two or three moments.

(2) Once-returning.—When the ariyan reaches this path three things occur :—

a) There is a new important development, that of mind. It is the beginning of “ Sambodhi ” which is wisdom, intelligence, mental awakening,—the christian illumination. This new factor is a necessary condition in the last three paths.

b) There is more victory over sin, its moral aspect. This time it is another category, namely the three root-evils of greed, anger, and ignorance, that are, not completely overcome, but reduced to a minimum.

c) This path expressed as outward result signifies that the ariyan will be reborn on earth only once more ; after that he will enter Nibbana.

(3) Never-returning.—Here too the ariyan’s development is in the same three things :—

a) Intellectually, his illumination becomes fuller, more permanent, for “ he will come back no more to things as we know them in this world of sense-perception ” (1).

(1) Compendium, p. 218. The “ ithitan of the Kamaloka. ”

b) Morally, there is still more victory. This time the struggle moves back to the ten fetters, of which he gets rid of two, namely sensuality and malevolence. They are the fourth and fifth, for in the first path he has already got rid of the first three.

c) Physically, there is no more rebirth for him in this world, for after death he goes to the perfect heavens, and will from there pass away into Nibbana.

(4) Arahantship.—This is the last path and fruit, the ariyan life's fulfilment, being the ideal before all that long and difficult training in the ariyan eightfold path. It is equivalent to Nibbana, the "unconditioned reality." The ariyan now becomes an arahant, literally, "he who is worthy of all gifts."

The understanding of the ultimate buddhist experience or ideal, for in buddhism they mean the same, is so very important that its best to go to the most valid instance, which will be the Buddha's. There cannot possibly be a better, speaking of a buddhist experience. A full account from different parts of the writings will be given, as an isolated passage dealing only with the actual moment of the experience would very likely give an uncertain and even wrong idea of the whole. All the material here collected will enter in one way or another into the later conclusion.

First of all the Buddha makes clear to himself what it is that he should seek by means of a spiritual life. "Why" he asks, "myself subject to birth, do I crave what is subject to birth, myself subject to old age... disease... death... sorrow... corruption, do I crave what is subject to corruption? What if now, myself subject to birth, and perceiving the wretchedness of what is subject to birth, I were to crave the incomparable security of a Nibbana free from birth; myself subject to old age... disease... death... sorrow... corruption, I were to crave the incomparable security of a Nibbana free from corruption?"

Then comes the great renunciation—the four visions of a sick man, a very old man, a dead man, and a priest shaved and yellow-robed ; the disturbed mind, the questionings, and the sudden decision and the forsaking of the world to lead a hermit's life in the forests. He becomes a disciple to Alara Kalama, a mystic, whose doctrine he soon acquires. It brings thoughts to him.—“ And it occurred to me, O priests, as follows : It is not through mere faith in this doctrine that Alara Kalama announces that he has learnt it for himself, realised it, and lives in the possession of it. Alara Kalama surely knows and perceives this doctrine. Then, O priests, I drew near to where Alara Kalama was ; and having drawn near, I spoke to Alara Kalama as follows : Brother Kalama, how far does this doctrine conduct, concerning which you announce that you have learnt it for yourself, realized it, and entered upon it ? When I had thus spoken, O priests, Alara Kalama announced that it conducted to the realms of nothingness. And it occurred to me, O priests, as follows : Faith is not peculiar to Alara Kalama : I also have faith : Heroism... contemplation... concentration... wisdom is not peculiar to Alara Kalama : I also have wisdom. What if now I were to strive for the realization of that doctrine concerning which Alara Kalama announces that he has learnt it for himself, realized it, and lives in the possession of it. Then I, O priests, in no long time, quickly learnt that doctrine for myself, realized it, and lived in the possession of it. ” But that was not all he was seeking. It was not sufficient; it clearly fell short of the glory of his ideal. So it occurs to him—“ And it occurred to me, O priests, as follows : This doctrine does not lead to aversion, absence of passion, cessation, quiescence, knowledge, supreme wisdom, and Nibbana, but only as far as the realm of nothingness. ” Consequently, he leaves Brother Kalama on a further spiritual quest. He comes to Uddaka, the disciple of Rama, yet another mystic. The same happens; but this new doctrine

led to a higher mystical stage, for it conducted to the realm of neither perception nor yet non-perception. This also was not enough, for it was not the highest. These two mystical episodes are most helpful for understanding the buddhist ideal, for they show how it is in the direct line of tradition with certain mystical stages, how in fact it is only a higher stage of development, differing only in this way from the others. It has been seen that these two ecstasies, namely the realm of nothingness and that of neither perception nor yet non-perception, take high place in buddhist jhana contemplations, the only thing higher being the realm of complete cessation belonging to those attaining Nibbana. Also the exact phrases of the two mystics are used repeatedly to describe the buddhist ideal. All this has been pointed out.

After leaving these mystics the Buddha feels that he has done with teachers. Alone he continues the struggle the highest, following the usual way of extreme asceticism. At last, almost killed by austere living, it comes to him that all this violence done to the body cannot be good, and so he becomes more moderate. It is followed by the great experience—" And craving, O priests, the highest ideal, the incomparable peaceful state, I came in the course of my journeyings among the Magadhans to Uruvela, the General's town. There I perceived a delightful spot with an enchanting grove of trees, and a silvery flowing river, easy of approach and delightful, and a village near by in which to beg... And there I settled down, O priests, as everything was suitable for struggling. " It was under the famous Bo-tree. Then came the great moment—" And being, O priests, myself subject to birth, and craving the incomparable security of a Nibbana free from birth, I attained the incomparable security of a Nibbana free from birth... " and so on through old age, disease, death, corruption—" I attained the incomparable security of a Nibbana free from corruption. And the knowledge and the insight

sprang up within me, " My deliverance is unshakable; this is my last existence ; no more shall I be born again. " And it occurred to me, O priests, as follows—" This doctrine to which I have attained is profound, recondite, and difficult of comprehension, excellent, and not to be reached by mere reasoning, subtle, and intelligible only to the man who has enlightenment. Mankind, on the other hand is captivated, entranced and spell-bound by its lusts, and for as much as mankind is captivated... by its lusts, it is hard for them to understand the law of dependence on assignable reasons, the law of cause and happening, and it is also hard for them to understand how all the constituents of being may be made to subside, all the substrata of being be relinquished, and desire be made to vanish, and absence of passion, cessation, and Nibbana be attained." Later he preaches the new doctrine to his old fellow-ascetics who express doubts about it—" Brother Gotama... how, now that you are luxurious, and have given up the struggle and devoted yourself to an easy life, can you have transcended human limitations, and attained to pre-eminence in full and sublime knowledge and insight ? " This question makes very clear the substance of the Buddha's experience under the Bo-tree and his claim based on it. Then we get his answer—" A saint, O priests, is the Tathagata, a supreme Buddha. Give ear, O priests. The deathless has been gained, and I will instruct you, and teach you the doctrine. If ye will do according to my instructions, in no long time, and in the present life, ye shall learn for yourselves, and shall realize and live in the possession of that highest ideal to which the holy life conducts... " His first thought after the emancipation is for the world, and how to save it from its sufferings according to the new doctrine. He has good reasons for doubting whether the world would understand it. But in the end the desire to save others prevails and he begins his mission. Meeting a certain naked ascetic he makes the following declaration to him :—

All-conquering have I now become, all-knowing ;
Untainted by the elements of being.
Ive left all things, am freed through thirst's destruction,
All wisdom's mine : what teacher shall I follow ?
I have no teacher anywhere ;
My equal can nowhere be found ;
In all the world with all its gods .
No one to rival me exists
The saintship, verily, Ive gained,
I am the teacher, unsurpassed ;
I am the Buddha, sole, supreme ;
Lusts fire is quenched, Nibbana gained.

There are other accounts in other suttas as well, all giving the same matter, although each shifts the stress to a different view of the experience. Thus one (The Maha-saccaka) dwells on the four raptures, and the three forms of knowledge ; another (The Bvadhā-vittaka) on the certainty, the absence of doubt; another (The Bhaya-bherava) on the conquest over fear and agitation ; another (The Ariya-pariyesana) on the bliss and security of the Nibbana to which he then attained. In the first of these suttas the story ends in the following manner—" When this knowledge, this insight, had arisen within me, my heart was set free from the intoxication of lusts, set free from the intoxication of becomings, set free from the intoxication of ignorance. In me, thus emancipated, there arose the certainty of that emancipation. And I came to know, Rebirth is at an end. The higher life has been fulfilled. What had to be done has been accomplished. After this present life there will be no beyond. This last insight did I attain to in the last watch of the night. Ignorance was beaten down, insight arose darkness was destroyed, the light came, inasmuch as I was there strenuous, aglow, master of myself. "

All the above concerns the Buddha's enlightenment. But no one of those several episodes is, in the canonical books

confined to the Buddha. Each of them is related, in other passages, of one or other of the men and women who afterwards adopted the new teaching and practised according to it. These conditions are, from the accounts when put together, the constituent parts of the emancipation belonging to every form of arahantship. They all are repeated in the standard description, occurring so often in many of the suttas, of the manner in which arahantship is reached (1). In the opinion of the early Buddhists their Buddha was an arahant ; but in his case there was no limit to all the depth and amount of his enlightenment, or to the extraordinary graces he possessed in common with other arahants. The distinction between arahant and Buddha became very vital in latter days (2). But what must be remembered here is, in the early passages describing the crisis under the Bo-tree there is no mention either of Buddha or of Buddhahood as apart from arahantship.

We now have a full account of the Buddha's arahant-experience ; because of this experience he became Buddha or the awakened one. On analysing it its different parts appear quite plainly. First of all, the general impression it leaves is that of an emancipation affecting the whole man. All the accounts are consistent in saying this, so that it is always true. The Buddha is made to declare to the same effect, namely that the whole of arahantship is an emancipation of being—" Just as the great ocean has one taste only, the taste of salt, just so have this doctrine and discipline but one flavour only, the flavour of emancipation " (3). And again—" When a brother has, by himself, known and realized, he continues to abide, here in this visible world, in that emancipation of mind, in that

(1) Given in full in *Dialogues of the Buddha*, I., 79-93.

(2) See Rhys Davids, *Early Buddhism*, p. 37-38; *Dialogues*, I., 190, note.

(3) *Vinaya*, I., 239.

emancipation of heart which is arahantship " (1). Thus arahantship was as seen in life wholly an emancipation (Vimutti) :—

“ And see, O Master! Sundari who comes
To tell thee of Emancipation wom. ”

Emancipation, as one goes on analysing, falls into three divisions similar to those already found in each of the three paths lower than arahantship, namely, stream-attainment once-returning, and never-returning. They are as follows.

(a) The intellectual factor, which is a supreme enlightenment, or omniscience, as another account gives it (2)—
“ Transcending human limitations and attaining to pre-eminence in full and sublime knowledge and insight. ”
Therefore, it is “ not to be reached by mere reasoning, subtle, and intelligible only to men with enlightenment. ”
It is clear that the illumination which has been growing in the second and third paths here becomes the complete vision of things, insight, gnosis, perfect awakening. Not only is it so, but this illumination which is called the emancipation of the mind is the beginning of everything else that is perfect. The Buddha explains this precisely—
“ When this knowledge, this insight had arisen within me, my heart was set free from the intoxication of lusts... becomings... ignorance. ” The disciples too are like-minded in this—“ Lord, he who is arahant, ” says one, “ has won his own salvation, has utterly destroyed the fetters of becoming, is by perfect knowledge emancipated. ”

(b) Next there is the moral or volitional factor, for the emancipation of the mind leads to the other emancipation,

(1) Mahali Sutta. Dialogues, I., 201; cf. 204. Cf. Anguttara, I., 236 f.

(2) Jataka, I., 76; Digha, Sutta, XXIV. Dialogues, vol. I., 93-201-203; vol. II., 167.

that of the heart, for “ to him, thus knowing, thus seeing, the heart is set free ” (1). “ Desire and passion vanish. ” In the three lower paths the ariyan gets rid of a great part of the two sin categories—he destroys the first five of the ten fetters, and reduces to a minimum the three root-evils. In arahantship the remaining five fetters are destroyed, and the three root-evils completely ended. All other lesser categories of sin, for buddhism has many, too disappear (2). It is, therefore, an absolute purification. The arahant is free from all sin ; he sees and values all things in this life according to a new transcendental set of values, in the light of vision, of his arahant experience.

What other men call Sukka, that the ariyans
Call Dukkha; what the rest so name,
That do the ariyans know as happiness.
Behold a dhamma that is hard to understand.

The Buddha describes it above—“ I attained the incomparable security of Nibbana... Aversion, absence of passion, knowledge, supreme wisdom, and Nibbana... ”

(c) The emotional factor, or more correctly, that of feeling and well-being, is the sense of a great peace, the incomparable peaceful state sought for seven years and found under the Bo-tree. Connected with this factor in the buddhist mind is “ the knowledge and the insight springing up within me, my deliverance is unshakable ; this is my last existence, no more shall I be born again. ” Peace was the emotional result which most impressed the arahant’s mind ; all other emotions are directly related to it—comfort, end of ill, end of becoming, rest, calm, coolness,

(1) Dialogues, I., 93.

(2) Compendium, p. 69-218; Visuddhi Magga, ch. I.; Dialogues, I., 191-200; The last five fetters are; desire for rebirth, in heaven, pride, self-righteousness, ignorance; cf. Early Buddhism, 67-72.

safety, joy, what are they but the ariyan peace seen and felt differently in different moods.

“ We both are arahants with selves well tamed;
Cool are we, ours is Nibbana now ” (1).

Here peace becomes a coolness, like a shadow under an eastern sun.

So this is what is known of arahantship or Nibbana, the ariyan ideal waiting at the end of the ariyan eightfold path, perfect knowledge, perfect purity, perfect peace. The best summing up is a passage from the writings themselves—
“ He whose senses have become tranquil, like a horse well broken in by the driver ; who is free from pride and the desires of the flesh, and the desire for living, and ignorance—him even the gods envy. Such a man whose conduct is right, remains like the strong earth, untroubled, like the pillar of the city gate, unmoved, like a clear lake, unruffled. For such there are no more births. Peaceful is the mind, peaceful the words and deeds of him who is thus given peace, and made free by knowledge ” (2).

The conclusion therefore is that arahantship or Nibbana leads to an emancipation, a complete rebuilding of the man which produces in him perfect enlightenment, perfect purity, and perfect peace, the whole taking place interiorly as a new state of consciousness, an experience here and now of the ideal. It is completely subjective. The ariyan is not interested in any other kind of reality.

Nibbana have I realised and gazed
Into the mirror of the holy dhamma.
I, even I, am healed of my hurt,
Low is my burden laid, my task is done,
My heart is wholly set at liberty (3).

(1) Psalms of the Sisters, p. 49. This book of the canon, Theri-Gatha, is a collection of 73 songs by women ariyans of the canonical days. They contain some 55 references to these emotional aspects of arahantship or Nibbana as a great Peace.

(2) Dhammapada, vv. 94-96.

(3) Psalms of the Sisters, vv. 222-223.

A medieval work explains it picturesquely—“ There is no spot O king, east, south, west, or north, above, below, or beyond, were Nibbana is situate, and yet Nibbana is, and he who orders his life aright, grounded in virtue, and with rational attention, may realise it, whether he live in Greece, China, Alexandria, or in Kosala, ” for he enters that city “ who emancipates his mind in arahantship ” (1).

So far we have seen the outward evidences of Nibbana. For ordinary religious purposes no distinction is made between Nibbana itself and what it brings to the man entering it. The state can as well be taken for the result seeing that it is the most effective way of expressing something which otherwise would be inexpressible. But to the mind which needs to think accurately there is an important distinction. For Nibbana is a state which is indefinible; it exists only as an experience. It is described as being different from every other thought or object. All the rest are “ Sankheta ”, that is to say, formed, fashioned, made, conditioned, caused (2). These terms will apply to everything which can enter the mind, including the fruits of emancipation. Nibbana alone is “ a-sankheta, ” the opposite of the other things, and therefore the unconditioned reality (3). It is called the “ beyond ” in every sense, that is, “ beyond all the three worlds of existence, ” as the commentary explains. The consciousness which belongs uniquely to it has been described as “ transcendental consciousness that has altogether gone beyond all worlds ” (4). From such a level of being all that can be known, or described, or even thought of is clearly excluded. It exists just as a pure experience, on a level of consciousness which is higher than those of the known worlds.

(1) Milinda, 212 f., 202 f.

(2) Compendium, p. 197.

(3) Compendium, p. 168-169.

(4) Compendium, p. 168.

Nowhere is measure for one gone to oblivion,
That whereby we speak of him—that exists no longer.
Wholly cut off are all forms of our knowing.
Cut off the channels of speech, every one (1).

It is therefore evident that an important division exists between Nibbana as a pure fact, and its results. For this reason the ariyan ideal should be understood as having two parts.

(1) Nibbana which a pure experience above every word and thought. This is the true ariyan ultimate.

(2) Nibbana as known in consciousness when it comes to be described by its known aspects, namely, the results it leads to. These are an emancipation of the whole man which produces chiefly enlightenment, purity, and peace.

(1) Sutta-Nipata, 1074-1075; cf. Samyutta, IV., 2, 9.

CHAPTER III

Enlightenment.

In the general emancipation which is the result of arahantship it has been made clear that the first and really fundamental thing is the emancipation of the mind, or enlightenment. Now, in the canonical writings, several terms are used to express the idea, showing it in its different aspects of process and result. It will help very greatly if these terms are understood just as they stand in the several texts; in fact it seems the only real way of knowing what enlightenment exactly meant for the arahant.

Buddhism, like other Indian religions, possesses a great amount of terms to denote different levels of understanding, not only as so many states of mind but also as an evolution or a growing from strength to strength. Its language, namely Pali, helped it quite a lot by having stems from which new words for this purpose were easily made. Mrs. Rhys Davids has remarked on it—" Buddhist philosophy has not only commandeered the acts of waking and turning towards but has nearly a dozen words built on the proper know-stems alone" (1). Again—" Our European languages, are not rich enough in terms of higher intelligence to produce equivalents. Perhaps our religious ideals have tended to be emotional rather than intellectual " (2). Here it is unnecessary to go through the whole

(1) Buddhist Psychology, p. 110.

(2) Buddhism, p. 228.

collection of them. Only those denoting the highest understanding, and therefore meaning arahant emancipation of mind, concern us, terms rendered by different western scholars as wisdom, gnosis, knowledge, supreme knowledge, enlightenment, sometimes even omniscience.

(1) Nana and panna.—These two terms can mean any form of understanding, from the most primary sense-perception to the highest intuition. Mrs. Rhys Davids writes as follows about panna—“ So protean and flexible is the term that it is used not only for intuitive knowledge, but for any exercise of intelligence... The synonyms by which it is defined in the Abhidhamma-Pitaka embrace nearly every aspect of cognition, from research and analysis to insight ” (1). But as actually used in the canonical writings these two terms show the state of a mind moving towards the highest. The necessary impulse is already there ; and very often that highest, which is arahant enlightenment, is achieved. The following text will show it—“ What is it to have panna ? It is to know the method of the four Truths. What is consciousness ? It is being conscious for instance, of pleasure or pain or neutral feeling... What distinguishes them ? Panna is to be made to become ; consciousness is to understand... And by what does one know knowable idea ? By the eye of Panna. But what is here the meaning of panna ? It means supernormal knowledge, complete knowledge, elimination ” (2).

Now, hear the greatest living Burmese mystic commenting on the same term—“ Now knowing is threefold: there is knowing as being aware of, knowing as perceiving, knowing as understanding. Perceiving is a clearer knowing than awareness, and is also knowing without forget-

(1) Buddhist Psychology, p. 130; Compendium, p. 102.

(2) Majjhima, I., 292 f.

ting over a lapse of time. Understanding... is knowing completely all about any knowable thing... Panna is to have an exhaustive knowledge of all this, as it is said : the limit of knowledge is the knowable, the knowable is the limit of knowledge. Panna in its fullest sense is omniscience... Nana, do you say, is the criterion of truth? But nana is twofold : inferential or intuitive. When ordinary folk are investigating abstruse, subtle, deep matters, they know by way of inference. But by proper mental training, by developing panna, they may attain intuition in these matters... Now, mind, mental constituents, matter, Nibbana (the four ultimates of later buddhist category) are just such abstruse, subtle, deep matters, to be truly understood only as inferential knowing becomes, through persistent training, transformed into intuitive knowing " (1).

So panna, in highest spiritual matters, really means complete knowing, an intuition of ultimate things omniscience. It is even spoken of as the result of almost a special organ of sight quite different and higher than those which bring all other kinds of knowledge.

The eye of flesh, the eye divine,
And the eye of Panna best of all (2).

A fourth eye is mentioned, namely the eye for truth, which brings insight into the nature of things. The highest god was once said to have attained it. An account says— " Now while he was speaking in this dialogue, the stainless spotless eye for the Truth arose in Sakka, the ruler of the gods, to wit, Whatsoever thing can come to be, that also must cease to be " (3). The eye of panna is also above this

(1) Yamaka; appendix, p. 264, 274 (P.T.S. ed.).

(2) Iti-vuttaka, § 61; also see Dialogues, II., 357; Buddhist Review, Intellect and the Khanda Doctrine, April, 1910.

(3) Dialogues, II., 320; Sutta, XXI.

eye, for it is the best of all. This makes panna not only a special perfect knowledge but also the result of a different organ of sight, thus separating it utterly from the rest. Nana means the same thing as panna. The Burmese translator of "The Compendium of Philosophy" says— "The scholastic distinction between panna and nana, which is useful in a philological study, does not hold good in philosophy. These two terms have been used, at least in the Manual, to signify one and the same idea... Therefore if panna and nana are rendered by reason, it must be understood as a power or faculty of understanding as distinguished from the concrete reasoning process. It is the underlying principle of all forms of knowledge" (1). The substance of all the above texts and statements is that panna and nana, at their highest spiritual value in the ariyan life, imply knowledge which is a perfect beholding, a vision of the highest eye, perception as distinct from conception and all inferential knowing. "Panna is to be made to become; consciousness is to be understood." In this passage one sees the intuitive non-inferential quality of panna. Something new, higher, has "become" which was not there before, a plain act of creation leading to the arising of a new eye, and a new arrangement of ideas (2). This new eye or vision was the substance of the Buddha's experience under the Bo-tree. "Coming to pass! Coming to pass! At that thought there arose in me a vision into things not called before to mind. And knowledge arose, insight arose, wisdom arose, light arose..." (3). The result was omniscience. I heard the Truth, "says a saint testifying," which that Great One had taught, and felt its mighty virtues, known by Him, who, by supreme nana, has understood everything (4). This same new vision enters

(1) Compendium, p. 41.

(2) Dialogues, I., 247 f.

(3) Quoted in Buddhism (H.U.L.), p. 97.

(4) Psalms of the Brethren, v. 69.

into the arahant's experience. Thus he is taught—" When by the aid of panna thou hast stopped thy wrongful ways... so thou canst see how all things do become... then thou shalt be the heir of Him, knower and teacher of the things supreme " (1). In another place a great arahant is approached with the following prayer—" Well have we learnt how thou canst answer, whose panna straight to heart of things doth go. Not vainly do we stand, once more saluting—O baffle not, thou infinite in wisdom " (2). After this one can understand, although it is perhaps too early to accept all of it in this place, the conclusion arrived at by Mrs. Rhys Davids. She says—" Panna was not simply exercise of thought on matters of general knowledge and practice, nor was it dialectic, nor desultory reverie. It was intelligence diverted by—or yather as—concentrated volition, from lower practical issues till, as a fusion of sympathy, synthesis, synergy, it made to become that spiritual vision which had not been there before... And this is intuition, or insight, that effort of intellectual sympathy by which the mind can place itself within the mobile reality of things " (3). A sound statement on the whole, but here I am occupied only with the texts and their explanations.

(2) Abhinna.—In one of the above quotations, abhinna, rendered as "supernormal knowledge," is given as a form of panna. It will therefore be useful to know its meaning. Besides, it is an acquirement greatly coveted by the arahant. Abhinna is obviously derived from the same root as panna, and means literally, "knowledge that goes beyond." In buddhist writings the term has a special use, because it refers to the possessing of six extraordinary powers, as follows :—

(1) Psalms of the Brethen, v. 1142.

(2) Psalms of the Brethen, v. 1272.

(3) Buddhist Psychology, p. 133. The quotation in the passage is from Bergson's 'Introduction to Metaphysics.'

(a) " Divinely clear hearing, surpassing that of men, sounds both celestial and human, far and near...

(b) " Investigating and discerning the hearts of other beings, the hearts of other men...

(c) " Calling to mind many previous existences...

(d) " A divinely clear vision, surpassing that of men, beholding beings as they pass from one existence and spring up in another existence... (This is the divine eye, one of the four kinds already given. And clearly shines the eye divine, says one possessing this power) (1).

(e) " Freedom from depravity, emancipation of the mind, emancipation by wisdom... "

(f) Power to move through earth and air at will, " as quickly as a strong man might stretch out his arm " (2).

These six powers came in the course of the ariyan life, during the time of mental training, " for by concentration is indicated the advent of the six abhinnas " (3). Very often they are a part of arahant enlightenment. It was so in the Buddha's case, for these powers came to him under the Bo-tree. " And then, " says one account of the incident, " while the Bo-tree in homage rained red, coral-like sprigs upon his priestly robes, he acquired in the first watch of the night the knowledge of previous existences; in the middle watch of the night the divine eye... " (4). Many arahants also are reported to have possessed them. Of one it is said that, " Six branches of abhinna she realized

(1) Psalms of the Brethren, v. 332; also vv. 379, 516, 562, etc.; cf. Compendium, p. 209.

(2) Milinda-Panha, p. 82.

(3) Quotations from Majjhima, I., 34, Akankheyya-Sutta; for detailed account see Digha, I., 78-84; Samyutta, II., 216, I., 191, II., 217, V., 282; Petisambhida-magg, I., p. 112 ff. gives the oldest account of the process of inducing Abhinna. See also Warren, 303 ff.; Compendium, 209, etc.

(4) Visuddhi-Magga, ch. I. Warren, 286.

(5) Jataka, I., 75; Warren, p. 82.

as learner, then winning to the highest fruit " (1). A very frequent testimony by the early arahants repeats the same in these words. " How erst I lived I know ; the divine eye have I clarified ; supernormal power, reading others thoughts, the divine hearing have I achieved " (2). So here are certain concrete instances of what the arahant means when speaking of enlightenment. They are as it were the outward sign and symbol of an inner possession, testifying, even if with a certain extravagance, to the belief in the new quality of that possession, for it brings with it extraordinary powers, intuitions, and an altogether different level of consciousness.

(3) Anna.—This term is reserved only for the highest enlightenment and it is used for the emancipation of mind in arahantship. In fact the ariyan's progress is divided into three stages according to its relations with anna. I have already shown this to some extent. It is as follows :—

(a) In stream-attainment, the ariyan has " consciousness-that-he-shall-have-anna " (3).

(b) In once-returning and never-returning he has " consciousness-of-anna. "

(c) In arahantship there is " consciousness-of-him-who-has-obtained-anna. " This is the highest and perfect fruit.

Anna is a term that the Buddha also uses in describing the virtues of the arahant. " The brother who is arahant," says one account, " in whom the intoxicants are destroyed, who has lived the life, who has done his task, who has laid low his burden, who has attained salvation, who has utterly destroyed the fetter of rebirth, who is made free

(1) Psalms of the Sisters, v. 516.

(2) Psalms of the Brethren, v. 379; also in numerous other verses.

(3) Digha, III., 219; Samyutta, v. 204; Bud. Psy. Ethics, pp. 86-97.

by true anna... ” (°). So anna is the moving power behind the arahant’s emancipation and it is the highest buddhist enlightenment, among men as well as gods. The arahants testify to the fact that it was a real power making for the holiest things—“ How will anger come to him who is free from anger, ” asks one, “ whose ways are free from all passion, self-tamed, serene, by utmost anna saved ? ” (°). Also in their open testimonies telling of their having gained arahantship, a popular practice in those days, they are said “ to declare anna. ” In this manner the term meaning the highest enlightenment came to be used to indicate the whole new emancipation. There is an account of two disciples who waited upon the Buddha and publicly declared their new-won arahantship. The Buddha replies, “ Even so do men of true lineage declare their anna—they tell of the good they have won ” (°). Now, perhaps I may add a note by Mrs. Rhys Davids. “ Signifying literally ad-sciens, ac-knowledging, anna is used in the Suttanta books to signify that mental flash or suffusion of intuitive knowledge and assurance of salvation constituting emancipation or arahantship. The Buddha testifies to having realized it under the Bo-tree, but uses a kindred less specialized word... ” (°).

(4) Sambodhi.—This term, along with some others, is connected with the act of waking. It is a metaphor not associated with the Buddha’s own enlightenment. The texts dealing with the latter will make the meaning of sambodhi clearer. In one place the Buddha says :—

All that which should be known is known by me.
All culture of the mind, that have I wrought
Whatever should be renounced I have renounced,
Hence, Brahmin, am I Buddha—one Awake (°).

(1) *Digha*, III., 133; cf. *Dialogues*, III., 125; also see *Majjhima*, I., 479; *Samyutta*, II., 221.

(2) *Psalms of the Brethren*, v. 441; cf. *Dhammapada*, v. 96.

(3) *Anguttara*, III., 359.

(4) *Psalms of the Brethren*, Preface, p. XXXI.

(5) *Psalms of the Brethren*, v. 828.

In another place the Buddha's words after his enlightenment are given—" All conquering have I now become, sambodhi... all wisdom's mine ; what teacher should I follow. I have no teacher anywhere ; my equal nowhere can be found ; in all the world, with all its gods, no one to rival me exists. The arahantship verily I've gained; I am the teacher unsurpassed; I am the Buddha, sole, supreme,... Nibbana has been gained... " And a little later, " A saint, O priests, is the Tathagata, a supreme Buddha... " (1). These passages very fully explain the meaning of sambodhi as the uttermost awakening, omniscience itself, coming suddenly and packed into a few intense moments, when all reality becomes clear before a direct beholding—" Coming to pass! Coming to pass! At that thought there arose in me a vision into things not called before to mind. And knowledge arose, insight arose, wisdom arose, light arose... "

In the ariyan life sambodhi has already been found to be necessary to the latter three paths and fruits. Very often, as in the case of the Buddha, it is used to mean the whole of arahantship. Thus " the incomparably perfect Sambodhi " (2) is put before all as the reward of faithful practices. A disciple tells how he won it :—

I stirred up effort, put forth all my strength,
And won the goal, sambodhi supreme ;
Arahant am I, meet for men's offerings,
Thrice-wise, the heavenly vision I behold ;
Conquered is Namuci, and all his host (3).

The above are the explanations according to the texts of the four terms most often used in the canonical writings and the commentaries when referring to the enlightenment

(1) *Majjhima*, I., 170-172; cf. Warren, 343.

(2) *Digha*, III., 101; cf. *Dialogues*, III., 96.

(3) *Psalms of the Brethren*, vv. 335-336. Namuci is another name for Mara the buddhist satan, the highest god of the lower worlds.

of arahantship. There are some more, not only other terms, but also a great amount of phrases bringing the meaning nearer still and most usefully. For example, this enlightenment is something personal, a man's very own, individual, direct, realization of the truth. It appears unmistakably in the words of one arahant :—

Yes, won and realized is the Dhamma.

Even for my own, not learnt as-such-and-such (°).

The ariyan is told that he will know for himself and realize for himself that supreme religion and goal ; and similar phrases are everywhere in the writings (°), one of them putting it even more forcibly—“ Ye shall attain to and abide in, each one for himself, even here and now, the understanding and the realization of full and abounding insight ” (°). Even more than that, the arahant realizes and sees face to face (°) something not to be grasped by mere logical reasoning, subtle, intelligible only to the man with enlightenment (°).

There is still another phrase which is even more indicative. It says that the arahant, in knowing and realizing for himself, sees the truth “ according as it has become, by right panna ” (°). The phrase is peculiarly buddhist, and is found all over the chief canonical writings. In one passage at least there is certainly an attempt to give it a meaning that goes to the first beginnings of things. It is where the Buddha is teaching about cause and arising, that is, about the great buddhist law of becoming. He says, “ This has come to be (*bhutam*), Saraputta, do you see ? This has become, Saraputta, do you see ? ” “ It has

(1) Psalms of the Brethren, v. 331 ; cf. Sutta-Nipata, vv. 934, 1052, etc.

(2) Digha, III., 102 ; cf. Dialogues, III., 97, 50, 102 ; see Majjhima, I., 171-172.

(3) Dialogues, III., 52 ; Digha, Sutta, XXV, the end.

(4) Dialogues, I., 42.

(5) Majjhima, I., 167.

(6) Cf. Samyutta, VI., 81-82 (index).

become, master ; by right panna one sees it even as it has become (*yathabhutan*) ” (1). Consciously, it seems, the same term *bhutam* is chosen, thus connecting the vision into things “ as-has-become ” with ultimate beginnings. Therefore to know things in the actual process of coming into being is one instance of seeing according as has become, by right panna ; and in this manner the new vision penetrates to the causal relations upon which everything is built, that is to say, to ultimate becoming—not ultimate being, because that does not exist in buddhism. In this connection it is interesting to read a note by Mrs. Rhys Davids in which she compares one aspect of the buddhist enlightenment with Spinoza’s *scientia intuitiva* as being the nearest western term for insight conceived as transcending normal perception and not consciously rati-
native—“ Spinoza uses the term to mean knowledge which proceeds from an adequate idea (that is, an idea having all the properties or intrinsic marks of a true idea) of the absolute sense of certain attributes of God to the adequate knowledge of the essence of things... In simpler cases, Spinoza goes on to say, we see the relation with one glance. What he really means, comments that ardent spinozian, the late J.-A. Picton, is, that if we see things as God sees them, we see them truly. And this means seeing things as in themselves they really are. But this is precisely the buddhist ideal knowledge or vision... ” (2).

Conclusion.

At the end of these explanations concerning arahant enlightenment we find that eight points have appeared in a clear amanner.

(1) The enlightenment is entirely new and different from the ordinary understanding. It is “ an incomparably

(1) *Samyutta*, II., 48 ; cf. *Majjhima*, I., 260.

(2) *Compendium*, Appendix, p. 224.

perfect awakening; ” it “ transcends human limitations, attaining to preeminence in full and sublime knowledge and insight ; ” therefore it is not to be reached by mere reasoning, subtle, and intelligible only to one with enlightenment. It is the work of a different faculty, the eye of panna, which is so carefully separated from the others.

(2) It is a direct and personal experience, most really an act of realization. The arahant sees face to face, which is a direct beholding ; he knows and realizes for himself ; he “ wins and realizes the Dhamma even for my own, not learnt as such and such. ” Oldenburg states it partly when he says that “ aroused by the Buddha’s word a personal knowledge arises in the mind ” (1).

(3) There is a singular clearness in it, according to the testimony of many arahants. Clearness begins during the time of training, at a high stage of ecstatic meditation, when for some brief moments there is an utterly pure lucidity and indifference of mind (2). Next, at a more advanced stage, when the six abhinna’s are won, clearness comes regularly as the gift of the divine eye which sees past lives and other people’s minds. “ My vision as a god’s is clarified ” says an early brother in speaking of this experience. Then in arahantship, it becomes a general permanent thing, the gift of the eye of panna, when the disciple with thought composed, intent, and with clearness belonging to panna comes to know that which the great seer had known, not merely his own past lives and other people’s minds, but Truth itself, namely the four ariyan truths. In this manner clearness is made permanent in the seeing of the highest truths, of everything in fact.

He, who both understands the inner life,
And doth discern the things that are without,
Clear visioned, by no voice is led away (3).

(1) Buddha, p. 321 ; cf. Majjhima, I., 165.

(2) Anguttara, I., 235.

(3) Psalms of Brethren, v. 472.

(4) It brings with it the most perfect certainty. There can be no mistake about it, for it is a direct and personal beholding, and a man cannot see face to face without being quite certain about his vision. The Buddha makes this the chief point in one account of his enlightenment. He says—
“ When this knowledge, this insight, had arisen within me, my heart was set free from the intoxication of lusts, set free from the intoxication of becomings, set free from the intoxication of ignorance. In me, thus set free, there arose the certainty of that emancipation... ” (1).

(5) It is final, allowing no further knowledge beyond itself. It sees ultimate reality which is a becoming according as has become, by right panna, and there is nothing more left. The result is so complete and authoritative that the arahant, the man with that vision, is called one who has reckoned up things, an adept or one who has finished learning. It is a set phrase throughout all the canonical writings to refer to him as one who has done his task, and has laid down his burden.

(6) It comes suddenly, often in a brief moment of ecstasy, leaving behind a permanent emancipation of mind. Therefore it is an awakening. This is a clear fact in the case of the Buddha to whom the vision came in a few intense hours of a memorable night, after many days spent in being wholly taken up by the delights of the ecstatic meditations, of the paths, and of the fruits (2). The latter statement shows that there was ecstasy in the experience. The songs of the early arahants too are full of suggestions about emancipation coming like a sudden flash and leaving great results behind. The importance attached to ecstatic meditations in the ariyan life further settles the point, namely that enlightenment comes as a sudden brief ecstatic experience.

(1) *Maha-Saccaka-Sutta*.

(2) *Jataka*, I., 69; Warren, 74.

(7) The enlightenment is the first result of an emancipation ; it is then followed by others in which the whole being takes part, the mind, the emotions, and the will, and in the end there are wisdom, purity, and peace as a life's perfect flowering. The Buddha speaks of it. The same is told at almost every climax, in the songs of the early arahants. Always the result is a freedom completely won.

I, even I, have seen, inside and out,
This body as in truth it really is,
Who sought to know the what and why of it...
Now for the body care I never more,
And all my consciousness is passion free.
Keen with unfettered zeal, detached,
Calm and serene I taste Nibbana's peace (1).

And the same feeling is everywhere in those songs.

(8) There are also outward results in the form of signs and wonders, namely the six extraordinary powers, such as the directly clear hearing, the heavenly eye which sees past lives and even thoughts, the power of travelling through earth and air freely. These are declared to be parts of the new enlightenment, proving therefore that the latter is very different from the normal forms of consciousness.

These eight points are more or less directly a summing-up of the whole quality of Buddhist enlightenment.

We now know sufficiently about the quality of this enlightenment. It is next necessary to go into its contents that is to say, into the truth or truths it reveals. Only when this has been done can there be a proper understanding of the matter, and without the understanding any later conclusions and upbuilding of theory would be without value.

Here too it is right to begin with the Buddha's experience under the Bo-tree. There is sufficient information on the

(1) Psalms of Sisters, vv. 85-86.

point—" In the last watch of the night "—that night of enlightenment—" his intellect fathomed the law of cause and happening. Now while he was musing on the twelve terms of this law forwards and backwards, round and back again, the ten thousand worlds quaked twelve times, as far as to their ocean bounderies... " (1). " The Blessed one sat crossed-legged for seven days together at the foot of the Bo-tree experiencing the bliss of emancipation. Then the Blessed one, during the first watch of the night, thought over Dependent Origination both forward and back... Thus does this entire aggregation of suffering arise... Thus does this entire aggregation of suffering cease... Then the Blessed One, during the middle watch of the night thought over Dependent Origination both forward and back... " (2). In another account the Buddha describes the incident in his own words, bringing out something new—" And being, O priests, myself subject to birth, I perceived the wretchedness of what is subject to birth... myself subject to old age,... disease... death... sorrow... corruption. I perceived the wretchedness of what is subject to corruption... it is hard for them (men) to understand the law of dependence on assignable reasons, the doctrine of Dependent Origination, and it is also hard for them to understand how all the constituents of being may be made to subside, all the substrata of being be relinquished, and desire be made to vanish and absence of passion, cessation, and Nibbana be attained... " (3).

These texts are a very precise account of the Buddha's enlightenment as far as its contents go, for they show the truths he saw during those moments of vision. First of all is the law of cause and happening, called here dependent origination, which explains all things that exist as arising

(1) *Jataka*, I., 75; Warren, 82.

(2) *Maha-Vagga*, I., 1; Warren, 83-85.

(3) *Majjhima*, I., 166-167.

through a cause and then passing away every moment, and consequently, all things as only a becoming. This is the fixed truth behind all the flowing acts, thoughts, and circumstances of life as the buddhist sees it, that is life not only as a present living, but as a timeless series going back infinitely into the past, to no given beginning. Secondly, the Buddha understood suffering, which he had always believed to be the most immediate thing in life, in the light of the law of cause and happening, thus seeing its cause, end, and the way leading to that end, in short the four ariyan truths about suffering. Evidently this is a result of the knowledge concerning the law of cause and happening, or in other words that law as applied to the problem of life, namely suffering and the way leading to its end. So, according to the writings, two truths were revealed to the Buddha under the Bo-tree—the law of cause and happening and the four truths concerning suffering.

The arahants also say that these two truths are the contents of their enlightenment. Thus, one of the greatest of them testifies to seeing clearly the very difficult truth of cause and happening—" O wonderful is it, Holy Master! " he says to the Buddha, with great conviction, "O Marvellous is it, Holy Master! How profound, Holy Master, is cause and happening, and of how profound an appearance! To me, nevertheless, it is as clear as clear can be. " The Holy Master replies, " Profound, Ananda, is cause and happening and profound of appearance. It is through not understanding this doctrine, Ananda, through not penetrating it, that thus manking is like an entangled warp..."⁽¹⁾. The Buddha's reply above is significant, for it places this understanding at the beginning of emancipation. Again, another arahant tells of his enlightenment as a seeing of the four ariyan truths :—

(1) Digha, Maha-Nidana-Sutta; Warren, 203.

O wonder that I found the power to draw
Myself forth from the waters on dry land.
Borne drifting on the awful flood I learnt
To know the Truths, their truth to understand (1).

All this content of actual arahant experience is further established by means of doctrinal teachings as the really essential matter. To it is given the name of "Dhamma," which means law, the doctrine, and even more than those, for it means something at the uttermost bases of law and doctrine. "He who discerns origin by way of cause," says the writings, "he discerns the Dhamma; he who discerns the Dhamma he discerns origin by way of cause." To realize these truths is to attain the highest gifts. "And what house-father," says a passage, "is this ariyan system which one who is fit for the highest has by insight well seen and well penetrated? This: that the ariyan disciple well and thoroughly attends to the arising by way of cause, namely that being present, this becomes; because that arises, this arises..." Another stresses the second truth—"What is the third grade (panna)? When a bhikkhu knows it really is that this is suffering; this is the cause of suffering; this is the end of suffering; this is the way leading to the end of suffering." The contents of the ariyan's enlightenment are now definable. They are always one of the two things, the law of cause and happening or the fourfold ariyan truths. Later on, when the formula of the three signs displaced in popular faith the fourfold truths it naturally became one of the chief contents of the enlightenment. Now, the law of cause and happening and the fourfold truths have been proved to be but two aspects of one which is deeper and more complete than anything else to the buddhist. That one is the great truth

(1) Psalms of Brethren, v. 88.

of becoming. The ariyan who tries to seize it as thought which is expressible at once reduces it to two forms according to his personal needs, namely a theory to satisfy his mind and a practice to guide his life. All this has been explained.

So it is this simple vision which comes to the ariyan, the vision into the truth of becoming, and essentially, nothing more.

When by the aid of vision thou has cut short
Thy errors, and restrained thyself by application,
Turned it along the path of truth,
So thou canst see how all things do become—
Rise into being and are then dispersed—
Then thou shalt be the child and heir of him,
Knower and teacher of the things supreme (1).

The truth, as we have seen, spontaneously leads to two deductions, but these can be called deductions only in the after-analysis, for at the moment of enlightenment both are inseparable from the vision, are in fact the body of the vision. This is all the contents of the ariyan enlightenment. It looks very simple and little to say that everything is a becoming, but for the buddhist there is nothing more ultimately at the beginning of all things. That little amount contains the all, because, it its root and substance, and the whole area of life :—

The wide kingdom of system and of law
Outside which there can be no salvation (2).

Therefore to understand it perfectly, to change the idea by hard effort into a realisation, into an ecstasy of direct

(1) Psalms of the Brethren, v. 1142.

(2) Dialogues, II., 167.

personal beholding is full enlightenment, even omniscience, justifying the use of the most far-reaching words when it is mentioned.

All conquering have I now become, all-knowing...
All wisdom's mine; what teacher should I know.

Further than this there can be nothing knowable, even in an easter vocabulary of infinite distinctions and divisions.

PART III.

The Ariyan and St. Theresa.

CHAPTER I

Introductory.

All thought and criticism regarding the question of buddhist mysticism, if meant to be constructive or to help in any way, will be based upon two teachings with all that they imply; they are, as explained, the eightfold noble path which is the highest buddhist salvation, and Nibbana or arahantship, the ideal waiting at the end of that way.

So much at least is certain at the beginning. Up to this place I have been careful to give only the documentary facts without trying to interpret them or to reduce them to a theory. They are there as nearly as they are found in the canonical writings. This is the most practical method, especially in the present case where the subject is very little known so that it becomes a duty to take every measure possible for keeping the facts pure and in their real atmosphere.

The importance of this in dealing with any disputed subject is plain. There is a criticism of a certain method which appears to be very much to the point here. It is by M. Blundel, who points out very discerningly some dangers which I think are real. " I merely ask you, " he tells a great writer, " not to exclude implicitly, by your systematic way of putting the problem and of describing the mystic states, a hypothesis which does not fit in with your methods. For you seem to exclude it... by altering the

facts... By the manner in which you expand this succession of states (those of St. Theresa) you imply that a solution has been arrived at with regards to the actual question of their origin, and you reduce them, as hallucinations, to mere nervous diseases, mere efference with efference. And I say plainly, that your discription of the facts themselves is thereby distorted... If I draw your attention, and somewhat insistently, to a tendency that seems to me to make itself apparent in several of your expressions, you will pardon me, believing that it is a question here not only of the method that should be applied to the study of mysticism, but even, we must say it, of all religious philosophy... If we wish to avoid distorting facts, they must first be described without pronouncing even indirectly upon their deep seated cause " (1). This is a very timely counsel, and should if followed lead to a less subjective and interpreted way of presenting facts in our work. The great advantage of such a method is that there will be a really free discussion, that is to say, the facts which determine the arguments will be known as they really are, and the reader will be able to take part in them almost as much as the writer himself. Thus he can accept the facts without being at the same time committed to the explanation given; he can disagree on the authority of those separate facts, he can argue quite independently without feeling, even for a time, exact helpless for want of proper information. Therefore in discussing a subject like mysticism, everybody must be sure that the facts are before him just as they exist; after that has been made certain any personal reading of them for purposes of building the later theory may follow. Then the approximity of the objective canonical matter will assist greatly to prevent their wrong handling in argument. So the first two parts

(1) Quoted in Poulain, *Des Graces d'Oraison*, p. 581. All through this work the page references to Poulain's book are based upon its English translation from where the quotations have been taken for greater convenience.

will be useful to the reader in the following ways : to know for himself the documentary side of the question, to verify according to this knowledge the conclusions that will naturally be drawn in the remaining parts, and if necessary even to come to his own conclusions.

2.—Now from this part onwards there will be arguments and conclusions derived from the facts, already given. It will be seen how far these facts go by themselves in the direction of mysticism ; in other words, they will be used to answer as much as possible the following question, how far and in what way is the buddhist ariyan experience mystical ? Here then we are set a definite task. The question gives it precisely so that all I will have to do is to confine myself to answering it. According to the plan of this study the answer is to be given by means of two comparisons.

3.—The first comparison will be between St. Theresa's mystical experience and the ariyan's, and will form the matter of this present part. There have been certain reasons for choosing St. Theresa. First of all, we, without doubt, have in her one of the very greatest mystics according to the judgment not only of the catholic church but also of all who are able to speak on the subject. More than this, she has been found worthy of presenting perhaps the most important, and in any case the most considerable form of christian mysticism in practice as well as for study. This makes her eminently a type both great and representative. In her we are quite certain of having a mysticism which is not irregular or about which authorities still dispute, but a really admitted case, and believed to be so by the strictest part of western mysticism, that of the catholic church. It is plain enough that the choice of such a mystic for a study which must deal with the principles of mysticism is most advantageous. Thus by doing so I am sure of possessing material which is pure, and acceptable

everywhere. It will follow from this that any other experience which is shown to be in reality the same as that of such as mystic must be also mystical beyond any question whatever. This is a great advantage for the purpose of proving the ariyan mystical experience. Even more important is the fact that by this means a really good start will be made to reduce the mystical experience of different religious to a minimum which is common and essential to all of them. I mean, of course, that this is to be done as much as the material will allow. Now, for the task in view St. Theresa gives us the christian part of it with absolute certainty. There only remains to get what is essential and minimum in the ariyan experience with the help of the christian example.

Again, from the buddhist point of view, St. Theresa is in an important sense, the most suitable for a comparison. There are a group of reasons for this, among which are the completeness of St. Theresa's experience, the full accounts she has left of them, and, the greatest of all, the perfectly unique light that her writings in general throw on the psychology of the experience. When explaining the ariyan's life I also showed how the canonical writings handle the subject with a great amount of psychological attention. In those days the power to explain psychologically was almost taken as a sign of being an ariyan, and once it even happened that the Buddha was recognized by a discourse on the constituents of man, his physical, mental, and ariyan states (1). This being so, the way to use the psychological material regarding the ariyan is to understand it psychologically, and if there is to be any comparison, to seek a psychological basis for it. This is just what St. Theresa enables us to do properly and without any gaps. In fact I am convinced that her complete psychological analysis is the only thing of its kind in the

(1) Majjhima, No. 140.

west which is able to meet the ariyan subtleties without being inadequate.

Besides, the psychological method is the only one possible here, since the comparison is between to experiences which are very widely different in every circumstance of history and belief. In such a case, if a similarity of any kind is to be found it must be by analysing thoughts, feelings, and such inner acts and workings of the heart. These are the things that really matter and that alone can prove either a similarity or a difference which is final. The historical and doctrinal facts will, without doubt, help to explain what takes place actually in experience, but they can neither do more nor be the chief facts especially in such a comparison as this, without stopping everything most effectively at the very beginning. So from all points of view the analysis of inner states is of the greatest value. For this St. Theresa is almost unique in western mysticism, and the two things that are obtained by choosing her are, an authoritative mystic, and a complete and psychological method of study.

CHAPTER II

St. Theresa's Life.

St. Theresa was born at Avila in Spain, in the year 1515. Even during her childhood her thoughts were religious owing chiefly to the example of devout parents. She read the lives of the saints, played at being martyr, anchorite, at setting up alters and saying mass, and even built a mud hermitage at the end of the garden. A martyr's death greatly impressed her. She wanted quite early to suffer it so much so that one day she ran away with her little brother with the hope of reaching Africa and being killed there for the faith. An uncle who saw them at a distance from home brought them back. A few years later the religious mood passed away for a time and her mind, always susceptible to the influences around it, was busy with romances and little personal vanities. But all this came to an end easily, as soon as her father sent her to an Augustan convent. She was then fifteen years old. Soon the religious feelings which were really a part of her returned, and after a few incidents, such as a serious fever, the advice of a devout uncle, struggles with her father who wanted to claim her back from the nunnery, she at last entered a carmelite convent for good when she was eighteen years. Immediately she found there a life according to her exact desires and temperament, and she was happy because she was able to live free from the worldliness that was so bitter to her true self.

The following year, that is 1534, practically sees the beginning of her continuous spiritual life. It was then that she read " The Third Spiritual Primer " by Francis de Osuna. This book proved most stimulating. She decided to follow its instructions as regards the mystical prayer of recollection, and within a year she had succeeded in it and even reached for short moments some higher stages of prayer. This was before she was twenty. At the same period her nervous troubles which had begun earlier became very complicated and serious, with the result that she suffered acutely, the attacks often ending in total unconsciousness. This and the unsympathy of her confessors at the time were great obstacles in her interior or mystical way. Perhaps owing to these causes she made no further progress in mysticism. At twenty one she gave up the practice of recollection altogether.

Then followed some years when St. Theresa felt herself bitterly divided between God and the world. She wanted to choose both and this of course only made her suffer more. At this time too she had a great deal of trouble with her confessors who were more incompetent than ever. According to her own account they were even the cause of her backsliding (1). At last the change came suddenly, in which the image of a suffering Christ and St. Augustine's Confessions played the main parts. The result was a total following of the interior way for the rest of her life. It took place in 1555, when she was forty.

The saint's real mystical life began at that date. Before that, whatever she had experienced of the mystical prayers was elementary and also very transient. There had been nothing quite sufficient to be called a form of living. There had been a great deal of contemplation of a general kind, but it did not reach higher than that, except perhaps at short moments. As M. Delacroix points out it contained

(1) *Life*, IV., 9.

too much contemplation at the expense of action. But from 1555 " all her life was a continual effort to find in contemplation the sources of action and to make contemplation richer with the results of action ; and later on, towards the end of her days, she learnt to unite the two in a supreme state " (1). This new mystical life was, as might be expected, the time of her extraordinary graces by the help of which she passed through all the degrees of union, saw visions and heard voices, reached the highest ecstasies, and finally installed herself in a life of permanent union which includes contemplation as well as the most practical actions, such as the founding and management of new convents. According to her division, there are four degrees of mystical prayer or union, namely the prayer of quiet, the prayer of full union, ecstasy, and the spiritual marriage. St. Theresa explains them in detail, making use of her own experiences most faithfully and well. They will be given later by themselves for the sake of a clearer understanding.

The new mystical life healed and comforted her extraordinarily, it is true, but there were still some troubles awaiting her. For instance amidst the favours she enjoyed her mind was divided by doubts as to their origin. She constantly asked herself whether they were indeed from God, and whether such a life of unnormal happenings was for her good. But she persevered in prayer, sometimes yielding, but more often resisting when the new grace took the form of seizures during worship. These later became more frequent and often very awkward and perplexing. And then, when the great Francis Borgia visited Avila, St. Theresa consulted him, and she was told not to resist any more. Soon after this, in 1558, she had her first ravishment. She felt violently torn away almost out of herself, and she heard the following words in the inmost part of

(1) *Les Grands Mystiques Chrétiens*, p. 11.

her soul—" My will is that you commune not with men on earth but with angels " (1). They were the first extraordinary voices she heard ; the visions appeared almost two years later. Both of these, especially the latter, form an important part of St. Theresa's mystical life, numberless secrets being revealed to her by the two means. Later the visions became so frequent and daring that she was ordered by her confessor to resist them ; even her mystical prayers were to be stopped because of the visions. She tried to obey, but it only increased them until at last the state of prayer became continual, lasting both day and night. Often it was accompanied by violent rapture which was a strange mingling of pain and joy.

At this time there came a vision which was instrumental in conducting St. Theresa towards a great practical task. One day, during mystical prayer, she found herself vividly in the midst of a vision of hell. She came out from it quite overwhelmed by the endless horror and suffering she saw there. It was shown, according to her interpretation of it, to remind her of all that she had been saved from by God's love. In answer to that her duty was obviously to repent more, and to separate herself to the uttermost from the world. For instance the rules of her convent were too mild, too forbearing with her, and consequently stricter rules were necessary. Here arose the momentous thought of beginning a movement for a new order of convents and monasteries which were to follow very strictly the old carmelite rules. St. Theresa at once took up the idea. From the outset almost everybody in authority opposed her, but she persevered, outwardly abiding by the prohibitions placed upon her, but in her heart praying and believing in her great idea, while yet more visions assured her that she was right. Soon St. Theresa succeeded with the convent of St. Joseph at Avila, and she became its first

(1) *Life*, XXIV.

prioress. More than that, she held an order from Rome which gave her authority to found as many like the first as she thought proper. With it she founded 15 more, the total thus making 16 convents consecrated to the life according to the true rules. Later on she founded new monasteries as well, as part of her campaign for a more spiritual life.

Amidst these difficult tasks which she continued to perform to the very end of her life St. Theresa reached the highest mystical stage, namely the spiritual marriage, when, as she believed, God and the soul are so united that separation is not possible, and the soul continually and consciously enjoys God's presence as its very inmost life. This new life is also a perfect synthesis of action and contemplation. Up to the last she kept these two elements together in herself. Then ecstasy became rare, but there were still visions helping and counselling her, and they always left her more fit for the duties that were waiting. This state continued till her death in 1585.

The saint wrote several books which are of very great interest and value. The first of these is her "Life" which she undertook in order to obey the order of her confessor in 1565. The book is written with astonishing accuracy. It tells everything that can be told about a life of rich spiritual experiences. Even the smaller facts are scrupulously described, not only from the outside point of view, but analytically, almost with the power of the trained psychologist. Two other books which followed, "The Way of Perfection" and "Conceptions of Divine Love," are both an explanation of certain mystical points, and contain some very useful material. "The Book of Foundations" was written later, and deals with the new convents and monasteries. The last work is "The Interior Castle" which is in a sense the most important because it is the most complete of all. It contains descriptions of St. Theresa's highest experiences which are not found in

her " Life " for the reason that they occurred after the earlier work had been written. Also, in " The Interior Castle " the saint enters into a more elaborate study of the mystical progress. She gives it in seven stages called mansions. They are really an expansion of the four stages of prayer or union already mentioned, containing the same substance, and differing only in name and in the divisions.

The Four Degrees of Prayer or Union.

We already know that St. Theresa divided her actual mystical life into four parts calling each of them a degree or union. Their names have been given. She also used some other ways of classifying them, which will be mentioned when the occasion arises. But there is no doubt that these four degrees are the most clear in outline and contain all the substance of the others ; in any case they are what occur in the saint's description of her experiences, and so they shall be used here in reproducing the chief facts from them. They will be taken in order.

1. The prayer of quiet.—In some other places St. Theresa calls this prayer " The second manner of drawing the water which the Lord of the Vineyard has ordained ; " also, " The fourth mansion of the interior Castle. "

St. Theresa first experienced it when she was twenty. It occurred without warning, coming wholly as a divine gift beyond her control and for which she could only prepare herself. In substance the prayer of quiet is a sense of repose in God, deliciously felt, which holds the will engaged yet still as free as the other parts. The chief feeling therefore is repose. " I call it the prayer of quiet for the repose it causeth in all the powers, so that the party seems to possess God as he most desires. " And then it appears to the soul that she has at last found all she could desire even

if she cannot tell exactly what she has found. Although that is so, the understanding knows that it is near her God. There is no doubt about this, for the knowledge is experimental (1). More than this, the understanding feels sometimes a general illumination on things (2). This prayer is the beginning of union or the first stage in it.

2. The prayer of full union.—It is also called the third water in the vineyard of the Lord and the fifth mansion of the interior castle. Here the faculties of the soul are fully awake in God, equally fully dead to other things, and the bodily senses continue to act, although it is with great effort that they can perform their usual tasks with relation to objects in general. All these three facts prove that at this stage the soul is plunged wholly into the awareness of the Divine presence so that it is unable to do anything but feel God close to it. In one place St. Theresa says the proof of this degree is that the soul's conviction of God's presence becomes deeper than during the prayer of quiet. There is also not only repose but joy which is almost delirious.

3. Ecstasy.—Its other names are the fourth water and the sixth mansion of the castle. This degree is, in simple terms, the cessation of the personal surface consciousness. Thus during it the body is almost like a corpse with every activity stopped except the most vital. "The soul feels itself with a very keen and sweet joy to swoon away almost entirely. It falls into a kind of fainting condition which slowly stops the respiration and all the forces." In the extreme cases, to all appearance, it is total annihilation of the mind.

But during the time that this takes place there is the reality of possessing and enjoying something, all things in

(1) Cf. St. Theresa's letter to Père Rodrigue Alvarez.

(2) See *Les Grands Mystiques Chrétiens*, p. 19.

fact, because it is perfect well-being that is thus possessed. " In this fourth state there is no sense of anything, only fruition or perfect well-being. " The person only sees that he possesses this well-being which contains whatever is good, but he does not understand it in any other way (1). It is all that St. Theresa knows and feels at the time. What else takes place she cannot say; only she is sure that " it is not an utter swooning away by which the person loses all consciousness, both interior and exterior. "

Among the fruits of well-being which the soul enjoys at this time one of the greatest is illumination. This is ordinarily connected with visions which can be both imaginary and intellectual. At higher and more lucid moments it is just a darkness which is God. In both cases the illuminated soul is taught an infinite number of things (2). A second fruit is a joy which is also like a delirium, just as in the preceding degrees (3).

There are many other fruits besides the two that have been mentioned, such as peace, humility, the increase of the virtues. Of this last St. Theresa says " I have almost never had visions which have not left me with more virtues than I had previously. "

So ecstasy has its distinct features. Firstly there is a general suspension of all the faculties of the soul and the body ; secondly, it is yet not unconsciousness but, on the contrary, an extraordinarily active state, for " God busies them all without their knowing how or being able to understand it; " and lastly the soul is aware only of a perfect well-being, the multiplying of such fruits as illumination, joy, peace, the virtues, etc.

When ecstasy is accompanied by violence it is called ravishment. Then it is sudden, intense, and irresistible, and consequently its results are stronger.

(1) Life, XVIII., 2.

(2) Interior Castle, VI. mansion, IV., 5, 6, 12, 13.

(3) Interior Castle, XI., II.

4. **Spiritual Marriage.**—This is the seventh mansion of the interior castle. St. Theresa reached it in the last years of her life, according to M. Delacroix the ten last years, but that is difficult to say and not of great moment in this place. Only it is certain that she did reach this degree which she describes very lucidly. It began with an intellectual vision of the of the Holy Trinity which she saw dwelling in her soul. “ She sees clearly in the manner in which I have described that they are with her soul, in its inmost part, as it were within a deep abyss. ” And all through the marriage this vision was continually present with her (1).

The first fact therefore as regards spiritual marriage is that God is almost constantly and consciously enjoyed in perfect union. Separation has practically become impossible and the mystic walks with God in increasing gladness (2). It is because God and the soul are most intimately united, the latter being in a literal sense forever in the divine keeping. St. Theresa makes the point absolutely plain in a series of comparisons. “ Spiritual espousals are different, and, like the grace of union are often dissolved... This is not so in spiritual marriage with our Lord, where God always remains in the centre of the soul... Spiritual marriage is like rain falling from the sky into a river or stream, becoming one and the same liquid, so that the river water and the rain cannot be divided; or it resembles a streamlet flowing into the ocean, which cannot afterwards be dissevered from it. This marriage may also be likened to a room into which a bright light enters through two windows—Though it passes through the two, the light is one ” (3).

Another fact in connection with this degree has been described as the perfect synthesis of action and contemplation. The permanent and conscious union with God

(1) Interior Castle, VII. mansion, I., 12.

(2) Interior Castle, III., 8.

(3) Interior Castle, II.

is a state only known interiorly and by the mystic alone. It is a pure subjectivity for which we have the mystic's testimony which is not without the interpretation so unavoidable in such cases. Outside of that subjectivity with its terms of God and soul and union we come to an objective fact which is open to all observation, namely, the new life of extraordinary synthesis, the contemplative man going forth to do practical works. This is something which can be seen and touched, and which is not wholly a work of faith in the mystic's account of what is taking place in himself. Coming to St. Theresa's case, from the beginning of the spiritual marriage her inmost being "always enjoyed solitary peace" (1) in thoughts of God while at the same time the daily occupations were not interrupted; on the contrary she became more competent and discerning in them, her mind fertilized remarkably, and thoughts which arose during contemplation took her towards action. "It is to this point, my daughters, that prayer tends; and, in the design of God, this spiritual marriage is destined to no other purpose but *the incessant production of work, work!* And this, as I have already told you, is the best proof that the favours which we receive have come from God" (2). The passage fixes the real character, from the outside point of view, of the mystical marriage. According to a famous mystical phrase it is "the mysterious peace dwelling in activity" (3). St. Theresa's mysticism reaches here its time of perfect flowering, subjectively known as union with God which is both conscious and enduring, and objectively as thought going forth towards works. "The summit of her mysticism therefore is the union of the active and the contemplative life. She lived in God at the same time that she was actively engaged in the world. This union which

(1) Interior Castle, VII. mansion, I., 14.

(2) Interior Castle, IV.

(3) Ruysbroeck, De Contemplatione (Hello, p. 167). Ruysbroeck is, I believe, the greatest authority on this feature of mysticism.

is absolute, ultimate, transforming, which is the identification of the soul with God and called a spiritual marriage, all this which takes place in the seventh dwelling is precisely the state when life is fully accepted because the continuity of the Divine presence consecrates it fully and because the inner God is in reality the principle of life and action " (1). Thus finally contemplation has led to a more abundant life. The above four degrees of union contain all the leading facts of St. Theresa's mystical life.

(1) *Les Grands Mystiques Chrétiens*, p. 55.

CHAPTER III

*St. Theresa's Mystical Experience. - Its Three
Essential Features.*

1.—The chief fact in mysticism is an experience. It must finally come to that ; and the experience will contain all that is mystical in the particular mystic's life as if it were the fruit of the whole. This being so, in studying St. Theresa it is her mystical experience which should occupy us. Proceeding from this starting point the first business is to know what is essential in that experience. It will have to be obtained analytically so as to be in a form as free as possible from all that is not essential, either in the way of fact or of supposition. When this is done the result will provide just the basis necessary for a comparison between St. Theresa and the ariyan. Before that too many difficulties of various kinds will be present. Thus, for instance, we cannot at once and without analysis compare St. Theresa's experience as usually described and speaking of a God, a soul, and love which lives and increases forever, with buddhist arahantship which has no God, no soul as the christian understands it, and which only finds a peace in which all desires, both good and bad, are ended. Such a method would be violent, very confusing, and would lead to no good results. Hence it is necessary to begin with the most fundamental things on both sides, the experience just as it exists stated with the

least amount of merely theological language. Every other matter will have to be kept out of the discussion.

2.—Fortunately for us, Pere Poulain, a great catholic authority on the subject, has examined St. Theresa's experience very methodically with the result that his analysis is just the kind that is able to serve as the beginning of such a study. In examining the experience he gives two " fundamental characters " and ten " subsidiary " ones, all of which are stated in language which can finally be accepted by every faith, at least it has made as small as possible all differences arising from the use of special words and concepts. This is done without unduly straining anything, since Pere Poulain, as a good and great catholic, must be understood to be only too careful to keep to the orthodox forms wherever the facts will allow him.

3.—The two fundamental characters are naturally the most important. They are said to explain " the inmost nature " of the experience which is exactly what is wanted as a starting point. They are :—

1) The interior knowledge of God's presence—" He gives us an experimental intellectual knowledge of this presence. In a word, he makes us feel that we really enter into communication with Him " (1).

2) This knowledge in its nature in something like an impression, a spiritual " sensation "—" It is a sensation of " inhibition " (saturation), of fusion, of immersion... we can depict what it is by describing the sensation as an interior touch " (2).

The ten subsidiary characters which come after the above two are not fundamental, they are only the consequences from those two, not establishing the mystical fact

(1) Des Graces d'Oraison, p. 65.

(2) Des Graces d'Oraison, p. 90-1.

but only appearing together with it and as it were making up its fulness. " These two, " says Pere Poulain in connection of course with the fundamental two; " are, in fact, the only characters that make us acquainted with the *basis* of the employment given by God to the soul in the mystic state. The others indicate the *effects or the accompaniments only*" (1). The ten subsidiary ones are as follow:—

- 1—It does not depend upon our will ;
- 2—The knowledge of God accompanying it is obscure and confused ;
- 3—The mode of communication is partially incomprehensible ;
- 4—The union is produced neither by reasonings, nor by the consideration of creatures, nor by sensible images ;
- 5—It varies incessantly in intensity ;
- 6—It demands less effort than meditation ;
- 7—It is accompanied by sentiments of love, of repose, of pleasure, and often of suffering ;
- 8—It inclines the soul of itself and very efficaciously to the different virtues ;
- 9—It acts upon the body and is acted upon in return ;
- 10—It impedes to a greater or lesser extent the production of certain interior acts; this is what is called the *ligature* (2).

The above twelve characters contain the substance of St. Theresa's mystical experience, that is, of all her four degrees of union. They are, to explain it very simply, like the sap which feeds the tree in all its stages of growth. It is the same sap all throughout, except that there is more or less of it according to the tree's age and size. In the same way the twelve characters are present in all the

(1) Des Graces d'Oraison, p. 114.

(2) Des Graces d'Oraison, p. 114.

unions, but in the highest they are more evident than in the lesser ones.

4.—Here then is what has been said to be necessary as a starting-point, namely, the essential part of St. Theresa's mystical experience given in the least obstructive language. We get this in the two fundamental characters of the list above, and they are indeed the smallest minimum that is possible, the least that the experience can be to St. Theresa and, as Pere Poulain says, to the catholic church (1). By making use of these two a comparison with the ariyan experience comes within sight, or it should do so, for if there is any *common factor* between the two experiences it must first exist in the two fundamental characters. The way to begin therefore is to accept them as the necessary starting-point, to rearrange their contents if this will make them clearer, and then to examine them in detail, each one separately, so as to find something which may also exist in the ariyan experience.

For the sake of a thorough comparison I shall rearrange the contents somewhat, as follows :—

- 1—An interior experience which is a knowledge ;
- 2—The nature of this knowledge is an impression, a spiritual sensation ;
- 3—The object of this knowledge is God.

By the new arrangement three points are exposed as being fundamental, and all relating to the interior experience, namely its *fact*, *nature*, and *object*. This will make evident any relations that may exist between the buddhist and the christian experiences, for each point gives an opportunity to find a similarity, and also a difference which, if possible, must be explained and settled. I need hardly say that the three points contain all that is in the

(1) See. Des Graces d'Oraison, p. 88.

two which Pere Poulain has given. All I have done is to take out of his two points and leave for discussion in the third the object of the knowledge which, according to St. Theresa, is God.

As for Pere Poulain's ten subsidiary characters they will be found to come in by themselves at different places when we are dealing with the above principle ones. Pere Poulain gives those ten characters separately, but there seems to be no reason for doing so, unless it be for clearness' sake. Otherwise they form part of the problem set by the essential points, and it is best for them to remain so.

The three essential points will now be taken up in order.

CHAPTER IV

First feature of mystical experience. - An interior experience which is a knowledge.

1.—St. Theresa's mystical experience then has three features. The first of these, as given in the above form, is based upon nearly the whole of Pere Poulain's first point, or more exactly, it collects together the following parts :—

“ The mystic states... attract attention at the outset by *the impression of recollection and union* which they cause us to *experience*. Hence the name mystic union. Their real point of difference from the recollection of ordinary prayer in this, that in the mystic state God is not satisfied merely to help us to think of Him and to remind us of His presence. He gives us *an experimental intellectual knowledge* of this presence... There is a profound difference between thinking of a person and *feeling him near us* ” (1).

What appears as the chief thing in the above passages is knowledge which is based upon an interior experience, and therefore upon a “ feeling ” using the latter word as the one which gets nearest to the mystic's meaning (2).

(1) Des Graces d'Oraison, p. 64-5.

(2) “ Moreover, the soul has no wish to speak of it; and beside, it can discover no way or proper similitude to describe it by, so as to make known a knowledge so high, a spiritual impression (or sensation or feeling) so delicate and infused ” St. John of the Cross, Night of the Soul. Bk. I., Ch. XII.

Here feeling is quite different from mere emotion or sensation. As much as it is definable it may be said to consist of all the inner forces of the being. The feeling that some one is near is a simple instance of the work of those forces; it is not arrived at dialectically or through any given sense. This feeling by

This being so the knowledge differs from the purely abstract dialectical kind which is the result of reasoning. Even the words " presence of God " are used in this part of the statement (°) only to increase the idea of something directly felt, for, says Pere Poulain, " when we *feel* that someone is near us we say that we have an experimental knowledge of his presence. In ordinary prayer we have only an abstract knowledge of God's presence " (°). This appears to be clear enough, but it is made still more so by another catholic writer who speaks with equal authority on the subject. He says, " Before going farther I would suggest a thought which is important for the proper understanding of what I have to say... Philosophers state that the experimental knowledge of an object is knowledge born of the experience or the act of some one sense as it touches its object then present.

From this we deduce the conclusion that the experimental knowledge of God and of divine things is that, and that only, which arises out of the experience of God's presence on the part of one of the soul's spiritual senses " (°). So at last we reach the basis of the whole in *knowledge consisting of a feeling of the known object*. The test of experimental knowledge is the presence, or rather the fusion, of two things, knowledge and feeling, always keeping in mind that they are mentioned as two only for the sake of an analytical study, and that in reality they are one, *a felt knowledge*. This is the religious view of the matter.

On the scientific side this important mystical fact is

which one knows is "a well-known though transitory experience in religious life : like the homing instinct of birds, an act which can neither be denied nor explained" — Underhill's *Mysticism*, p. 291.

(1) This qualification is to meet the objection on the question of God. The latter will be treated separately and in its proper place; that is, under the third point in our list.

(2) *Des Graces d'Oraison*, p. 65.

(3) Scaramelli, *Directorum Mysticum*, Treatise 3, No. 121, as quoted by Poulain, *Des Graces d'Oraison*, p. 103.

admitted and put psychologically by a leading writer. " Since the mystics themselves, " M. Delacroix explains, when speaking of their knowledge declares that there is nothing intellectual about it, or discursive, that it has not the forms of the understanding, the only way of expressing it psychologically is to say that this knowledge is a condition analogous to feeling, or anyhow nearer to feeling than to the intellect. There remains to be asked, no doubt, as to what is meant by feeling, that is, whether we are to admit under it the consciousness of organic states only, in other words a synthesis of internal sensations, or whether, on the contrary, we must also include the consciousness of a mental attitude towards sensations and representations " (1). The very subtle question asked in the latter part is not important at present. It will be met when considering the chief contents of the feeling. Here what we want to know is its general nature; and one thing has become evident, that, whatever else might be understood by it, feeling at least means something quite opposed to the ordinary discursive knowledge, and that it synthesises the inner forces. For this reason the result is a felt state, a sensation, as M. Delacroix says, which afterwards becomes the presence of God.

There is sight, knowledge, but it is the heart that sees, and therefore it is a felt knowledge. Pascal, believing similarly spoke of God felt by the heart—*Dieu sensible au cœur*. To the psychologist who looks at it more objectively this knowledge in all its forms is " something not sought but put before the mind, and seen or perceived by the whole self by means of a sense which is neither sight nor feeling, but partakes of both. It is intimate but indescribable: definite, yet impossible to define " (2). There might be many names and descriptions but the truth is one, namely, knowledge as the work of "the whole self," the synthesis of

(1) *Les Grands Mystiques Chrétiens*, p. 382.

(2) Underhill, *Mysticism*, p. 338.

the inner forces, which claims to know directly and without reasoning. Here the term feeling is used for it as coming nearest to its nature, so that the knowledge is a feeling of the known object.

2.—Now that the statement made at the beginning is seen to consist of two discernable elements, knowledge and feeling, it becomes less difficult to gather the testimony of St. Theresa whenever necessary, and also that of other christian mystics, without going wrong in doing so. When their language is unfamiliar and hard to follow there will always be these two things serving as possible points of crystallisation for the real meaning for all testimony, in order to prove any point here, will have to contain those two elements which will be inseparable and really one. The following are some accounts of the first feature of the mystical experience.

“ In this prayer the soul, illuminated by the divine light, discovers, without any reasoning or difficulty, God present, near her, or within her, insomuch that she seems to see, to hear, and to feel Him ” (1).

“ The real of fruition of the contemplative soul with God is an experimental and immediate perception of God, produced in the intelligence and the will by the real presence of God. It is not the beatific vision ; the mind however knows the divine presence, not only by faith, but through the gift of wisdom, by taste and experience. ”

It is the same truth more experimentally known and given, that knowledge is wrought from the substance of an inner feeling of the object. God is known and *realised* by the heart, that is, through feeling. Because of the presence of knowledge and feeling certain mystics describe this primary truth of the mystical life as “ a sweet-savoured knowledge ” meaning thereby “ the gift of wisdom which brings the soul near to God... so that not only does she

(1) St. Theresa, Life, X.

believe in His presence ; but she actually feels it with a very sweet spiritual sensation " (1). This knowledge which is sweet-savoured and loving is union itself (2) : in other words, these mystics believe that their experience is before all a knowledge which is felt.

3.—The original statement being thus proved analytically to be true in St. Theresa and made clearer from other catholic mystics the question now arises as to whether buddhism has anything like it. Does the ariyan too speak of and possess an interior experience which is a knowledge, that is to say, according to the above finding, knowledge which is a feeling of the known object ? Here also, in answering the question we must be guided by the presence or the absence of the two elements, knowledge and feeling in a synthesis. There must be a felt knowledge.

Now, it will be remembered that this was one of the facts noticed in ariyan enlightenment, namely that it is a direct and personal experience, an awakening, or an act of realization by which the ariyan " wins and realises the Dhamma even for my own, not learnt as such and such. " Such phrases, as I have shown, were already used by mystics in India, and in the buddhist scriptural writings they appear almost every time the ariyan's acquirements are described at length. When we leave aside phrases, however intentionally they may seem to be used, and go directly to the life of the ariyans the fact becomes more evident. We read again of the Buddha's wholly experimental methods, and how he arrived at his knowledge through an experience and with the aid of concentration and ecstasy and the slow training of a new vision. The following text shows admirably.

(1) Interior Castle, VII. mansion, I.; cf. John of the Cross, Ascent of Mt. Carmel, Bk. II., ch. XXVI., p. 176-7.

(2) "It is only a soul in union with God that is capable of this profound loving knowledge, for it is itself that union".
Ibid., from Ascent of Mt. Carmel.

It is a dialogue between the Buddha and some of the great disciples on the subject of the ecstatic practices leading to the highest realisation. He asks, " Have you three, Anuruddha, who lead this life, eager, ardent and persevering, succeeded in reaching supernormal states, extraordinary ariyan knowledge, and happiness ? " The disciple replies, " We have perceived both a luminance and a vision of forms. But lately these have all disappeared and we are unable to reach the later vision. " Then the Buddha explains to them, " But this later vision is what you three must succeed in reaching. I too, indeed, before I became wholly enlightened and Buddha, perceived both a luminance and a vision of forms. And then, in my case too, they disappeared. So I thought deeply over the cause of this, and in this manner, discerned that concentration had left me, and consequently, the vision; also that my concentration had been made weaker through the coming of doubt, then by lacking attention, then by laziness and stupor... And to me continuing eager, ardent, and persevering, came perception of luminance and vision of forms. But they soon disappeared again... Then I beheld the luminance, but not the forms... then the forms and not the luminance. Finally I became sure that the reason for my backsliding in concentration was the presence in me of varieties of vitiated consciousness, and that, these being all got rid of, I would practice the three concentrations, namely, applying attention and sustaining it, sustaining attention with applying it afresh, and concentration without attention in either way. And I concentrated with rapture, and without it, with delight, and with indifference. And then in me, with concentration so practiced, lo, there arose the knowledge and the insight that my emancipation was sure... " (1).

(1) *Majjhima*, III., 157 ff., trans. based upon Mrs. Rhys Davids, *Buddhist Psychology*, p. 107; cf. *Compendium*, p. 65 ff.

This careful account proves that the whole knowledge is an interior experience taking place at the climax of a very great interior concentration of the forces on a single point of thought, and, therefore, rightly described as “ the *experience* of supernormal states, extraordinary ariyan knowledge, and happiness. ” What the Buddha had learnt for himself is here told to the disciples to be followed by them in their own practices as the way to the extraordinary ariyan knowledge. The latter must come by the training and exercise of all the interior forces, by synthesising them through the three concentrations. There is nothing discursive or merely intellectual about it. Before anything else it is an experience. The same fact appears in the many ariyan songs of victory where the new knowledge is claimed. Thus, in one instance, a sister has learnt the truth. After doing so, “ For seven days I sat in Jhana-joy and ease, cross legged ; on the eighth day at last I stretched my limbs, and went my way happily, for I had burst asunder the surrounding gloom ” (1). Another, this time a brother, has the same experience—“ Forthwith the doctrine sank into his heart ; he left the world, he chose the homeless life. On the third night of contemplation rapt Sajala touched and won the threefold wisdom ” (2). In both instances there is previously knowledge of the truth, not a mere acceptance but a conviction which makes the person act accordingly. Still it is built up through reason and investigation, the person being persuaded by these means, although very completely. So far then it is a reasoned act. The ariyan later on enters into his practices which the Buddha has described. It is not enough to know discursively and only through the reasoning faculty. There must be experience, a vision and a touching, in order that extraordinary ariyan knowledge might appear.

(1) Psalms of the Sisters, v. 44.

(2) Psalms of the Sisters, v. 322 ; cf. vv. 16, 149.

suddenly, like an entering light. In each of the above instances this knowledge arises during a jhana trance. One of them refers to it as a touching. But most often of all it is an act of perception bringing together the knower and the known directly ; the forces active in the man are then gathered up into one act of perfect beholding which takes the consciousness to the uttermost ends, and what else is this but feeling in its most complete sense, or more properly, knowledge which is an infinitely fulfilled feeling of the known object.

Here, then, is a point of contact between the ariyan and the christian experiences, the latter of course meaning St. Theresa's. Without the persons being aware of the fact, these are wrought from the same primary substances of knowledge and feeling, and the result is, to say it again, knowledge which is a feeling of the known object. It is a synthesis that all mystics claim as a fact of experience.

4.—In connection with the subject of feeling in the two experiences two other questions naturally suggest themselves. The first is, what actually are the constituents of this feeling ; and the second, is there no difference in any respect and at any time between the ariyan's feeling and St. Theresa's ? They are both very important and require to be answered here. To do this I shall take the two together, dealing with them at the same time because the nature of the difference which exists makes them really parts of each other.

Now a certain difference does exist. But it is quite apart from the similarity already proved to be at the basis of the two experiences, so that it should not throw any doubt on that fact. However, the difference is material, for it is the beginning of a separation that increases as the two systems producing the experiences become more elaborate. This ultimate similarity has been shown. With it clearly in mind we can proceed to what remains.

The difference arises from the question of the constituents of feeling according to the mystics ; it consists in two ways of judging the forces that are chiefly active when we speak of knowledge which is a feeling of the known object. Here, it will be observed, many forces are said to be active, so that we shall have to know them first. That is to say, while finding out the constituents of the feeling the difference which exists will appear by itself.

5.—At this point, to avoid a misunderstanding, it is again necessary to state that feeling in both the experiences refers to the inner forces, to their synthesis whose nature we are not able to explain and which brings a more direct knowledge without one understanding how this happens. Now, concerning the identity of the forces, St. Theresa speaks of “ *all the faculties of the soul* ” (1) as being in union, that is, as being engaged in “ the loving knowledge of God. ” It is then right to call them the logic of the whole man, as one writer does in defining the “ reason ” which acts in mysticism (2) ; in the light of St. Theresa’s words the phrase ceases to be vague. An examination of other and more detailed passages will make the fact plainer. They mention all the soul’s powers known to the writers of the time as actively taking part in the knowledge of union. The following will show this.

“ That which torments her here (that is, in the prayer of quiet) is the understanding, or imagination, which it doth not do when there is a union of all the three powers (memory, understanding, and will) because He that created them suspends them, for with the delight which He gives, He busies them all without knowing how or being able to understand it ” (3). “ The faculties of the soul now retain

(1) Relation VIII.

(2) Dean Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, p. 18.

(3) St. Theresa, *Way of Perfection*, ch. XXXI.

only the power of occupying themselves wholly with God " (1). As to the understanding, " she writes again, " I have noticed that the soul has never more light to understand the things of God than in this sort of rapture." Then about love which is the most active of all there is the following. " The soul seems to herself to be suspended in those divine arms and to rest on that divine side and those divine breasts ; and doth nothing but enjoy, being sustained with divine milk wherewith her spouse goes on feeding her... She seeth herself... caressed by Him who knows how and is able to do it" (2). This is indeed the very ecstasy of loving and its the most frequent metaphor under which St. Theresa describes her feeling of God.

The undoubtedly high place that St. Theresa gives to love has been the cause of a certain misunderstanding. Thus, in some explanations, nothing is said about the other parts of the feeling and how they are all actively present and aid and partake in the union. Love is mentioned alone, and very exuberantly, as the only feeling, acting always, it seems, in opposition to the intellect and the will, and succeeding almost because of that. Now, this is an exaggeration which easily takes place if the mystics are read without continually attending to all they mean. St. Theresa as well as many others believe quite otherwise, as we know. Even love itself has been explained to be the very composite functioning of all the inner senses in an admirable account of it. " But what then is it, O Lord, that I love when I love Thee ? " asks St. Augustine eager to know the truth. He learns it. " Neither the beauty of the body nor the graceful order of time, nor the brightness of light, so agreeable to these eyes, nor the sweet melody of all sorts of music, nor the fragrant scents of flowers, oil, spices, nor the sweet taste manna manna or honey, nor fair

(1) St. Theresa, Life, XVI., 4.

(2) Conceptions of the Love of God, ch. IV.

limbs alluring to carnal embraces. None of these things do I love when I love my God. And yet I love a certain light and a certain voice, and a certain fragrancy, and a certain food, and a certain embrace when I love my God, the light, the voice, the fragrance, the food, and the embrace of the inward man ; where that shines to my soul, which no place can contain, and where that sounds, where no time can measure, and where that smells which no blast can disperse, and where that relishes which no eating can diminish, and where that is embraced which no satiety can separate. This is what I love when I love my God " (1). It is as near as possible to an explanation of mystical love and is the best I know. On the theory that the soul has five senses they are shown as being all employed when the mystic loves. In that act there are vision, taste and even a contact, so that it is not strictly emotional. St. Theresa also has said the same. Love, in as much as it means only the emotional factor, cannot do all by itself. Nevertheless it is greater than the rest in power and swiftness. It is precisely at this point that the difference between the christian and the buddhist feelings arises, namely, when St. Theresa makes love as the emotional factor the most important in the feeling, and even calls her highest union a marriage, by this sign accepting it sacramentally as love's perfect intimacy.

6.—The ariyan in this matter believes differently. But before going further it should be at once said that for the ariyan also feeling consists of all the inner faculties, so that in this respect he agrees with St. Theresa. The exercises by which he approaches and actually realises his object make the fact clear. These are seen to be a systematic training in the uses of will, mind, and all proper emotions, that is to say in all the inner factors according

(1) Confessions, Bk. X., ch. VI.

to his knowledge of them. For instance the four sublime occupations that have been described as important exercises are, strictly speaking, the practise of the different emotions, namely, love, pity, sympathetic joy, and indifference, each in its turn, according to the given order, and each thoroughly and for a long time until "aloft, below, across, the whole world and all it contains be continually absorbed in a loving consciousness, abounding, lofty, infinite..." Indifference comes at the height of love, pity, and communion of joy, clearly not as the absence but as the completing of the first three, love, pity, and joy not left to themselves but mingled and made perfect by the necessary control of intellect, the greatest force in buddhism. After these exercises, on coming to the later and greater ones, namely the jhanas, the same training is seen leading to the same result, only now it is more complete since it contains more. Thus in the first jhana the ariyan experiences zeal, joy, and many other things which are related to different parts of his inner being, a typical list being, "thinking applied and sustained, and zest and pleasurable feeling and singleness of object, and contact, feeling, perception, consciousness, desire, choice, effort, mindfulness, indifference, adaptation of attention—these are for him serially determined" (1). That is to say, all forces that the psychology of the time could discern in the man are mentioned as coming into the exercise. At the highest point is a state of utterly pure awareness and indifference. "He discerns, verily, that these presentations which were not, have become; having become, they again depart. And he with regard to them abides neither drawn to nor averse from them, independent, not captivated, but free, detached, his mind caught among no barriers." The indifference is therefore due to a discernment. Under the impulse the mind is shown as collecting together the forces

(1) Majjhima, Anupada-sutta.

that have been " serially " exercised before, and arranging them in a new way which is based upon a perfect intellectual understanding of the truth of becoming. Everything is a becoming and so everything passes away leaving nothing real. Love, joy, the passions, whether good or bad, all pass away in this manner. Only the truth remains untouched by any becoming. Such are the natural deductions from what the mind has understood and they are present during all the exercises. As a result every thought and movement is controlled by that understanding which is continually applied ; the separate forces no longer grow blindly without thinking of the larger truth of which they are only the parts, for that would make the whole false, and consequently life would not be according to the truth. By thus regulating himself by the truth of becoming which is seen through wisdom to be at the root of all that is commendable the ariyan soon reaches an utterly pure awareness and indifference. .

It is quite wrong to say that what takes place when indifference appears is an elimination leaving at the end only the factor of pure mind. Nothing of that kind occurs, and such a theory would be quite contrary to the uses of the buddhist exercises. Thus even after the ariyan has attained Nibbana he goes through those exercises as before; he practices all the emotions that he is, without reason, supposed to have trained away, and at the end he arrives at indifference, which is not the giving up of the will and the emotions but a state of equilibrium prevailing over everything. The mind is then perfectly free, and inclined to no one part more than to another. Thus is the intellectual indifference made real, which is a harmony and not an obliteration. In the exercises as we saw just now, always the proper will and emotions are cultivated and always the intellectual indifference is something which naturally arises when the will and emotions, trained to the highest, come in contact with an enlightened mind. " Thus

he lives, either in his own person, as respects the elements of being, observant of the elements of being, or in other persons, as respects etc..., and he lives unattached nor clings to anything in the world " (1). It is then that wisdom appears, which means, morally, the complete intellectual control of all the forces in which nothing is lost but only made parts of a whole the result being a new creation. This is the real answer to the very perplexing question in buddhism as to whether the will and the desires entirely disappear in the indifference of Nibbana. For instance one authority says, "It is evil desires, low ideals, useless cravings, idle excitements that are to be suppressed by the cultivation of the opposite—of right desires—lofty aspirations " (2). But this is not wholly true. The truth is that the state is another of those zero-points, as Mr. Rhys Davids would say, which are common in mysticism; that is to say, it is a condition beyond the known classifications, being in this respect like mystical union, the will in quietism, and many other matters. In mystical union the self exists and yet does not exist; it is the mystery of the great declaration, " I live, yet not I but Christ who liveth in me. " The position of desire, including the emotions, in buddhism is the same. It is always there, from beginning to end, and yet, in the higher stages, when indifference comes, desire is no longer a separately active force, nor does it cease to exist, but is *united*, just as in mystical union the self is present, but wholly united to God. For this reason the buddhist calls his *an intellectual indifference* to give us an idea of this position between desire and non-desire, and meaning by it, literally, a middleness arising from scrutiny (3).

(1) Digha, sutta 22.

(2) Rhys Davids, *Early Buddhism*, p. 59.

(3) The Pali "upekka" which has been rendered as indifference is of three kinds—The first *anubbavana-upekka*, is a neutral feeling of the physical senses and signifies a state of insensibility as regard physical pain and pleasure. The second,

The ariyan's interpretation of feeling is now known; it consists of all the inner forces each of which has been trained with great care ; in the course of the training they are assimilated, being held in solution as it were, by the most powerful among them until at last there is only the " indifference " of perfect intellectual control—" Lo! the parts and powers of men lead to welfare or to evil. Powers unguarded lead to evil, while guarded powers lead to welfare. He who keeps guard o'er his parts and powers and watches over all of them he is fit for every duty... Is his love set on the Dhamma, then let him take the work and do it; other loves that Love surpasseth " (1).

It is now possible to state the difference between the ariyan and St. Theresa as regards this matter in the following way. They both believe in feeling as the sum of all the inner forces of being leading them towards the known object. But with St. Theresa love stands before all others and at last ends by collecting all others into itself. With the ariyan intellect takes the place of love and finally works everything else into a perfect intellectual indifference or harmony.

7.—In exploring the difference we seem to have come upon its real principle, which is of such a nature that the whole question is further extended by it. For, if we try to formulate it, the difference is based upon a process of assimilation during which the various factors lose their forms, all except one, and that imposes its own form upon the rest, so that at last only the one remaining factor is

indriyappabhada-upekka, is a similar insensibility in connection with the mind, that is to say, a middle state between mental pain and pleasure. The third, tetramajjhata-upekka, is the highest and is what is referred to here. It is intellectual indifference, but in a higher sense than the second kind, because in it the indifference, is not only as regards mental pain and pleasure, which is still a hedonism, but as regards the highest mental interests. This last is therefore balance of mind in the completest sense.

(1) Psalms of the Brethren, vv. 28-9.

discernible. At this moment the difference appears most sharply. But in strict logic, the process should not stop here. There is no reason for it to do so if the conditions are the same. The disappearing of the old separate forms should still go on.

Speaking more precisely, in this process of assimilation love in one case and intellect in another cannot alone remain unassimilable, as fixed points beyond which feeling does not go. This would mean that the process has suddenly become illogical, which cannot be.

Now, the christian mystics generally are certain that love exists to the end at the height of the feeling for the object. The reason of course for this is that they are aware of no part of their feeling which is as perfect or vivid. They always return from their ecstasies with wonderful memories of a love stronger than death, of embraces and ardent words infinitely given and received; and they remember nothing going further than these. Naturally, the emotional memories, so rich and fluid, overflow into the empty places in their consciousness and completely fill them. What has taken place there is " a love-meeting... for here there is naught else but an eternal rest in the fruitive embrace of an outpouring Love " (1).

With such memories it is not surprising that the mystic should hereafter be only persuaded of love. But for us who look at it more detachedly, is that really all; and even if the christian mystic does not as a rule say it, is there not a point where the process of assimilation is at last complete and every particularisation of feeling as either love or intellect or will is lost utterly in a pure feeling without name or quality even as the object is said to be so ?

St. Theresa has some things bearing on the above question. When describing her condition during full union she

(1) Cf. John of the Cross, Night of the Soul.

says, " There is no need here of any effort to suspend the action of her intellect or even the action of love. The soul loves, if it can do that, but it does not know how, nor whom it loves, nor what it desires " (1). This is evidently a turning-point where St. Theresa's love, which has been very precise so far, is seen to be quickly losing its precisions, being even uncertain about the most necessary matters, and at last, about its very self. The saint asking herself " if she can love " has indeed come to a critical moment. Then, at the next stage, that is, in ecstasy, even the doubt passes away together with everything that is precise. " Let us come now to the intimate sentiments of the soul in this state. If anyone can tell them to me let him do so. As for myself, I consider it impossible to know them, more still to speak of them " (2). " As long it lasts, no power has the sentiment of itself and knows not what passes there " (3). In such a state the mystic cannot affirm that he loves. His sentiments are so completely gathered up in one undivided act that no name can be given to them, for a name means a divided and special functioning. " There is no sense of anything, only fruition " according to St. Theresa once more. " One is only aware of possessing without knowing what it is he possesses. " That is to say, there is only one act, that of possessing something that brings great benefits, and the self is engaged in that alone, having lost all sense of its separate and usual acts, like knowing, willing and loving. In this manner love too loses its forms at some time in St. Theresa's ecstasy just as every other precision does. In that dark vision of God, the soul has been made naked in every way ; " then the Good bringeth no smile upon the lips, *no fervour or devotion or love into the heart* " (4). M. Delacroix has studied the same fact in a

(1) Interior Castle, V. mansion, I., 3.

(2) Life, ch. IV.

(3) Life, ch. IV.

(4) Blessed Angela of Toligno, Visions and Instructions, p. 181.

modern mystic. He makes an excellent comment on it. "The mystic" he says, "has commenced by love; he has lived in adoration, in a fascination carefully sustained, of the divine object of his young ardours; but if, at the end, he still speaks of love, it is because love is the sentiment that has brought him to that superior exultation and that still most resembles it" (1).

What St. Theresa has said on this point is capable too, of being explained in the same way. The saint, writing purely of the state of her feelings, says that it is indescribable, being neither love, nor anything else. But when she writes to uphold and formulate, and tries to give a reason for the faith that is in her, she naturally speaks of a very definite love as being always present and real. The two acts are quite separable and, in fact, should be separated to make them more consistent. In one case the mind records the facts of experience; in the other it reasons from those facts while unavoidably using, as it does so, the logic of its daily convictions. Our choice between the two is clear enough, for it is the facts we want before anything else. From these facts we know that at a high stage of mystical experience, love, as meaning a precise and nameable thing, is forgotten like all the others, and there is only a pure liquifaction of feeling.

8.—As regards the ariyan, it has been said that he believes in intellect as the highest part of his feeling. But in his case too this has happened through a process of assimilation which has so far left intellect unassimilated. But the process does not end there, and shows any sign of going on. In fact his intellect, after it has absorbed everything else, has become an indifference which proves that even at its climax, when the whole feeling has outwardly taken its form, it has begun to move towards imprecision.

(1) *La Religion et la Foi*, p. 260; cf. p. 194.

Indifference, that is, a perfectly poised consciousness, must from the first mean a neutralising. And then, with the coming of the highest moment of ecstasy, all feeling becomes unthinkable in its old and divisible forms. All perception and sensation cease. "It is the stoppage of all mentality by a gradual cessation." This should not be taken for total unconsciousness, for the Buddha himself declares that the most exquisite satisfaction is contained in it; and Buddhagosa says that nothing can be predicted of such a state because there is nothing in it which is positive or calculable. This last feeling then, as in St. Theresa, is something which cannot be called by any particular name, being neither love, nor intellect, but only as it were, the fluid substance of these and of the rest.

9.—So the two experiences, the buddhist's and the christian's once more come together. We saw how they separated because they understood differently the chief force in the feeling which constitutes the knowledge of their object. For one it is love, and for the other intellect, each being the highest known term of that feeling according to its particular religion. At last a time arrives when the two fall together again, that is, when love and intellect which up till now have absorbed the rest are themselves absorbed and feeling no longer arises from any precisely known factor, however plastic or subtle in its meanings, but is its bare substance, pure, fluid, and inaccessible to any word or thought. "It is a simple and death-like passing which is in no wise." Feeling is now a liquifaction, a well of living waters.

Conclusion.

This ends the discussions on the first feature of mystical experience according to St. Theresa. By means of analysis I have tried to begin from the very first elements of the feature, and then, having discovered them, to follow their growth progressively up to their final form; and while

doing this at each stage I have drawn the necessary comparison, showing either a similarity or a difference as the case may be. Now putting the results together, they may be given shortly as follows.

1.—The first fact concerning mystical experience, is that it is knowledge which is a feeling of the known object. St. Theresa and the ariyan are essentially at one in this belief.

2.—As regards this feeling it is, for both, all the inner forces, love, will, the understanding, all the faculties of the soul. These are present and active in a very real sense, and work together to create a new order of intuitions around the object which engages them. In the meantime they do not remain separate and precise. Slowly there has come to be a harmony, a synthesis, and then a process of assimilation which wears away the lines, making the many forms disappear while one dominates by virtue of its greater powers to assimilate the others.

Here a difference arises between St. Theresa and the ariyan, that is, in selecting this dominant force that controls and perfects the whole feeling. For St. Theresa it is love, and for the ariyan it is the understanding.

3.—The process of assimilation has not stopped. It goes on because the conditions are the same. A point is finally reached during the highest ecstasies when love and the understanding, the two remaining precisions, themselves become fluid and imprecise. The assimilation is now complete. Feeling, in the two cases, is again the same, for the difference has been washed away, and there is a new state which is due neither to love nor to intellect nor to any other particularity, but is a bare and perfect liquifaction of being.

CHAPTER V

Second feature of mystical experience—the nature of the knowledge is an impression or a spiritual sensation.

1.—Now that mystical experience has been discovered to be a felt knowledge the next thing to do is to analyse it in detail. It is not enough to say that the mystic knows by a feeling of the known object, that this feeling is composite and includes all the inner forces, and that the force which is most active is love in one case and intellect in the other. All that simply explains the *fact* of the knowledge and its means. What we want to know now is its *nature*. The second feature of mystical experience, as given above is meant to explain the last point.

In the explanation the knowledge is described as an impression or a spiritual sensation, the metaphor being a common one with mystics. When taken as it stands it is vague and can have several meanings. This is of course due to the difficulty that the mystic must always find in attempting to speak or even to think accurately of something which is in its nature beyond such acts, "because this interior wisdom is so simple, general, and spiritual, that it enters not into the understanding under any form or image subject to sense, as is sometimes the case; the imagination, therefore, and the senses, as it has not entered in by them, nor is modified by them cannot account for it, nor form any conception of it, so as to speak in any way

correctly about it, though the soul be distinctly conscious that it feels and tastes this strange wisdom " (1). One of the consequences is that mystical metaphors are always ambiguous, and still more so when taken by themselves. Hence it is most necessary to understand them as much as possible in the light of all that the mystic has to say on the subject of his experience. In order, therefore, to understand what is meant by saying that the knowledge is an impression or a spiritual sensation we will have to do the same; the meaning shall have to be fixed from St. Theresa's accounts taken as a whole after full analysis.

But first of all let us see what Pere Poulain means by that statement since it is his in its present form. He says— " In the states inferior to ecstasy we cannot say that God is seen save in exceptional cases. We are not instinctively led to translate our experience by the word sight. On the other hand that which constitutes the common basis of all the various degrees of the mystic union is that the spiritual impression by which God makes known His presence, manifests Him in the manner, as it were, of something interior which penetrates the soul, it is a sensation of imbibition, of fusion, of immersion... For the sake of greater clearness we can depict what is felt by describing the sensation as interior touch " (2).

The above explains Pere Poulain's position as regards the mystic's knowledge, namely that it is an impression, a spiritual sensation, a fusion, something felt most intimately and within the deepest being. It is, of course, supposed to describe St. Theresa's experience which is a knowledge.

The next step is to learn how St. Theresa would have understood the statement, that is to say, there is to be a search for its precise meaning in the saint's writings so as

(1) John of the Cross, *Dark Night of the Soul*, Bk. ii., ch. XVII.

(2) *Des Graces d'Oraison*, p. 90-1.

to make the statement wholly her own. This can be done with the aid of two things, a study of the forms, and a study of the substance; the former will deal with the words and metaphors describing the impression, and the latter with the qualities manifested by it. All that St. Theresa has written on the subject will come under those two heads. As her meaning becomes clearer it can be compared with anything the ariyan may have to say on the same things.

2.—The first is the study of the forms or St. Theresa's metaphors to describe her knowledge which Pere Poulain has called an impression. These can be given under three names according to their degrees of intensity.

a) Interior Touch.—In the lower stages of union, that is, before ecstasy, the knowledge is a general feeling of something interior penetrating the soul. Often it is described as the feeling of interior possession, " of plunging into some, I know not what, divine atmosphere " (1). " The soul is like a child that sucks still, lying at his mother's breasts ".

The object is felt in a *general simple way*, the feeling amounting to only the consciousness of a presence, like a child's of its mother, and no more. It is this sort of feeling that is meant by interior touch. One thing to remember is, such names should not be understood too literally. They are only a manner of speaking, for the sensation is " so simple, general, and spiritual, that it enters not into the understanding under any form or image subject to sense. " Pere Poulain who also deals with the question is careful to say that there is no implication here of a metaphysical doctrine believing in the contact of spirits. It follows that the whole is simply an intenser way of saying that there is an immediate feeling which is like a touch.

(1) Des Graces d'Oraison, p. 91.

More truthfully, it should not be given any name, but that would be very confusing. To quote Pere Poulain, " In the material order we make use of the word touch each time that it is a question of knowing experimentally any object contiguous to us... It is the word touch, therefore, that best expresses the analogy " (1).

This interior touch can increase into what is still more intensely called a clasping and an embrace. Almost all catholic mystics mention this form of experience. St. Theresa knew it when she " seemed to herself to be suspended in those divine arms and to rest on that divine side and those divine breasts. " She describes it as one of the most delicious forms of touch, the caress of a mother tenderly loving her infant, and who nurses and fondles him.

The whole of this stage of feeling called an interior touch can now be summed up thus : during union, when it is not too exalted, the mystic is like a man placed with a friend in complete darkness and silence. He feels in a general way that his friend is there close beside him; " but because he is in the dark he sees him not " (2). The feeling amounts to a touch, for, he is sure of his friend's presence as if he were touching him all the time. There may even be certain moments of crisis when the touch becomes an embrace in that darkness and that silence. This, it appears, in the closet way of describing the feeling, being a form used by St. Theresa and some other catholic mystics.

b) Sight.—In ecstasy, that is, with the coming of the higher unions, the feeling passes beyond the simple general condition of touch and becomes more luminously present as sight or vision, almost fulfilling in this manner the highest christian beauty, namely the vision of God.

(1) *Des Graces d'Oraison*, p. 93.

(2) *St. Theresa, Relations*, VII., 26, *Life*, p. 454.

Rapture, according to St. Theresa, produces in the soul, among other graces, " a perception of the greatness of God " (1). Only the divine object is not actually seen as they say the blessed in heaven see it.

Sight is here a more immediate, more perfect way of representing knowledge as a feeling (2). " It signifies, " Pere Poulain explains, " a mode of knowledge of such a kind that we are instinctively led to compare it with bodily sight " (3). Otherwise the use of the word would be very doubtful. It is only as a means of describing a higher form of intimacy and knowledge that the word sight is here considered. We have nothing to do with any literal use of it, in other words, with what is called bodily vision or apparition. For St. Theresa's vision is, as Pere Poulain rightly points out, an intense, immediate, and perceptive consciousness of a fact. Even the lowest form of it known to St. Theresa, the imaginary vision, is purely of this nature. Thus Miss Underhill, while discussing it psychologically writes, "There is no sensorial hallucination. The self sees sharply and clearly it is true, but is perfectly aware that it does so in virtue of its most precious organ, that inward eye which is the bliss of solitude " (4). It is necessary to understand clearly the purely "illuminative" character of St. Theresa's visions; the latter are all that we know of her mystical illuminations, her perception of God.

Now vision is of two kinds, imaginary and intellectual.

1.—Imaginary vision is the lower of the two in quality. It is " a sensible representation confined entirely to the imagination, and which presents itself supernaturally to the mind with the liveliness and clearness of a real physical

(1) Interior Castle, VI. mansion, v. 12.

(2) Cf. Ruysbroeck, *L'Ornement des Noces Spirituelles*, Bk. II., ch. LIV.

(3) *Des Graces d'Oraison*, p. 89.

(4) Underhill, *Mysticism*, p. 342; cf. John of the Cross, *Ascent of Mt. Carmel*, Bk. II, ch. XVI.

thing " (1). So this vision has the following features ; it is seen by the imagination (hence its name), it is extraordinarily clear, and it is profitable, revealing not only God but also many great secrets. The mystic's experience of God becomes a perception, not yet of the highest quality, it is true, but nevertheless an immediate and perceptive knowledge, especially relating to the simple mysteries, like the historical Christ, and the fact and the will of God (2).

II.—Intellectual vision is the most perfect and the highest. " It takes, place in that faculty of the soul where appear the things that have no bodily form, and where they are seen under the one aspect of being... It is for this reason that this kind of vision is the most excellent and the most spiritual because by a vision of this kind man here on earth is enabled to understand and receive knowledge after the manner of the angels and the saints in heaven ; not through the senses or the imagination, but by the simple act of the intelligence illumined by a special Divine light " (3). " By means of this special light the mystic learns how He is God, is mighty, can do all things, commands all things, governs all things, and fills all things with His love (4).

These, then, are the perceptive stages of the knowledge of God in St. Theresa. In describing them the saint uses the word vision as giving the nearest idea of what she means. But, as we know, this is a manner of speaking, what takes place being in reality something " seen or perceived by the whole self by means of a sense which is neither sight nor feeling, but partakes of the character of both, " or more correctly, by a feeling which consists of all the inner forces. In substance it is the same knowledge

(1) Devine, *Mystical Theology*, p. 342.

(2) Cf. *Ascent of Mt. Carmel*, Bk. II., ch. XXIV.

(3) Devine, *Mystical Theology*, p. 545.

(4) St. Theresa, *Life*, XXVIII., 14.

as in the case of touch, except that it is here perceptive, and therefore more mature. God which was a simple presence, and then a touching in the dark, has now become lucidly known as a Reality whose mysteries are seen and in a sense understood. Thus the meaning of vision is a knowledge of God which is deep, direct, and perceptive—“ The innermost God, formless, but capable of assuming all forms, expressing Himself in vision ” (1).

c) Absorption.—Beyond touch and sight there is another stage of the knowledge of God which surpasses those two in depth and excellence. It is so perfect that there can no longer be a question of vision, but purely of absorption, of being in a sense the object itself. “ Let us suppose union to be two tapers, so exactly joined together that the light of both make but one light ; or that the wick, light, and wax are all one and the same... ” (2). From that account the highest knowledge is to be understood as being neither touch, nor embrace, nor vision, but an utter absorption. No visions enter there; in the actual absorption it is only a darkness in which God is completely realised. Yet it is not the darkness of the stage of interior touch, but “ a dazzling darkness, ” a realization so perfect that the person becomes the light that he sees (3). It is therefore perfectly right to say that “ in this conjunction with Deity there were not two things, but the perceiver was one with the thing perceived, *as not being vision but union* ; whoever becomes one by mingling with Deity, and afterwards recollects this union, will have within himself an image of it ” (4). St. Theresa’s experience at its highest is exactly that, and is, I believe, best suggested by absorption. The knowledge is won by the soul’s partaking of the nature of

(1) Les Grands Mystiques Chrétiens, p. 116.

(2) Interior Castle, VII. mansion, ch. II.

(3) Cf. Ruysbroeck, The Sparkling Stone, ch. XVIII.

(4) Plotinus, Ennead, VI., 9.

God Himself, by becoming " one and the same liquid " (1).

The above three modes of representation, namely, touch, sight, and absorption, are the forms under which St. Theresa describes her knowledge which is a feeling or "impression" of God in its different stages of growth.

3.—Now that we know those forms with sufficient clearness they can be used then for a comparison with those that the ariyan may be found to adopt for his own knowledge. The question, therefore, is, does the ariyan also have similar degrees of feeling as regards his object, and does he too try to express it in similitudes immediately suggesting the directness and the finality of a sensation ?

In answering, the first thing to say is that such similitudes exist, but they do not have the graded and well-defined meanings that St. Theresa suggests by means of hers. Still, what is most material is that the ariyan too does his best to convey to us the idea of something different from ordinary forms of knowledge by freely speaking of the sense activities, such as awakening, touch, and, most of all, sight. The resources of the Pali language from this point of view are great and the ariyan makes the fullest use of them, so much so that some of the terms have become inseparable from the gifts of arahantship. Thus buddha, for example, literally means an awakened one.

a) Taking those three terms in order, there is, first of all, awakening. What that means has been explained in an earlier part where the term was found to have been frequently employed by the Buddha in describing his experience and also in setting it before the ariyan disciple as the ideal chiefly to be desired. The Buddha spoke of " an incomparable awakening " very soon after he had

(1) Interior Castle, VII. mansion, II., 4 ; cf. Eckhart, *Mystische Schriften*, p. 122.

left the Bo-tree and while all that had happened under it was most freshly remembered by him. Later on, in explaining on various occasions the substance of the experience, he uses the figure of an awakening *repeatedly* and as a climax to his account, proving in this way that the word has been chosen with an intention, which is, to convey an idea singularly its own and denoting something like the work of the sensory powers that have just awakened from sleep. And to show further the accuracy of this term in describing the new experience he calls himself Buddha, the awakened, from this time onwards. Such uses are too important to be explained in an ordinary way. Here we have a man with an overwhelming experience which he has gone through with all his being. The results too are overwhelming. In the description he gives immediately after, he calls it an awakening and himself an awakened one. The term becomes almost habitual in all accounts of a similar experience. Surely there is a reason for this. The experience is most truly like a physical awakening. It is as nearly as possible like the feeling of fresh and sudden awareness which a sleeper experiences on waking. In this case it is not the work of any one particular sense, but is based on a general activity, the senses working together and thus creating the awareness. So also as regards the man in this state of interior awakening, he knows through a complete awareness exactly as he knows the presence of the world around him when he awakes from physical sleep. That is to say, he has a complete feeling of the fact, the result, as explained, of the various forces working together. Arahant experience, therefore, when it is called an awakening is like the awareness, direct, sudden, and without reasoning, that comes to the body as it awakes from sleep.

b) The second metaphor that the arahant uses is touch. The realisation of his object is as it were the touching of it. "For there, even as I sat, my spirit touched the Dhamma immaculate," says an ariyan who had realised the truth by

means of the ecstasies (1). The same figure is used by ariyans on many occasions in describing the result of those ecstasies and also of other exercises in concentration lasting for many days. And, at last, in one instance which has already been cited to prove another point, a distinction is, without doubt, made between the usual parts of the religious life on one side, such as believing in the truth and being a priest and even the performance of good ascetical practices, and, on the other side, the attainment of the end by touching it. This occurs in the case of Sujata, the brahmin, who heard the Buddha's teaching, and, much convinced by it, became a priest. " On the third night of contemplation rapt Sujata touched and won the three-fold wisdom " (2). The incident can help us understand better the significance of touch as a metaphor for the ariyan's experience, seeing that it here means something which is different from the usual attainment because it is the result of certain long and admittedly mystical contemplations. The touch has followed as a part of the ecstasies, and so it must mean a peculiar experience. It is difficult to say where the peculiarity lies as the canonical writings do not help us much further. But what we know for certain is that the ariyan touches the object while contemplating ecstatically, and this gives him enlightenment or the three-fold wisdom with its supernatural powers.

c) For the ariyan's experience it is the metaphor of sight which is the most important because it explains better than the others what is actually supposed to happen. The explanation is, of course, limited to what figurative speech can do by itself, so that it cannot be really complete. Nevertheless sight approaches nearer to explaining the experience than awakening and touch do.

(1) Psalms of the Sisters, v. 149.

(2) Psalms of the Sisters, vv. 322-4.

It has been sufficiently made clear in the last part that all the enlightenment and perfection of arahantship is essentially a new, complete, and continuous act of seeing. Arahantship itself is often defined as realising the truth (that is Nibbana) by bringing it before the eyes. The whole is an act of realisation, or, in its Pali meaning, making the truth to become, seeing it face to face, as one scholar puts it (1). A greater significance is given to the whole when we remember that the vision is the work of a special organ of sight, namely the eye of Panna, the highest of all gifts. This fact that vision is for the ariyan no mere figure of speech but an experience, actual and certain, is also seen in some of the accounts given of the Buddha's enlightenment. For instance, according to one of these, enlightenment came to him almost like a visible light, certainly as a vision perceived after a less perfect "luminance and vision of forms." The final vision exceeds the luminance and vision of forms inasmuch as it is wholly an interior, spiritual act, and yet it has developed from the earlier forms. For this reason it is more than metaphorically a vision; in other words, the experience contains an understanding, so complete, direct, and sure, and so much a feeling that it can only be spoken of as a perception. We see therefore without difficulty that the ariyan uses the term vision with generally the same motive as St. Theresa, which is, to quote the orthodox words of Pere Poulain once more, to signify "a mode of knowledge of such a kind that we are instinctively led to compare it with bodily sight."

It seems hardly possible to exaggerate the meaning of vision in the ariyan's experience. The buddhist writings dwell upon the fact everywhere, as has been already shown. To give one more good proof, the canonical collection of

(1) See Childers, Pali Dictionary, on "Saccha Karoti".

ariyan songs contain some fifty-three references to light and vision. These latter thoughts, floating up so naturally from the experience, represent a fact which is a part of that experience. It explains why there are so few ariyan accounts which do not use the words vision and light. The Buddha himself is called the great seer of Nibbana (1), the seventh in the lineage of seers (2), namely those who have achieved buddhahood, "for among men the eye supreme is he" (3).

The arahants too are seers. Thus by means of this particularly important sense-analogy, the ariyan, like St. Theresa at a high stage of union, speaks of a certain object directly known, which is an act of realisation so lucid and experimental that it can indeed be called a vision.

d) But vision is not the highest form of the ariyan experience, what it is when most complete. There is a state beyond any description, a pure termlessness where the subject no longer speaks of vision or any other categorical thing, where all reality of subject and object is passed, and there is only a perfect realisation, an experience without name. In the regular contemplations it is the highest jhana, the realm of cessation.

The Buddha reached it for the first time under the Bo-tree. It will be remembered that this was the realm that his two mystic teachers of earlier days could not reach and that he himself succeeded in attaining only after six more years of discipline. As has been said, it is a condition which is quite indescribable, remaining only as an experience that is perfect in every manner.

So we find here an attempt to name something going beyond the known forms of experience precisely as St.

(1) Psalms of the Brethren, v. 1264.

(2) Psalms of the Brethren, v. 1240.

(3) Psalms of the Brethren, v. 1267; cf. 288, 168, 320.

Theresa attempts to do when writing of the absorption in God of the soul that has "swooned away." Both these states, the cessation of buddhist jhana and St. Therera's final ecstasy, are beyond the ordinary consciousness and therefore beyond the thoughts and words which are, in the nature of things, only suitable for the uses of that consciousness. This difficulty exists even as regards the less perfect forms of the experience, as we know well; but here, when the experience has become perfect, when, as the mystic claims, the world of relations is transcended in every way and the absolute made present and palpable, all words and thoughts pass away and the mystic no longer tries to give any accurate account. He just states the fact as well as he can without speaking of any definable act. The christian mystic, of course, later on does his best to interpret that experience by the help of his "certainty;" but there, as the word itself explains, the subject has passed out of that experience and has become one of interpretation, or more correctly, of doctrinal interpretation (1). The ariyan, on the other hand, leaves his most perfect experience as little interpreted as possible, simply calling it the trance of cessation when it is a jhana, or at ordinary times Nibbana. When he does enter into details, it is the results of that experience that he describes. But this has been explained elsewhere.

From the above account of the ariyan's terms for his experience, his knowledge which is a feeling or "impression," it is clear that they are directly based upon an analogy with the sense activities, and this is not because of any loose thinking or writing, but, from all accounts, with a significance. Awakening, touch, vision, pure ecstasy, all have the experimental nature of the sense-appreciations, and by themselves suggest experience, directness,

(1) For, strictly speaking, all language is an interpretation, an attempt to relate our experience with our reason.

something known as finally as a man knows himself. The impression is beyond all questioning. The natural conclusion is that they are, from this first point of view, similar to the touch, vision, and the perfect ecstasy of absorption which are St. Theresa's forms for her experience.

4.—In now collecting together all that has been found in connection with the terms used by St. Theresa and the ariyan it seems that we have approached nearer towards a proper understanding of the nature of the experiences they describe, and which, according to Pere Poulain, is a spiritual impression. This is the result of the meaning that all these terms have. It is certain that they have that meaning. If they were only figures of speech existing in an ordinary way the fact would appear plainly in some part of the accounts. It would be explained to this effect, since we admit that these witnesses spoke of things in a responsible way. This holds true both for St. Theresa and the ariyan. For instance, it is no mere metaphor that St. Theresa uses but something which is a deduction from what we know to be an accepted catholic belief that all mystical states are founded upon the existence of spiritual senses which, as Pere Poulain explains, indicates the faculty of perceiving a spiritual being experimentally. That is then the real point, an experimental knowledge with all that an experience means. A good illustration of it is the following from St. Theresa—"The soul is like a child that sucks still, who lying at his mother's breast, she, to please him, without his moving his lips, spirts her milk into his mouth ; just so here, for... our lord is pleased that, without her forethinking thereon, she should understand that she is conversing with Him... "

Thus, putting it definitely, we are sure of one fact so far, as much as such a thing is possible from descriptions, and that is that the two experiences are as real, as direct, as utterly free from doubt as a physical sensation. Such is

then the first precise idea we have of the experiences when they are described as an impression, that is, of their true nature. And here, at the beginning, they are discovered to resemble each other. Surely this is an important step in the comparison, tentative perhaps, and still liable to be much corrected, but all the same a useful finding at the commencement. It is the most that we can learn from the study of words. The result therefore, of this part of the study is to make evident that, *so far as the manner of describing goes*, St. Theresa's expression is the same progressive experimental feeling as the arahant's, becoming more and more intense, at a certain point achieving vision that is an extraordinary knowledge and then in the end passing beyond everything else to an indescribable ecstasy of realization.

Although what has been said above is true within its limitations, it should not be exaggerated. The limitations should be borne in mind. For in this connection there will always be the question whether a similarity in the manner of describing which undoubtedly exists proves *by itself* that the two experiences are in a proper sense of the same nature. There is a danger in trying to depend too much on forms, especially when the method leads to forcing a similarity of description too far. Such a similarity can prove nothing *conclusively*. It can only show that the human mind, by some common instinct, falls back upon the analogy of the senses to express its highest degrees of experience. This perhaps leads us along the same step as before, because the similar manner of representing things in relation to the senses, *when it is made the only adequate form*, as in the instances we have considered, shows that it must arise from a similar by intensive and direct mode of knowing, something whose nearest equivalents are the sense-perceptions, and therefore showing experience, certainty, directness. Accepting this, then, knowledge in both instances, christian and buddhist, has the root idea of

intuition, which is " that directness or immediacy in contrast to abstractive or representative knowledge, or, more frequently, to forms of knowledge which are meditated by a discursive process. " In fact, following the explanation further, the knowledge is an intellectual intuition, for it denotes " an immediate function of thought or understanding akin to the direct perception of sense, " something, which according to Kant, is necessary " to secure a positive knowledge of things-in-themselves " (1). It is also said that this kind of intellectual intuition, when it exists, is claimed by many mystics as true spiritual illumination, and the vision of God. Perhaps these remarks may be useful in seeking the truth of the matter. They cannot of course be accepted wholly at present, since what has been done has been only a study of names and forms. Before coming to all that conclusion there are deeper facts to consider. So, in order to establish the fact existing as the real nature of the two experiences we shall have to go further, even as far as the qualities of each, for then only can the proof be said to be conclusive.

5.—We therefore come from names to qualities. For the latter are always the root of the matter, and the analysis must in the end deal with them. Their importance is wider even than the proving of a similarity. In the more general task of mystical criticism these qualities are in fact the only things which *prove* a difference between mystical and non-mystical ecstasies, for they belong peculiarly to the former. The latter kind of ecstasies, those which are caused by merely mechanical means or even by drugs and anaesthetics, never have the same qualities. This is another reason why a comparison conducted from such a standpoint is the surest method of proving what is required

(1) Dictionary of Psychology and Philosophy, ed. by Baldwin, on "Intuition".

here. Perhaps the meaning will become clearer when the qualities are actually shown through analysis.

I shall begin with St. Theresa. On examining her mystical experience, her knowledge which is a feeling of the known object, four well-defined qualities or groups of qualities are discernable in it. They may be called supra-rationality, certitude, completeness, and fruitfulness. They will be explained.

a) *Supra-rationality.*—By this word is meant that the new knowledge does not arise in the usual manner and by any of the usual mental processes, it is not based upon the functioning of the logical or reflective faculty. We are therefore dealing with an essential fact in mystical knowledge, namely, the superseding of the ordinary activities of the consciousness by a direct intuition. When expressed in result it may be called the immediate function of thought or understanding which is akin to sense-perception.

St. Theresa like every other mystic declares the above truth very plainly. "The understanding ceases from its acts," she says, "because God suspends it." What occurs after is then explained as follows—"For then our Lord suspends that which astonishes and occupies it, so that, without making any reflection it shall comprehend in a moment more than we could comprehend in many years with all the efforts in the world" (1). The new and marvellous knowledge which is given to the soul in this manner when its faculties are asleep is even considered by St. Theresa to be the test of true rapture. What comes then is called by most christian mystics the illumination of God's presense, because it is a direct light which the consciousness of God brings to the soul, wholly as a gift from above, that is to say, from outside of it and quite independently of any reasoning—"For it is above the eye of my

(1) *Life*, VII., 8.

soul, above my intelligence " (1). That light above reason is a new and strange illumination, so that in one moment, and without any sensible image or appearance certain things relating to the mysteries of the faith, together with even natural truths are revealed to the mystic abundantly and clearly. The whole is therefore in fact an illumination which takes place without the aid of reflections and when the understanding is " pure and empty of all clear intellectual perceptions " (2). Here we perhaps see the most notable feature of mystical knowledge. All mystics are constant in claiming it to be true. It is not a momentary sense of illumination which passes away as soon as the experience is over, as is the case in what are known as natural ecstasies (3). The mystic has a permanent conviction of having received a knowledge which is not the work of the reasoning faculty, but which is itself an actual experience of the known object, the becoming of the object itself as it were, or else the illumination collected around such an experience. The knowledge does not remain only as a fact isolated in an extraordinary experience, outside of which we have just the mystic's words as a testimony. Faith here is not dead, for there are good works ; for example the knowledge to which it testifies has increased the intelligence, it has produced many other great results, and the mystic goes through life conquering in the name of that experience and that illumination. These are very tangible results, and the christian is sure that they come from God and in a new and experimental way. For this reason the knowledge can be called supra-rational.

As for the question of supra-rationality in ariyan enlightenment we have only to refer to the analysis already given.

(1) St. Augustine, Confessions, Bk. IV., ch. X.

(2) Ascent of Mt. Carmel, p. 97.

(3) For instances see Jastrow, *The Subconscions*, p. 251; James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 249.

In it one of the conclusions was that enlightenment in the ariyan life is entirely different from the ordinary understanding. It is wisdom in the sense of "supernatural knowledge," the result of even a different organ of sight, namely the eye of panna, and therefore obtained in a different way, since it is not reached by mere logic, subtle and intelligible only to one with enlightenment. Its very quality is different, for what is then known transcends human limitations, the ariyan attaining to preeminence in full and sublime knowledge and insight. In its perfect sense this enlightenment or panna is even omniscience, as Ledi Sadaw explains (1). Without going as far as that, some of its contents are seen to be demonstrably supernatural, namely, the abhinna powers. All these facts have been sufficiently dwelt upon with evidence from the teachings as well as from the instances of the Buddha and the ariyans.

b) Certitude.—This is the second quality in St. Theresa's mystical knowledge. Its meaning is that although the contents of the knowledge are not provable according to the rules accepted in logical statement yet the mystic is perfectly certain that what he knows is true, far truer in fact, because it is more absolute, than any conclusion of dialectics, that maximum of work without faith or vision. Such a certainty is present in all forms of mystical knowledge, whether they are derived by means of voices and visions, or are, in their perfect form, just a pure inner realization. Thus, when speaking of a vision of the blessed Trinity, St. Theresa says, "There is a strange certainty about it, though the eyes of the soul see nothing, and when the presence is withdrawn, that withdrawal is felt" (2). Speaking yet of another vision she says, "Our Lord renders Himself present to the soul by a certain knowledge of

(1) Quoted by Mrs. Rhys Davids, *Buddhist Psychology*, p. 201.

(2) *Relations*, VIII.

Himself which is more clear than the sun " (1). The presence is " quite as evident and certain and indeed far more so, than the ordinary presence of people. About this we may be deceived, but not in that " (2). The same certainty exists as regards other revelations during union, for those " heavenly mysteries " are " deeply imprinted in the centre of the soul. " There are a great number of other passages speaking with equal confidence of the truth of the things heard and seen and known in such moments. It is only natural that most of the knowledge received in this way should concern the mystery of the Godhead since that, for the christian mystic like St. Theresa, is the substance of all mystical experience. It is the highest mystery, the truth beyond which there is nothing more. Following from this it may be said that the certainty found in christian mystical knowledge applies to the whole meaning of life, for God signifies all that.

The christian mystic, in beholding God during ecstasy is in contact with the most complete truth, and it is this that he claims to understand with all the certainty of his mind. It does not matter to him that he has no proofs beyond his own subjective experience, that he is unable to formulate his new knowledge scientifically. These are of no consequence to one having the experience. Facts of experience might not be maintainable to the same extent as the findings of the rational mind, yet, they are always truer, the mystic says. " The soul, " according to St. Theresa, " for some time afterwards possesses such certainty that this grace comes from God that whatever people may say to the contrary, it cannot fear a delusion " (3). Speaking of a case when this certainty of experience was eventually supported by a proposition reached through reasoning, she

(1) *Life*, XXVII., 5.

(2) *Interior Castle*, VI. mansion, VIII., 4.

(3) *Interior Castle*, VI. mansion, IX., 8.

says, " I knew someone who was unaware of God being in all things by presence, power, and essence, yet was firmly convinced of it by a divine favour of this sort. She asked a half-instructed person of the kind I spoke of to tell her in what way God dwelt within us; he was as ignorant on the subject as she had been before Our Lord revealed the truth to her, and answered that the Almighty was only present in us by grace. Yet so strong was her conviction of the truth learnt during her prayer, that she questioned other spiritual persons on the subject, who confirmed her in the true doctrine, much to her joy " (1). Here is mystical certainty openly justified.

Now, the same certainty is also found in arahant enlightenment, as has been showed in the analysis. The Buddha and the early arahants, according to all accounts, had the most perfect certainty of their emancipation, both moral and mental. We are told that as soon as the new knowledge which is a complete vision arises every chain is broken and chiefly that of ignorance. The statement occurs again and again in the references to arahantship. The ariyan is then certain that he has obtained wisdom, just as surely as the Buddha is in the several accounts of his enlightenment. " Then arose the certainty of that emancipation " is one of the usual plain ways of saying it. The analysis mentioned above has also shown that this enlightenment of which the ariyan is certain relates to the truth of becoming. For the buddhist this is the ultimate truth, containing in itself all others, just as God is for the christian that truth. In this way the ariyan's assurance covers as much of the problem of things as the christian mystic's.

c) Finality.—It is the third quality of St. Theresa's mystical knowledge; that is to say, for the mystic the knowledge is the deepest perception of reality, containing the

(1) Interior Castle, V. mansion, I., 8-g.

final and indisputable answer to everything that sets a problem in life ; in short it is a complete revelation which puts an end to all further questionings.

In St. Theresa finality can be naturally inferred from her vision of God. The God of her ecstasy is, as has been remarked, the sum of all knowledge. To know this God is essentially the same as knowing the reality in all things for she sees " how all things are beheld in God, and He contains them within Himself " (1). After that she finds she needs no other master (2). We can therefore understand why another catholic mystic says that in beholding the fulness of God she " comprehended the whole world, both here and beyond the sea, and the abyss and all things else " (3). All things exist in their essence in God as made manifest in these visions, so that to see and possess God is perfect knowledge after which there is nothing more to be known. In proof of it the mystic who sees God also speaks of seeing at the same time great mysteries concerning the world which are made intelligible to him. The knowledge of external things which some psychologists call " cosmic consciousness " appear to be inevitably connected with the vision of God, thus illustrating the truth of the statements just made that God is the final knowledge and that in Him and through Him the mystic knows all things. Christian mystical knowledge is therefore final, for beyond it there is nothing more.

But so also is the ariyan's enlightenment. According to the analysis given that enlightenment is based upon an intuition of the truth of becoming. This truth appears in two forms, namely, as a theory and as a way of life; the theory, it will be remembered, is the law of cause and happening which traces all known existence to ignorance, and the

(1) Interior Castle, VI. mansion, X., 2.

(2) Interior Castle, IX., 7.

(3) Blessed Angela, Visions and Instructions, ch. XXII., p. 172 (Eng. tr.).

way is that laid down in the four great truths about suffering. This, for the arahant, is the whole truth of things, and nothing else really matters; or, expressing it more precisely, everything that exists can be understood finally when considered in relation to the above truths.

As explained in an earlier part, it is the conviction of having arrived at the most final knowledge that explains the ariyan's claims to " full and sublime knowledge and insight, " to " the incomparably perfect enlightenment " and even to omnipotence. The arahant then calls himself " one who has finished learning " and, like the Buddha, he claims that as a result all ignorance is destroyed (').

d) Fruitfulness.—This fourth quality is particularly significant because St. Theresa and many other authorities on mysticism treat it as a reliable proof of the true mystical state. For instance, when St. Theresa found that some religious persons had doubts about her unions she very rightly made them consider the results of these unions as seen in her daily life. " I said to them once... that all who knew me saw clearly that my soul was changed—and so my confessor said; for the difference was very great in every way—not a pretence, but such as all might most clearly observe. As I was formerly so wicked, I said, I could not believe that satan, if he wished to deceive me and take me down to hell, would have recourse to means so adverse to his purpose as this of rooting out my faults, implanting virtues and spiritual strength; for I saw clearly that I had become at once another person through the instrumentality of these visions " ('). In the later work she is absolutely certain of the proof. " We may clearly see that these things do not come from the devil, and that they should come from our imagination is impossible, since the devil can represent nothing which leaves the soul great

(1) Cf. Psalms of the Sisters, vv. 9/4-6.

(2) Life, XXVIII, 18, 19.

effects " (1). This is so true and important that christianity as a whole has accepted the principle of judging mystical experience by its fruits. " The signs of a divine ecstasy are principally to be derived from his conduct who is subject to them " (2). It is certainly a very sound principle.

Here the term fruitfulness has been used for short, the meaning being that mystical experience *always* brings an increase of the virtues and other gifts beyond the ordinary measure. These virtues and gifts relate to everything that concerns a man's spiritual well-being, ranging from the virtues as they are ordinarily understood as far as the results of holiness, like peace, joy, and salvation. Often it happens that these fruits appear instantaneously at the very time of the unions, but even if they do not do so they are sure to manifest themselves in great strength very soon after. St. Theresa explains to this effect. Referring to the spiritual water in the season of full union she says, " Now you know how exceedingly this living water cleanseth... for, if but once drunk of, I hold it certain, it leaves the soul pure and cleansed of all its faults " (3). She speaks in another place of the suddenness with which the condition arises—" What the poor soul, with the labour, perhaps, of twenty years in fatiguing the understanding, could not bring about, that the heavenly Gardener accomplishes in an instant... the soul sees itself to be other than it was, and it knows not how, it is beginning to do great things in the odour which the flowers send forth " (4). These are " the effects of ravishment when they come from God " (5). All the fruits have been collectively called virtues and gifts. It will be perhaps better to classify them in three groups into which they seem to fall naturally; they will be, the

(1) Interior Castle, VI. mansion, V.; cf. Ascent of Mt. Carmel, bk II., ch. XXIV.

(2) Quoted from Benedict XIV. by Devine, Mystical Theology, p. 455.

(3) The Way of Perfection, ch. XIX.

(4) Life, XVII., 3, 4.

(5) Life, XX.

virtues such as humility, love, etc.; the immediate fruits such as joy, peace, etc.; and the final fruits such as selflessness, detachment, action, etc. St. Theresa has examples of each of these three divisions.

Firstly, she speaks of the virtues which are made increasingly perfect by her unions. " There arise the promises and the heroic resolutions, the ardent desires, the horror of the world, the clear view of its vanity " (1). Also love has become more consuming and she thinks continually of the manner in which she can serve her Lord. These indicate some of the gifts which the new experience brings, here chiefly relating to the virtues (2).

Next, as regards the immediate fruits such as joy and peace all mystics mention them as being almost overwhelming. St. Theresa particularly refers to these two things, joy which is an ecstasy in itself, and the peace of God which passeth all understanding. There are many accounts given of them. " In the last, " according to one which describes a high stage of union, " its mood is accompanied by so much of felicity, so much of spiritual consolation, that it wishes never to see it finished ; to its eyes it is less work than a beatitude " (3). " When the soul, " explains another, " finds her God, she feels herself swoon away almost all entirely with a very keen pleasure and a fulness of peace " (4). This joy is therefore truly an ecstasy. When St. Theresa's unions were explained in an earlier chapter joy was found to be present in all of them. As regards the new peacefulness the saint says further, " Outside of what relates to the orisons, pain, pleasure, everything in fact leaves me so peaceful that they take me for an insensible person, and sometimes I remain in this

(1) Life, XIX.

(2) Cf. *Des Graces d'Oraison*, p. 259.

(3) Life, XVIII.

(4) Life, XVIII.

state for several days " (1). This remarkable peace soon became permanent in her life and she attributes it to her mystical unions. In fact, among the many reasons which assured her that her unions were of the proper kind notwithstanding disputes, one was that they brought her much joy and quiet and profit.

Lastly there are the final fruits, that is, selflessness, a sense of detachment, and action. The three have been called final because, as a rule, they occur only in the highest unions. Thus self-loss and detachment occur during ecstasy, and sometimes in full union; action, in its synthesis with contemplation, belongs to the highest union, the spiritual marriage.

Taking up self-loss as the first we find it to be one of the most conspicuous facts of mystical experience. It comes with illumination, when the mystic beholds the truth of things and by doing so understands how the one is true and the many leading their little separated lives are false. Here arises the thoughts against the self, the giving up of the life which asserts the relative fact for that which alone is real and absolute. In these new relations that are the result of illumination there must inevitably be an unselfing. As the mystic approaches the vision of the absolute he withdraws himself by the same act from all things contradicting that vision, and of these the greatest is the self which, instead of accepting purely as such, always tries to recreate the truth around its own life and thoughts. For this reason the illuminated mind finds the self to be the chief enemy of truth, or as the christian sees it, God. Union with God must therefore end the life of self. St. Theresa says so, while recounting the principal effects of union. As a rule she expresses the mystical self-loss more quietly than many others and also more within the bounds of the usual christian ideas which consider the matter

(1) Quoted in *Les Grands Mystiques Chrétiens*, p. 52.

chiefly from the ethical standpoint. And perhaps for this very reason she shows herself more practical, acting true to her extraordinary instinct for reality as known in life. But, notwithstanding all that, she makes her meaning unmistakable. Her metaphors for instance are clearly suggestive of the thought, a thing which is understandable, since mystics instinctively use such a form of speech when dealing with the secretest parts of their experience. She often uses the illustration of the chrysalis and the butterfly, a very old and usual one with mystics who try to explain the deep mystery of self-naughting. In speaking of spiritual marriage she says, " Now the little butterfly I spoke of dies with supreme joy, for Christ is her life. This becomes more manifest as time goes on, for the soul learns that God is this life by certain secret intuitions often too strong to be misunderstood " (1). It is a good instance of the manner in which the self passes away in a new life. St. Theresa discovers for herself, as all mystics do, how true that saying of St. Paul's is, " I live, yet not I, but Christ that liveth in me ". This mystery has been described and explained in many ways by men looking at it from various points of view, but for the present purpose such explanations are not necessary. It is enough to know that St. Theresa believed in an unselfing as a result of her unions. From that time onwards a new life was lived by her, one full of God.

Liberty or a sense of detachment, which is the next of these fruits and frequently mentioned by St. Theresa, is to a certain extent another way of looking at the peace of her new unselfed condition. In one of the above passages she describes herself as being so calm after union that people take her for an insensible person. Nothing then effects her. This is the outward sign of her detachment. But both inwardly and outwardly it should be understood as the state of a person who is apart and above all worldly

(1) Interior Castle, VII. mansion, II.

life in the sense of having overcome it by being aware of its worthlessness. The whole consequently is a feeling of mastery. The self is utterly lost and then arises a new personality " at one and the same time greater than the self and identical with it, great enough to be God, intimate enough to be me " (1). It is this new self which feels the mastery over things, essentially by having conquered the old part of itself. " Ravishment, " says St. Theresa in describing the feeling, " produces, besides a strange detachment of which I am not able to give an adequate idea... God wishes, it seems, that the body itself should feel this detachment. One feels oneself then much more strange to the things of this earth " (2). Thus the detachment is born of victory, and hereafter the mystic also has a feeling that he is the master of the world. " What sovereignty than that of a soul which, carried to that height by God Himself, considers all things without being enchained by anything... Here God... detaches entirely a soul from the earth, He gives it the empire over all it finds there " (3). It is in such words that St. Theresa describes her " veritable transformation " so much so that " there is no need of commandment. "

The last final point is the synthesised life of contemplation and action. It has already been described in outline when giving an account of St. Theresa's fourth union or spiritual marriage of which it was called the visible sign. In this place a few conclusions may be further drawn. St. Theresa, on reaching her highest mystical stage, felt irresistibly moved to action. She mentions the fact in her counsels to those in her charge concerning God's designs during spiritual marriage—it is the incessant production of work, work. Such a result, according to her, is the best

(1) Recejac, *Les Fondements*, p. 97.

(2) *Life*, XVIII.

(3) *Life*, XVIII.

proof that the graces of this union have come from God. We know that her life proved it to be so, for this was the period of her extraordinary activities. The impulse for action which she declared to be the great outward fact of the highest union broke into her life most manifestly then, making her take up tasks so great and creative that it persuaded men to accept them as coming from above. Mystics of the true following agree that such a call to action, often of an ardent nature, is the highest mystical life, the most final point of mystical experience.

At this point life achieves its perfect fruit, which is declared to be a union of rest and work—" perfect repose, perfect fruitbearing. " There is nothing higher, as St. Theresa says.

Now that we know the meaning and divisions of the fruits which are produced by St. Theresa's mystical experience we may enquire further to see if the ariyan can show similar results from his experience. In the ariyan's case too the saying must hold true that by their fruits ye shall know them. It is well to remember St. Theresa's sound words, for such things as the rooting out of evil ways, and the gift of virtues, and the strength to will and to do things worthy of a high calling could not be the work of the devil. There must be something holy and true at the heart of an experience which produces them. The moral test set up by the catholic church is therefore most right.

Going once again to the analysis of arahantship we find that it was always understood as a general emancipation of the whole man that is, of the mind, the will, and the emotions, leaving in the end the highest enlightenment, peace, and purity. This is the general summing-up of the fruits of arahantship, each of which is equally insisted on through the canonical writings. The emancipation begins at the moment of arahant-attainment when the mind is suddenly illuminated. After this there follows of itself a complete purification (for ignorance, the root of

all evil has disappeared), and peace. By such means the ariyan's emancipation is made complete, this holding true both in the case of the Buddha and the ariyan disciples.

On examining closely the ariyan's emancipation there is firstly a complete purification with the increase of the virtues. Ignorance has been slain, desire suppressed, and consequently evil can no longer exist, for the roots of the condition of sinfulness have perished and of the time at which it is attained it is said—" Before the clear vision of wisdom all his depravity wastes away. Of such a priest, O priests, it is said, He has blinded Mara, the wicked one, made useless the eye of Mara, gone out of sight of that wicked one, and passed beyond all adhesion to the world " (1). Another account of this same ecstatic priest says that for him, after having lost all depravity, grasping has ceased, hatred has ceased, infatuation has ceased (2)— And these three, grasping, hatred and infatuation, are the most comprehensive formula of evil in buddhism, so that it is the very root of evil that is ended in this manner.

Following the purification there is the utter peace of Nibbana, for " lust's fire is quenched, Nibbana gained. " This peace, and together with it joy, which now are perfect, have been establishing themselves in the earlier stages of the contemplations. Thus in the first stage of jhana there is " zest and joy " ; in the second begins the inward tranquilizing of the mind, self contained and uplifted, while the zest and joy increase; in the third jhana, " the equal tranquil mind is made permanent while the man experiences that pleasure of which the ariyan's declare, Happy doth he abide with even lucid mind. " So by these means the new ariyan peace and joy are made perfect, and the Buddha says that they exist even in the final ecstasy although the state is in a general way considered as being beyond all

(1) *Majjhima*, I., 175, sutta 26.

(2) *Samyutta*, ch. XXXVI., II.

manner of description (1). They are always treated as very necessary results of the ecstasies, a fact which many arhants make clear. In fact the ariyan is inwardly aware of his spiritual attainment by the peace and joy that fill his whole being; they are a witness to the new state which is indisputable, and are almost an end in themselves, for peace and joy mean the death of life's greatest ill, which is suffering. In connection with the ariyan's joy an explanation is necessary. It is because the word does not accurately describe the ariyan's feeling at the moment. This is also true in all passages referring to the joy of Nibbana, as for instance when one of them speaks of "dwelling in rapture, the bliss, the joy, of emancipation, of fruition, of Nibbana." In all these cases the Pali word Piti which is rendered as joy or happiness has no emotional value. A Burmese writer has already pointed out the fact (2). Buddhist joy means an absolute sense of spiritual satisfaction or victory, just as suffering means the lack of that satisfaction or victory.

It has an indefinable quality of its own, something whose nearest western equivalent is a sense of victory, like the christian's when he defies anyone to separate him from the love of Christ (3). The victory is related to an ultimate object, either the truth of an ultimate law as in the ariyan's case, or the love flowing from an ultimate Being, as in the christian's. Taking joy in both these cases to have that meaning, it becomes mystical in character, if we accept Recejac's explanation of mystical joy as "the synthesis of all the higher satisfactions so far as they contain any sense of the absolute" (4).

But although the word piti may be very difficult to

(1) Samyutta, IV., 227 f.; Anguttara, II., 36, 87; Digha, III., 78.

(2) Cf. Mrs. Rhys Davids, Buddhism, p. 231.

(3) Romans, VIII., 35, 39.

(4) Les Fondements, p. 78.

render rightly, the ariyan peace anyway is at once understood, for it has the usual meaning of the English word. During the jhanas peace is most real and perfect, and many ariyan's have testified to it (1).

How very real and even visible this peacefulness is will be seen from the story of Sariputta, one of the greatest arayans, about whom it is recorded that the jhana exercises worked a change even in his countenance. Another disciple noticed it one day and asked him, "Serene and pure and radiant is your look brother Sariputta. In what mood has Sariputta been today?" The reply was "I have been alone in jhana, brother..."(2). Reading this a christian instance comes to mind by reason of being remarkably similar. In the life of St. Catherine of Genoa it is said; "When she came forth from her hiding place (where had occurred her ecstasy) her face was rosy as it might be a cherub's" (3). The conclusion to be drawn from the similarity is obvious. Above all, it will be agreed that in both cases the peace is remarkable, visible even, for the face shines with its light. We therefore see that peace and joy are true results of the ariyan experience, their quality becoming purer and fuller with each stage of ecstasy until in the highest, which brings arahantship, there is the most perfect peace together with purity and enlightenment. And there is joy also, intellectual and strangely subtletised it is true, but all the same very real for it is the feeling of a victory won at last.

Among the other results of the ariyan experience are also those which in St. Theresa's case have been called the final fruits, namely, selflessness, liberty, and the active life. Here also it is right to call them final because they are generally connected with the more advanced forms of the experience.

(1) Cf. *Psalms of the Brethren*, vv. 916 f.

(2) *Samyutta*, III., 235 f.

(3) *Vita e Dottrina*, ch. V.

Selflessness and liberty are even made to convey the idea of arahantship by themselves; and the active life is something that follows arahant-attainment.

To take the last fruits in the given order, selflessness, we find, is one of the greatest truths in buddhism. The way in which the buddhist approaches it has been sufficiently explained. The self is an illusion from the psychological point of view; knowledge is, in a sense, the grasping of this truth, for selflessness is only another and even a closer way of viewing the truth of becoming. Thus, speaking psychologically, the self is denied. When this takes place there at once and inevitably follows the second denial of the self, this time from the moral point of view, for in buddhism these two are inseparable, and to know the illusion of self is to be freed from its evils. If there is no self there can be no self-seeking (°).

The disappearance of the I-illusion is then a complete unselfing, both in knowledge and in conduct. And it is precisely this that the ariyan realises as a higher fruit of his experience, as many examples make clear. The Buddha made an utterance to this effect soon after he had left the Bo-tree (°).

The same holds true in the ariyan's experience resulting from the jhana ecstasies, the self being then just as fully cast out. There is a good example of it in the account of Sariputta's contemplations a part of which has been given earlier. When Sariputta returned from the jhana exercises his face was seen to be full of an extraordinary peace. On being questioned about it he replies. " I have been alone in jhana, brother, and to me came never the thought, I am attaining it ! I have got it ! I have emerged from it ! " This statement is repeated several times in describing every stage of the jhanas. These are instances whose meaning is

1) Cf. Samyutta, ch. XXII., 85.

(2) See Maha-Vagga, I., 3.

plain. They bring to the front the great buddhist truth of selflessness with all its psychological and moral implications. The ariyan experience whether ecstatic or otherwise, brings about its realisation. The ariyan returns from his experience " with thoughts of self well attenuated "; he has no longer the sense of being abiding, or even real, as the word is ordinarily used; as a result a life of self-seeking, either in act, thought, or desire, becomes perfectly unthinkable. The notion therefore as well as the claims of the self are simultaneously killed by the realisation. It is indeed a perfect unselfing.

Another of the final fruits is the new feeling of liberty or emancipation. Liberty has been explained quite often enough to be the most usual name by which arahantship is indicated. We may here try to know how the consciousness of it arises and grows during the experience. When the ariyan comes out of the ecstasy the feeling of indifference remains with him. As explained, the indifference is nothing else than a harmony of forces under the control of an enlightened mind which understands and therefore overcomes all. For this reason the person is really saved; he is, " a master and utterly free " because his mind is free and controls everything else, thus making the whole being free. So the indifference is at the basis a sense of liberty. Henceforth the ariyan speaks more appropriately of liberty, emancipation, and this even becomes equivalent to arahantship. The feeling is permanent and absolute, and often the words which express it appear exaggerated. This is particularly the case in one of the Buddha's statements where he describes himself as being free from every condition of even mind and body. It occurs in the course of a dialogue between the Buddha and Mara, the wicked one. " Thine, O wicked one, is the body. But where, O wicked one, there is no body there; O wicked one, thou canst not come. Thine, O wicked one, is the mind. But where, O wicked one, there is no mind, there, O wicked one, thou

canst not come " (?). The same spirit of liberty is made to enter, logically enough, into ethical matters with the result that there is a giving up of the usual moral values. No mysticism consistently following its impulses seems able to avoid this outcome of its law of liberty. Returning to buddhism, we come upon the following counsel given by the Buddha to the priests—" O priests, I teach you the Dhamma under the similitude of a raft, as a thing by which you must use to save yourselves, but to which you must in no wise cling... Bhikkhus, understand that ye must put away moral rules, let alone immoral rules " (?). All this is logical once the principle of liberty is accepted. Only, that principle has to be held very courageously, as in the case of the arahant after his experience, for it is then said of him, " From all detached and leaning upon naught, who all have mastered, from all bonds is loosed " (?).

The last of the final fruits is action. The ariyan whose highest experience is won during contemplation should in strict logic be altogether given to a contemplative life without thought of anything else, least of all of practical unreflective tasks. But, most remarkably, this is not the case. Instead of it, the experience proves to be in its results a power and a will for action. By a strange law, at the very height of contemplation he feels the impulse for life, for its actual tasks and circumstances most strongly, the need to do, to create, to carry the truth he knows into the midst of men either by word or by simple deed. Immediately this impulse creates in his mind a sense of mission, or sometimes only that of being helpful in an ordinary practical way. The best example of this in buddhism is of course the Buddha himself, as is natural; in fact I doubt very much if there is any better even

(1) Samyutta, ch. IV., 9, trans. Warren, p. 351.

(2) Majjhima, I., 134.

(3) Anguttara, II., 24.

outside of buddhism. For in the Buddha's life are seen most perfectly the three parts of this evolution, namely, contemplation, the ariyan experience, and the new active life. First of all there were many years of contemplation which were continuous and often terrible. There were other things besides, such as ascetical practices, but contemplation was always present as the most important of all. At last came the great experience that was an enlightenment. It changed everything, for its results were immeasurable. Among them was a sense of life, meaning by the latter term work and well-doing. In the Buddha's mind this took the form of a work to save his fellow beings by preaching to them the truth he had learnt so marvellously. It was revealed to him at the height of contemplation that there was something beyond it, that life had not been altogether complete up to that moment because life would be somehow different if, for instance, it were more active, more neighbourly, more really a well-doing. By this is not meant that all formulated itself in his mind in a regular manner. Obviously not; the whole was just a tremendous impulse making for a life of action, more surely than any ordered argument could. What the Buddha really says about it is given in a dialogue between himself and Brahma who is, looking at it psychologically, the new impulse setting him his task. Brahma tells him in earnest words where is duty lies now that he has found the truth. It is, in St. Theresa's words, the incessant production of work, work. Here we see the impulse gathering his mind for the inevitable decision. At last it comes. The Buddha describes it : " Then I, O priests, perceiving the desire of Brahma, and having compassion on living beings, gazed over the world with the eye of a Buddha. And as I gazed over the world with the eye of a Buddha, I saw people of every variety. And when I had seen this, O priests, I adressed Brahma in the following verse, " Let those with ears to hear come give me credence, for lo, the door stands

open to the deathless " (?). We all know the result. There followed a life of activity lived among great and continual affairs, the truth preached daily from place to place, a church set up and edified without ceasing, and at last a great religion widely established. This, then, is a perfect instance of action as a fruit of the ariyan experience. The impulse, the decision, and the matter, all are seen to come directly from that memorable experience under the Bo-tree.

In now collecting together what has been proved as regards the fruits of the ariyan experience, the least that may be said about these fruits is that they are all excellent and profitable. Therefore, they are undoubtedly a testimony to a high calling. Perhaps the fact will be more convincingly put by means of a quotation from an orthodox catholic authority. Speaking of such fruits of mystical ecstacy, Joli says, " If, as our religion teaches us, the least virtue requires the help of grace, how great must be the price required to produce such as these " (?). The ariyan's fruits have all the virtues which the catholic church unhesitatingly declares to be the result of true mystical graces. And, what is more, these fruits are precisely the same as those belonging to St. Theresa's stages of union. Both are capable of being divided into three groups, purification and the increase of the virtues, peace and joy, and selflessness, liberty, and action. With this analysis in mind we can better appreciate an extraordinarily synthetic account which St. Theresa gives of all the fruits appearing through the unions. She describes them all with her remarkable power to capture the actual living moment. In it the things that we now know as the outcome of the two experiences are mentioned, each in turn, and with such truth that psychologically it is the ariyan's experience just as much as St. Theresa's own. St. Theresa basis it upon the simi-

(1) Majjhima, sutta 26; trans. Warren, p. 331.

(2) Psychology of the Saints, III., p. 87, etc.

litude of the chrysalis which at last becomes the butterfly.

“As soon as in this prayer the worm becomes sufficiently dead to the world, it comes forth a white butterfly. O wonderful greatness of God ! How changed does the soul come forth by having been only for a short time immersed in the greatness of God and united closely to Him ! I tell you the truth : she now does not know herself, for you must remember that there is the same difference here as there is between an ugly worm and a beautiful butterfly. The soul does not know how she could merit so great a favour or whence it could come. She is so desirous of praising God that she would be willing to annihilate herself and endure a thousand deaths for His sake... O, how strange it is to behold afterwards the restlessness of this butterfly, though in all its life it was never more at ease nor more calm. This is an occasion of praising our Lord that it knows not where to rest nor to settle; and having before enjoyed such repose it is disgusted with all that it sees on earth, especially when God often allows it to drink of this wine : it gains more and more almost every time; Now it no longer esteems the works which it used to do when a worm, viz, forming its cell little by little. Its wings have now grown. How, then, as it is able to fly, can it take pleasure in creeping along ? All it can do for God seems little in proportion to its desires. It does not wonder much at what the saints did and suffered, because it understands by experience how our Lord exists and transforms a soul in such a way that she does not seem the same nor to be of the same shape, because the weakness which she seemed to have before in doing penance she perceives is now no more, but has become something strong. The ties which bound her to her friends, relations, or estate (which when she was desirous of leaving, neither acts nor resolutions were sufficient to remove), are now entirely broken ” (1).

(1) Interior Castle, V. mansion, II.

In this manner the comparison between the two experiences has been brought from the matter of forms and similitudes to that of substance, that is to say the qualities that exist in each of them. In dealing then with qualities a true and remarkable similarity has been proved on all the principal points. The two experiences therefore have the same substance, and the ariyan's experience can be called, to return to Pere Poulain's words " an impression or spiritual sensation " in all the rich sense which they have when applied to St. Theresa's experience.

Conclusion.

The present section of the study has led to some clear findings. The whole task here has been to understand the nature of the knowledge which is mystical experience with a view to understaking comparison between St. Theresa and the ariyan in this matter. That is to say, it has tried to carry the comparison into the second feature of St. Theresa's mystical experience, according to which the knowledge is a spiritual sensation or impression. Now, such words as the above, although used by the mystics themselves, do not however mean anything precise. And precision is the first necessity for a comparison. Sensation and impression, as they stand by themselves, can mean a number of things, none of which are certain enough to justify the exclusion of the rest. So the only way to get the required understanding is to take the knowledge that is called by these names and to analyse it in order to be aware of all the senses in which it can be said to be a sensation or an impression. A comparison can then be made as regards each sense. It is this I have tried to do here. The result may be given in two parts.

a) As regards names and forms, a remarkable similarity exists between St. Theresa and the ariyan in the way they have expressed themselves in the matter. They both have

had a certain experience during some moments of exaltation; in both cases it has meant a certain knowledge of a kind ont possessed before ; and again in both cases, this new knowledge is described by means of similitudes based upon the sense perceptions, and therefore the most certain possible in language for describing a form and method of knowing which is sure, direct, and the result of personal experience. So in connection with the first meaning of the statement that St. Theresa's mystical knowledge is an impression it is found that the ariyan by his language bears witness to a similar conviction.

b) As regards the substance, for establishing a more fundamental similarity, St. Theresa's mystical knowledge is analysed so as to get to parts deeper than outward descriptions. Four qualities are noticed, namely, supanormality, certitude, finality, and fruitfulness. In this also the ariyan's experience agrees with St. Theresa's; it too has the same four qualities.

The conclusion from the above two findings is plain enough. The ariyan's experience is of the same nature as that of St. Theresa, that is to say, it is of the nature of a spiritual sensation, " an impression, " in the sense that the analysis has given it.

CHAPTER VI

*Third feature of mystical experience—the object
of the knowledge is God.*

1.—The fact of the knowledge which is a feeling has been made clear; and then the nature of that felt knowledge which mystics generally describe as a spiritual sensation or impression. The next point that awaits explanation is the very delicate one of the object around which the new knowledge has built itself. For the knowledge, proved to be the experience itself, must be related to an object upon the quality of which its value will wholly depend. This is evident. The object is called an ultimate because it is claimed to be the highest and most final to the individual into whose experience it enters. It does not matter what other persons think of his ultimate, but to the mystic it must be true, it must penetrate to the root of every matter, and it must be continually present with him during the experience. Only by accepting this theory can we understand the spirit of the things of which mystics speak so whole-mindedly, and especially their ecstasies which to all appearances are so full of revelation, of happiness, of life's quest all at once held in possession. The fruit-bearing that immediately follows is a witness to the fact.

But the necessity of an ultimate in mystical experience must at present be taken for granted. Such a question, and also those which concern the objective reality of the ultimate and similar matters are not to be raised here.

I must accept the ultimate as it is found in St. Theresa and the ariyan, and see by means of analysis all that is really contains as substance. What lies before us is therefore the examining of facts, to take, for example, the ultimate as it was known by St. Theresa in her unions, to understand it not only as it has been described by her but also as it was felt and known at the time of those unions, and to state the result wholly by itself, without any mere theological language. It is only in this manner that we could understand the real truth behind the saint's mystical experience; and such an understanding is necessary in order to establish a basis of comparison on this point between that experience and the ariyan's, since these differ so much in their doctrines.

2.—Now, St. Theresa says in all her accounts that the object which holds the chief place in her unions is God, meaning by the word the orthodox christian trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Thus after her experience of the highest union which she calls the seventh mansion she had the conviction of having seen the holy trinity, the three in "One only God," dwelling in the inmost part of her. Now our duty is to know whether this language by means of which, after her unions are over, she describes her experiences during those unions, records the whole truth, just as it exists, of the object which really entered into them. In other words, is the triune God the last objective fact existing irreducibly as such, apart from the beliefs already present in St. Theresa's mind at the beginning of her unions? or is it simply a concept clothing the real Fact and used for conveying it into the ordinary human consciousness because that Fact cannot be conveyed in any other manner, or by any other means save concepts and symbols? An accurate answer to this is extremely important if the truth is to be disentangled from the mere forms of speech in which it is contained. What has just been said is certainly not an exaggeration, for it is proved

by the study of the contradictory imagery employed by christian mystics themselves in describing this last Reality with which they have come in contact.

Some speak plainly of a personal God, a lover of the soul seeking and finding at last the beloved. Others whose ordinary concepts are more metaphysical see only a great emptiness, an abyss, " the dim silence in which lovers lose themselves " (1). For yet another class of seekers after pure peace this reality is preeminently a life's fulfilment, a beatitude—" in it all things are fulfilled and all things made new " (2). All these different accounts exist in christianity itself, dividing in this way its most authentic mystics among themselves. And yet one knows that fundamentally they are not different, for they all try to describe a similar experience the sense of which in each case is a contact with one and the same ultimate which is God. The contradictions must consequently be the work of the accounts given and can only be explained in the following way, that those accounts are a personal interpretation of the object known during the ecstasies, and that the nature of the interpretation depends chiefly on the temperament and the particular conceptions of the mystic. It follows that the ultimate which is beyond all finite formulating will be described differently by different temperaments; for instance, the mystic whose thoughts incline towards metaphysics will render his experiences in metaphysical language, and will speak of the cloud of unknowing and its darkness; and the emotional concretely-thinking mystic will tell of the same thing in the language of the emotions, describing in beautiful words an experience of love, betrothal, and spiritual marriage. Therefore, as a starting point, here is the principle that all language is a process of symbolisation according to the normal inclinations of the

(1) Ruysbroeck, *L'Ornement des noces spirituelles*, bk. III., ch. VI.

(2) Ruysbroeck, *De Contemplatione* (Hello, p. 144).

mind which uses it, and so its symbols should never be confused with the fact that they try to express but only succeed in symbolising. This, true of language in all cases, becomes particularly so when it undertakes to express something that is unrelated to its habitual uses. This is a very important truth to remember in all such cases. The limitations of human language and ideas must be clearly recognised from the start, and as fully as possible. " It is not enough to say that the language which is adapted to the ordinary operations of the human mind is necessarily insufficient; the ideas themselves, those by means of which we understand everything, because they are the basis of our judgments, are no longer applicable to the intuitions of ecstasy which are of an infinitely higher order " (1). These are very discerning words written by a catholic authority. Their merit is not only that they have understood the matter rightly; it also consists in the fact that they suggest, evidently with the approval of the catholic church, the need of understanding the mystic's difficulty when he has to use our language for explaining and of making allowance for it in all circumstances. That is to say, the mystic's meaning is not finally found in his concepts and symbolic words. There is an intuition which goes very much further, quite away from words and concepts, and it is there that the truth of the ultimate exists in its purity. The quotation given above therefore shows that the catholic church admits this truth.

It will now be possible to study the ultimate of St. Theresa's experience in the proper way. For we know by this time that when, for instance, the saint writes about the holy trinity as seen in her unions she is simply giving us her reconstruction at the time of writing of what took place in clearly abnormal conditions. More than that, the reconstruction is done with a means which is admittedly

(1) Fr. de Bonnoit, *Le Miracle et ses contrefaçons*, Pl. 2, ch. VII., 2.

incapable of doing it accurately. A third point is that the reconstruction is done to satisfy, whether unconsciously or otherwise, the need of St. Theresa's religious consciousness to bring the experience to the level of its contents. These thoughts will indicate how extremely complicated the whole question is. But by saying this it is not meant that St. Theresa's accounts will always be wrong. No, I wish only to say that they need not be verbally and ultimately right. For such a kind of rightness which is ultimate, as much as it is possible to be known by us, the whole progress of the concept of God in St. Theresa's unions must be examined, in order to discover what part of it is merely the orthodox or temperamental rendering of the fact. The material of this will have to include the complete field of the saint's life and writings, and not just the exegetical parts.

3.—Let us start from the very beginning of the unions. The first fact is that throughout all the four unions, from the prayer of quiet to spiritual marriage, there is said to be "the enjoyment of the presence of God" (1). All experience is related to this experience, for St. Theresa is convinced that it remains with her in those times in some inexplicable but very real way. This is the general fact to remember about God as the object of her mystical experience.

The presence of God which St. Theresa enjoys is not static in the sense of being fixed in its form and power of manifestation. It goes through quite a number of changes, each marking a development; the progress begins almost palpably, either as the sense-feeling of somebody being present close by or as a sensible image endowed with human acts and appearance; at the end there is only a bare fact. It is this development in the experience of the presence of God which we must now follow. The whole

(1) Interior Castle, IV. mansion, ii., 2.

evolution of the mystic's God, from concept to fact, will thus be explained. The different stages will be given in their probable order.

(1) First of all St. Theresa says that in the two earlier unions, that is the prayer of quiet and full union, there is a simple, deep, and general consciousness without, as a rule, anything being seen. God is felt to be very near and this thought pervades the soul more or less intensely, but in no way can it be called a vision. This is the first stage in the evolution of God as the mystical ultimate.

(2) The next development takes place at the time of the third and fourth unions, namely ecstasy and spiritual marriage. God's presence now becomes a vision, and it is either seen sensibly, when it is called imaginery, or it creates an undoubted impression of a vision, in which case it is called intellectual. The two terms have already been explained.

According to St. Theresa, who holds the view in opposition to the experience of some other catholic mystics, visions are either the result of ecstasy or directly lead to it. As to their content these visions, when they concern the supreme object always refer to the triune God of christianity. Sometimes it is the separate persons of the trinity, sometimes it is the whole. Of the persons themselves she saw Jesus Christ most often, especially in the first period; thus her first vision was of Christ who stood on her right hand side and even walked with her for some time (1). In almost all these visions Christ appears in his traditional human form, and most frequently of all in the glorified body he is represented as having assumed after his resurrection (2). And always he is beautiful, in keeping with the church's idea of what is fitting and proper in such cases. "If I were to spend many years," she says in one

(1) *Life*, XXVI., 6; XXVII., 3.

(2) *Life*, XXIX., 4; also XXVIII.

account, " in devising how to picture to myself anything so beautiful, I should never be able, nor even know how to do it; for it is beyond the reach of any possible imagination here below; the whiteness and brilliancy alone are inconceivable " (1). So this is the Christ of St. Theresa's visions; he appears almost always in the human body, but crowned with beauty and glory. She also saw the other persons of the trinity, God the Father, who would speak to her at times, and the Holy Spirit, who never spoke (2). Next there were visions of the holy trinity collectively, the great mystery of the three in One. Often the vision is accompanied by words (3). With St. Theresa the latter are chiefly interior, like the visions themselves; the memory retains the words for a very long time; sometimes they are never forgotten.

Coming to their quality, the visions are clear and indisputable. In the case of the imaginary kind she would remember vividly even the details. For instance, on the first occasion she saw her Lord's hands; a few days afterwards it was his face, and still later it was his full self. The intellectual visions also, although different for the reason that God is then seen without any likeness of Him, are very clear and could not be doubted. According to St. Theresa it is clearer than the sun (4).

There is one last fact concerning the visioned presence of God which may prove helpful. It is that God seen in this manner is in every act and feature perfectly in keeping with the representations on the subject by the catholic church. Thus if we take the vision of Christ as an instance it is found to agree remarkably with all that catholic tradition has described and painted, or at least encouraged by its belief in such things. This is true without an exception. It is always the traditional Christ, young, pictu-

(1) Life, XXVIII., 3, 7; cf. B. Angela of Foligno, *Visions and Instructions*, p. 229.

(2) *Relations*, VIII., 20, 21; also Life, XXVIII.

(3) Life, XXV., XXVII.

(4) *Interior Castle*, VI. mansion, 4.

resque, and delicate-featured, whom she sees, either in life or in death. St. Theresa herself admits the guidance of tradition and faith in all these matters. In one instance to prove that a certain vision of her glorified Lord was true she says, "No one can have any doubt that it is our Lord Himself especially after communion : we know that He is then present, *for faith says so* " (1). There are even some cases when it was a painting which was responsible. So, "on one of the feasts of St. Paul, while I was at Mass, there stood before me the most sacred Humanity as painters represent Him after the resurrection" (2). When it differed from sacred paintings the difference was wholly due to the greater perfection of the vision which naturally was touched by a light that objectivity could not possess. In matters of dogma, such as the holy trinity, St. Theresa is so faithful to church teaching that it has led Pere Poulain to argue remarkably that "even if we do not know from the Church how many Persons there are in God, and how they proceed one from the other, we should come to know it, and by way of experience, through seeing it" (3). Apart from its curious logic the statement is of great analytical value, for it concedes the resemblance between what the mystic believes and what he sees, a fact which is most difficult to understand orthodoxly. I shall leave it at that until the time for interpretation comes. The resemblance is without doubt an important point of psychology, and can explain many things. These voices and visions which have been described are, according to the present arrangement, the second stage in the evolution of the mystic's God.

(3) In the intellectual visions, even while St. Theresa is aware of God's person as a presence speaking and walking

(1) Life, II., 12; cf. Interior Castle, VII. mansion, I.

(2) Life, XXVIII., 4; cf. II.

(3) Des Graces d'Oraison, p. 249.

in continual intercourse with her there takes place another development. The object which is seen has become more sublime and less definable by means of human words and imagery (1). The beginning of this upward flight is the shifting of the attention from forms and persons to the essential attributes, a change which is noticeable in the higher instances. To take a case, in an intellectual vision, she sees an attribute made clear, namely, "how all things are beheld in God, and how He contains them within Himself" (2). Again, speaking of the three graces of rapture she says that one of them is "a perception of the greatness of God which becomes clear to us as we witness more of it" (3). In this manner St. Theresa sees Divinity abstractly, as she so well describes, making the fact evident even in the consequences that the vision has on her. Instead of resting with human figures and white shining hands and the Holy Spirit hovering as a dove she rises by the new act to the more real things of God and her attention then fixes itself increasingly on deeper and therefore less palpable aspects, on such pure attributes as greatness, omnipresence, power, etc. God is no longer a figure according to the traditional notions of christianity, nor is He any other manner of pictorial representation, but becomes a term with a universal meaning, and standing only for powers and attributes. St. Theresa's experience in this matter is not singular to her; it only illustrates a truth which is common to all mystical experience. Many other catholic mystics, whose experience has been deep, have also written to the same effect (4). The development in the mystical idea of God appears as a victory of the spirit over the form; for the first time the two things,

(1) Interior Castle, IV. mansion, IV., 5, 6.

(2) Interior Castle, VI. mansion, X., 2.

(3) Interior Castle, V., 12, 13.

(4) Cf. John of the Cross, Ascent of Mt. Carmel, bk. II., ch. XXVI., p. 176; B. Angela, Visions and Instructions, ch. XXIV., p. 76-77.

namely the concept and the fact, are seen to be separate, and therefore not to be confused in our judgments. This vision of pure attributes is the third stage in the evolution we are studying.

(4) In the preceding stage it will have been noticed that the divine attributes are perceived distinctly, each separate from the other, or at least recognizable as a separate quality. Sometimes it is God's greatness, and then His goodness, power, and so on, always a clear whole impression of each, however swiftly one may follow another or even appear at the same time. Now, this is not the highest mystic vision of God (1). A time soon comes when there are no longer any well-defined attributes objectively seen, but a fusion of all of them, " the complete God-head or the ground of the God-head " as a famous mystical saying goes, an obscurity beyond clear sight or hearing or any objectification, and only known as an inner presence creating a knowledge in which the knower and the known seem to be mysteriously one. And even the revelation is an obscurity, " mysterious and hidden, " the only palpable thing being union with God (2). More than this, as has been said, is an obscurity, for " the spirit being lodged in this centre of our soul is so difficult to express and even to believe. " But the obscurity is in itself a higher thing than any beholding of the clear attributes as so many mystics have declared. This dark vision of God is a more perfect realisation by the very fact of leaving behind every reflective act concerning Him, by no more seeing nor hearing precisely nor in any other way identifying Him, but only possessing Him, in an interior union, in the midst of " a deep yet dazzling darkness. " It is at this point, when the soul is lost in God who is a fusion of all attributes that the

(1) Ven. Marina de Escobar, Vie, vol. I., bk. III., ch. I.

(2) Interior Castle, VII. mansion, II., 3.

things said by mystics concerning "the divine darkness" (1) become true ; God has now left behind not only His precise shape but even all precision of attribute, including objectivity, and He is known only " within the soul, in the inmost part, as it were in a deep abyss. " " All that I can say " again writes St. Theresa about the state, " in that the soul feels itself close to God, and there remains in it a certitude that does not allow it to doubt this. "

One thing must yet be remembered in writing about this aspect of St. Theresa's inner realisation of God. It is that for her the indescribable presence did not assimilate the whole idea of God after, as she has said above, the time of actual rapture. Then, although God was realised in her as a presence which overwhelms all reflection, there was all the time outside of her the personal objective describable God in agreement with catholic teaching.

But it is with the confused inner God that we are here dealing. St. Theresa records it as a fact, as the only fact known to her at certain times associated with rapture, although at other times she immediately sets up the clear outer God, not in place of, but to assure herself of the rightness of her inner God which, when alone seems to confound the mind. Thus at this stage and at this moment of inner realisation we find that the saint has definitely left behind the voices and visions of things pertaining to ordinary christianity, and even the clear attributes of an outer God, and vision has become confused because the object is nearer and therefore the light stronger; and consequently she " draws nearer unto God by not understanding than by understanding. " God is still a vivid reality, but He is within the soul and is indescribably dark. It is, we can notice, the old way of Dionysius the areopagite who said, " If anyone, when he has seen God, understands what he

(1) Dionysius, *Mystical Theology*, bk. I., I.

has seen, it is never God he has seen, but *some one of those things of His which exist and are known* " (1).

So far what has become evident is the idea of God who is a darkness to the vision and who only exists interiorly. In now coming to explain this it is well to remember that at the present stage the mind lays hold of the ultimate most actually although what it sees is dark. The mind still continues to see by " a most high power of beholding God ineffably as a great darkness. " Now this singular nature of the vision which seems to contradict itself so much, being, as Bossuet said, a clear seeing that it sees nothing (2), is due to the circumstances which have arisen at the time. For although the vision is real and even extraordinary it yet belongs to the finite mind, and therefore it is itself finite ; that is to say, the mind is forced to be aware finitely of the infinite it sees. In this way the singularity arises of a process of knowing which has passed beyond concepts and which yet cannot get free of its own finiteness. For it, then, the old words and formulae are no longer true; yet, being itself a conditioned activity, it cannot reach the truth which is not only without words but also without conditions of any sort. As a result following from this the ultimate is known as it is when free from concepts, but still under the conditions of a determining mind; it has become an object too great for time and yet too small for eternity. So one can only describe the fact in the manner that belongs to neither, and which is quite a contradiction when looked at independently from those two points, namely a bright and dazzling darkness in which " the soul seeth nought, and yet seeth all things because it beholdeth God darkly. " However, this is truly the highest vision and understanding of the ultimate that is possible to the mind acting in a conditioned world since it takes place on the

(1) *Mystical Theology*, bk. I., I.

(2) Letter 98, to Sœur Cornnow, quoted in *Des Graces d'Oraison*, p. 119.

highest levels under those conditions, where only thought exists and words and symbols have passed away.

To put it as simply as possible, the conclusion may be given in two parts—firstly, concerning the knower it is the mind, in the sense, of course, of the whole collected consciousness all of which “ feels and tastes the strange wisdom; ” here the mind is working at the highest level in finiteness, “ having soared above herself in the superior parts, ” (1) and where it no longer conceives but is only a perceiving (2). Secondly, as regards what is known, it is the ultimate existing at that height above concepts, by which is meant existing without attributes such as objectivity, as an object known only to exist within, and, being incomprehensible to finite thinking, is said to be dark. Such is the fact on analysis. By its taking place God passes from the clear objectivity of concept and outline to become a confused consciousness within the mystic himself. The mystic then tastes a sweetness and goes on loving, and yet he “ has no particular knowledge or perception of what he loves ” (3). The change indicated above is the fourth stage in the evolution of the mystic’s God.

(5) Even the inner confused God known only as a darkness is not the highest point of evolution as it takes place in St. Theresa’s mystical experience. The darkness, as we know, is how the saint perceives the ultimate at the highest finite level, where thought is pure and complete but without words. Next there comes a moment, like a lightning flash, when all finiteness is scaled, in thought as well as in word, and infinity reached where the ultimate is realised as it truly exists. Then the mystic no longer speaks even of a darkness however indescribable, for not

(1) Interior Castle, VI. mansion, V.

(2) This part of mystical experience when all is a wordless seeing is cited by M. Ribot to prove the theory of “ Pensées sans images. ” Cf. Delacroix, *La Religion et la Foi*, p. 264.

(3) Ascent of Mt. Carmel, bk. II., ch. XIV.

only have concepts failed but also thought which sees and knows. The darkness was itself a form of sight or knowledge, a perceiving without conceiving, for the mystic clearly declares that God was beheld although darkly. There were two discernable things, God and an act of seeing or knowing. But in the new state the mystic "neither sees nor knows, and is truly in that which surpasseth all truth and knowledge" (1).

Let us see now what St. Theresa says of this last stage. To do so we must take up her ecstatic union, for it is during that time, as many mystics explain, that the soul has its most perfect and immediate realisation of God. "Ecstasy holds in one infinite moment all which is, so to speak, lived above the level of life" (2). Since it is God realised in that infinite moment that we are attempting to study ecstasy must be the subject of analysis now. St. Theresa's ecstasy shall have to be dealt with very fully in order that every happening which is important may become clear.

The account that St. Theresa gives of it as follows—"Her soul feels itself with a very keen and sweet pleasure almost to swoon away completely. She falls into a kind of fainting condition which gradually stops the respiration and all the forces. She cannot, without very painful effort, make even the slightest movement of the hands. The eyes close themselves without her trying to do so, and if she held them open, she would see practically nothing... Thus her senses are of no use to her. She finds them instead an obstacle which prevents her from enjoying fully her happiness... All exterior forces abandon her" (3). Such is St. Theresa's condition during ecstasy showing, in

(1) *Mystical Theology*, bk. I., I.; cf. Ruysbroeck, *L'Ornement des noces spirituelles*, bk. III., ch. VI.

(2) *Les Grands Mystiques Chrétiens*, p. 71.

(3) *Life*, IV.

the language of psychology, the abolition of almost all sensory and motor activity.

Next, let us examine more particularly the condition of the mental powers during ecstasy and ravishment. "Here all the powers are tied and totally suspended so that one perceives no more their action even as I have explained..." St. Theresa makes a qualification in another place—"This is not like unconsciousness in which one is deprived of all knowledge, both exterior and interior" (1). Yet in ravishment she has lost all knowledge although only for a very short time (2). The suspension of the powers does not make them completely inactive. St. Theresa repeatedly says that these powers are all time busy, only they are concentrated on a special act which will be explained later. The whole is consequently a case of a localised activity; yet this very statement shows that the suspension has made all acts besides the special one impossible. St. Theresa's own words will explain the meaning better. Referring to a new sense of fulfilment that arises in ecstasy she writes, "One is only aware of possessing *without knowing what he possesses*" (3). Then in another place—"Let us come now to the intimate sentiments of the soul in this state. If anyone can tell them to me let him do so. As for myself, I consider it *impossible to know them, more still to speak of them*" (4). Further on there is a fuller statement—"If the understanding understands it is ignorant how it does so; at least, *it is impossible to say what it understands*, for it seizes nothing of what it understands. In my case, I do not believe it understands, because, once again, it is a matter which cannot be understood. For my part I avow that *I am utterly lost...* I do not wish to say that one seizes and

(1) Interior Castle, VI. mansion, IV.

(2) Life, VVIII.

(3) Life, XVIII.

(4) Life, XVIII.

understands when the ravishment is at the highest point—I call the highest point that where the powers are suspended in consequence of their close union with God—because then, in my opinion, one sees not, hears not, feels not... As I have said for the prayer of union, this total transformation of the soul in God lasts only for a short while; but as long as it lasts, *no faculty of the soul is aware of it and knows not what is passing there*. It is not proper, without doubt, that we have knowledge of it in our earthly life, at least it does not please God to give it to us. Perhaps we are not capable of receiving it. I speak from what I have experienced " (1).

It is now possible with the help of the above accounts to say approximately what St. Theresa meant by the suspension of the powers. Putting together the substance of those accounts one understands that there is a certain point in ecstasy which lasts only for a very short while and which yet is there, sharp and real, as a moment of climax. When the mystic reaches it his faculties, both sensory and mental, are suspended in all the usual sense and he feels himself utterly lost. Thus the memory and the understanding are held as in a deep sleep, or completely lost as St. John of the Cross says. Then the mystic " can think of nothing, " understand nothing, but only possess without knowing what it is he possesses. All life is felt, at this fleeting moment of ecstasy, only as an infinite well-being, fruition which is a tasting of all fruits. " There is no sense of anything, only fruition, " as St. Theresa puts it conclusively. In all other respects, such as their usual separate employment, the faculties of both body and mind have failed, that is to say, those faculties are completely gathered up in one simple ineffable act of inner realisation. The mystic has *become* what he has so far tasted and known by seeing or symbolising. Here therefore is the end of thought itself which is

(1) *Life*, XVIII., XX.

a wordless seeing and the last and highest level of finite consciousness. Thought too has followed the way of speech and symbol, and has failed in its separate functioning. For this reason the condition is declared to be above all truth and knowledge. At this point the mystic's experience has left all finiteness behind, having gone one does not know where; only one can see the "fruits" of well-being which are numberless. In her explanations, which often occur, as distinct from the facts, St. Theresa suggests a thought approaching what has been just said, namely, that the faculties are perhaps suspended because knowledge which has come during infinite moments cannot be shared by anything finite; or it might even be that if the ultimate were known at the time of its most secret possession by the soul it might prove too much and be fatal, for truly no man can see God and live (1). Union and every other mystical act or consciousness is now known only as a supreme blessedness. This blessedness, visible as the multiplying of all the spiritual fruits, is what remains finally in the consciousness, being the last perfect reward, at the height of ecstasy. "In this fourth state there is no sense of anything, only fruition or perfect well-being. The person only sees that he possesses this well-being which contains whatever is good, and he does not understand it in any other way. All the senses are absorbed in this fruition which is well-being, *so that not one of them is able to consider anything else*, whether outward or inward" (2). Thus, at last, the mystical consciousness of the presence of God as found in St. Theresa's unions becomes a pure fruit-bearing, a subjectivity because it is "life and blessedness in which all things are fulfilled and all things made new" (3). Every other matter in the way of theory or theology or any

(1) Interior Castle, VI. mansion, IV., I.

(2) Life, XVIII, 2.

(3) Ruysbroeck, De Contemplation (Hello, p. 144).

form of knowledge has here disappeared. The state may be considered as the most final in the evolution of the mystic's God since it occurs at the height of ecstasy when "man's spirit is caught up to its most immediate vision of the divine" (1). St. Theresa of course explains it quite differently when writing about them afterwards, but, as I have tried to show earlier, those explanations are another matter and do not concern the problem of the actual experience. For a proper understanding there is always a need to keep apart the fact and the reason or explanation. St. Theresa herself instinctively makes the distinction; for she says that all she claims to know came to her after the actual experience is over. There is an important statement to this effect. In it she says, "When she returns to herself it is impossible for her not to believe that she has been in God and that God also has been in her... But you will ask, how has she seen and understood that she has been in God, since during that state she can neither see nor understand. *I reply that she does not see it then, but she sees it clearly afterwards, when she has returned to herself, and that not by a vision but by a certitude which remains with her, so strong that it is God alone who can give it*" (2). The whole matter is therefore explained; at the actual moment St. Theresa neither sees nor understands any form of relationship into which such a factor as God has entered, namely that she has been in God and God with her; after the moment has passed away a certitude arises as a result of the experience and the mind immediately uses it to reconstruct what has happened. And then, as said before, the old logical forms return, the old gods are reestablished, and the memories of things seen and understood quickly fill the empty places in the finite consciousness. The truth then is, at the highest moment of realisation the mystic, according

(1) Underhill, *Mysticism*, p. 428.

(2) *Interior Castle*, V. mansion, 1.; cf. VI. mansion, IV., 6.

to St. Theresa, can know the ultimate only as an ecstasy of experience, a life's blessedness, something which is wholly a state of being. Beyond this there is nothing that can be said or even thought of.

Having now come to the above conclusion from the direct facts it will be very useful to know the best psychological explanation of the matter that has been achieved so far. "Contemplation" says M. Delacroix at the end of his study of St. Theresa and some other christian mystics, "commences a manner of being and of knowledge. These two, besides, tend finally to merge into one and the same thing; the mystic has increasingly the impression of being what he knows and of knowing what he is. But at this stage all the notions of christianity disappear, for they are expressly a part of the christian system. Ordinary prayer lifts the person towards God as He is represented by the church, and establishes him there as a living soul before its God, in some definite relations. Contemplation, while suppressing these relations, leaves in the soul nothing more than the confused state that has already been described, but which, for the mystic, contains eminently all the distinctions of christianity. It seems that there is in the mystic states an aversion to everything that is formulated, an aspiration for the infinite or the indefinite which leaves behind all dogmas and all religious acts. Christian mysticism does not escape this rule..." Then again a little later—"According to St. Theresa the humanity of Jesus Christ appears from the first union; it persists to the end, remaining as a guarantee of orthodoxy in the higher stages; it is supported by this usefulness. More or less the vision follows the different stages even as far as the threshold of the most obscure darkness. But there in that darkness it is lost although perhaps it does not disappear altogether. But after ecstasy or union is over it is again the image of the christian God that appears before anything else and which the mystic at once uses to explain his ecstasy. From then onwards the mystic can sink himself

in the darkness and abyss, his experiences can become more and more confused and formless ; but all this confusion, this shadow of the great silence, as soon as the suspension of ecstasy is over, takes once more the figure of the christian God " (1). The greater part of the above statement agrees with what has been found in this study concerning the pure subjectivity of St. Theresa's ultimate during ecstasy. It gives the psychological explanation for it very subtly and well while at the same keeping closely to the facts. Its only shortcoming is that the conclusion is not followed to the actual end as the facts require. It leads rightly to the disappearing of all ordinary concepts in a darkness, what M. Delacroix calls the confused God. But here it stops abruptly, although one feels that there are facts which still remain unexplained. Is there then nothing beyond a mere confusion, a darkness ? According to our analysis there is an important stage which follows, or rather the period of confusion can be divided into two parts—(1) The period when God is a darkness from excess of light, from seeing Him too closely and understanding Him too deeply, and therefore the mystic's knowledge is confused, " because this great supernatural light masters the natural power of reason and takes away its natural way of understanding " (2). In this condition and before this great light, speech fails and thought, which feels and tastes what it holds, is active but confused, hence seeing only a darkness. But all the time it knows God to be real, however dark. (2) The second period is when there are no terms, nor even thought, and consequently no mention of light or darkness; the mystic is no longer conscious of God, confused or otherwise, for every finite act has passed away. " She does not see God then. " The one clear fact at the time is a climax, an infinite moment free from

(1) *Les Grands Mystiques Chrétiens*, p. 370-372.

(2) *John of the Cross, Dark Night of the Soul*, p. 80.

finiteness, and which can appear on the accessible levels only in its results of a supreme well-being or blessedness. This is a point to remember, that the absence of knowledge is not due to any confusion as in the case of the first. It is not a vision of something as through a glass darkly, but a complete unawareness, for the subject is totally absorbed beyond all thinking, whether clear or confused. " There is no sense of anything only fruition. "

The above distinction is very important, for by its means we arrive at the utmost logical conclusion of something possessed, not only above names and concepts, and darkness, and the utmost negativity, but which escapes thought itself because that too is finite and tangible only in its subjective manifestation. It must certainly be admitted that the average christian mystic hardly ever passes beyond the first of these two divisions, namely where there is no concept but still the thought of God exists, although utterly confused. Yet the second exists. M. Delacroix speaks somewhat admittingly of this last stage beyond even the confused God when he says that " there is in the beatitude of ecstasy a moment when the person does not feel any more that he lives. During this exaltation there opens out an abyss in which everything disappears. The darkness, the many things of wonder, are in a sense *a rupture of the mental synthesis, leading to the stoppage of thought* " (1). So thought, that last level of finite consciousness, is found to stop, and yet even M. Delacroix, who gives it purely as a psychological finding, declares that it is not total unconsciousness. St. Theresa herself, it has been shown, has no doubt whatever about a certain most actual experience which is in no way unconsciousness. Nor is it consciousness of God in any form, either as a term or a thought. At this stage, in giving the facts, the saint devotes herself wholemindedly to her inner state and its blessedness. That is all she has to tell.

(1) La Religion et la Foi, p. 258.

Concerning the rest, namely the infinite part of the experience, she confesses her inability even to mention or think of it. By its very nature it must be so to the finite mind. It can only be an experience whose fruits are visible in a new life. Only we know that it is there just as certainly as we know the presence of the tree from its fruits. So St. Theresa, we see, has no doubt whatever about the experience, although she can only describe its fruits —“ When God suspends them (the faculties)—He busies them without their knowing how, or being able to understand it ” (1).

The report of blessedness rising from the depths of an infinite experience is therefore the last state in the evolution of the mystic's God. In this sense it is the mystical ultimate in its purest form or more properly, the mystic's whole realisation of the ultimate. As such it is the object to which, according to Pere Poulain's analysis, all mystical life must necessarily be related.

4.—The question of the ultimate in the ariyan experience is less difficult than in St. Theresa. There are not so many stages of development. The reason for this is the ariyan begins with few theoretical assumptions; in fact he holds at the beginning to nothing really theoretical, that is to say, nothing that is not based upon an experience, for instance such empirically true things as suffering, and lust, and pure living and thinking which are able to save. This fact does a great deal to make the ariyan's progress in ecstasy more consistent as far as the evolution of thought and concept is concerned. The ariyan begins with a desire to win an emancipation, and the state in which he finds himself at the height of ecstasy is precisely that. There are no violent changes such as a secret shifting of thoughts from symbol to subtler symbol and then to the bare idea, and then back again from idea to symbol and all the daily

(1) The Way of Perfection, ch. XXXI.

imagery of religion. Having believed from the beginning that the experience is valuable purely for itself and also that it interprets itself best and finds its own fit symbols, he just acts accordingly with the result that he hardly has to mince the experience to suit the given symbol. But let us proceed to the facts.

The jhanas must once again be the source of our material, for it is during these practices that the ariyan passes through all the stages of ecstasy. The practices as such have been explained. So here only those parts which relate to the question of the ultimate need be taken up again. In explaining the ultimate in buddhism I showed that it is the inner state of realisation known as arahantship or Nibbana. All buddhist search has been for this great prize, from the Buddha to the large number of arahants whose songs of victory exist as a canonical collection. Although definable to the consciousness only as a negation or not even that, and known just in the present results of an emancipation it is nevertheless a most actual state for the arahant, his highest experience which the mere fact that it is unthinkable is not able to refute successfully. By taking the Buddha's instance we find that all through his early struggles, during which he was a disciple to two mystic masters, right to the day when he was so remarkably emancipated his chief desire was for this very realisation. He was even faithful to his mystical training up to the end, for he placed the realisation at the highest point of the mystical trances, even beyond the dizziest that past mystics had reached, which was the realm of neither perception nor yet non-perception. By doing so he finally made Nibbana the highest of the mystical trances, and it became known thereafter as the trance of cessation.

Again Nibbana, although beyond speech and thought as it actually exists, is yet known by the results which are an emancipation consisting of enlightenment, purity, and peace. Of these, enlightenment was found to be the chief

part and the beginning of all the other perfections ; and this enlightenment concerns essentially the great truth of becoming from which all other truths are derived. Now, when the ariyan sets up his ultimate of Nibbana at the time of contemplation it is precisely this true essence of it as known in consciousness, namely the truth of becoming, that occupies his thoughts. That truth may be called the centre of Nibbana-consciousness, all the while making a proper distinction between this consciousness and the true and infinite part of Nibbana which is hidden away from finite thinking. The result naturally is that the ariyan thinks chiefly of the truth of becoming during the jhanas. But for the whole progress of the ultimate as a concept in ariyan contemplation Buddhaghosa is the most complete authority and consequently his account of it will be helpful. He gives it as an actual case in point. " A priest who is desirous of entering on cessation will take his breakfast, will wash carefully his hands and his feet, and seat himself cross-legged on a well-strewn seat in some retired spot, with body erect and contemplative faculty active.

" He then enters the first trance, and rising from it, obtains insight into the transitoriness, misery, and lack of an ego of the constituents of being.

" There upon he enters the second trance, and rising from it obtains insight into the constituents of being in the same manner as before. There upon he enters the third trance... the fourth trance... the realm of the infinity of space... the realm of the infinity of consciousness, and rising from it obtains insight into the constituents of being in the same manner as before. He then enters the realm of nothingness.

" When he has thus entered the realm of nothingness, and risen from it and performed these preliminary duties, he enters the realm of neither perception nor yet non-perception, and having passed beyond one or two thoughts he stops thinking and reaches cessation...

“In regard to the questions, is the trance of cessation conditioned or unconditioned etc., it cannot be said either that it is conditioned or that it is unconditioned, either that it is worldly or that it is transcendent. And why not ? On account of the non-existence of any positive quality ” (1). And the final stage is also called “ Nibbana in this life, ” that is, the ultimate above concept and thought as it really is at the moment of realisation.

On examining the above account the stages of the evolution appear in their complete order. First of all, the ariyan insight is always in connection with the threefold truths of transitoriness, suffering, soullessness. Historically, this formula had come, at the time when Buddha-ghosa wrote, to displace the fourfold ariyan truths as the best application to life of the great buddhist law of becoming. So that when the threefold truths are mentioned, as in such an instance, it is essentially the law of becoming in its most important formula that is the subject of insight. This agrees exactly with the statement already made that during contemplation the concept before the ariyan is the law of becoming, that ariyan enlightenment is based upon an insight into this law, and that to realise its truth is the highest part of Nibbana-consciousness and the beginning of the other perfections.

There is a story very attractively told in connection with this ariyan attempt to penetrate the truth of becoming with the aid of the trances. It is useful to make clear that the ariyan is singlemindedly interested in this ultimate conceived intellectually as a law, and in nothing even faintly approaching that of the christian. The quest is not for an ultimate which is living and objective, such as a Brahma who is all-powerfull. The ariyan is, according to this story, not in the slightest degree interested in the kind of Brahma or even in his exceptional merits, since such a

(1) Visudhi-Magga, ch. XXIII., Warren, p. 384.

knowledge would not assist him to be fully enlightened on the truth of becoming, in this particular case the last condition of the four elements in the continual flow of becoming. This is told in a perfectly straightforward manner. The ariyan who is seeking for the new knowledge enters into a trance and thus " the way to the gods becomes revealed to him. " While he is in that state Brahma himself appears to him and declares his pre-eminence. But the ariyan's reply is quite to the point. " My friend " he says " I am not asking you, Are you Brahma, great Brahma, the supreme Brahma... But this, my friend, is what I ask you, where do these four elements, to wit the earthly element, the watery element, the fiery element, and the windy element, utterly cease ? " (1). At this Brahma at once reveals his inadequacy for such questions. The story goes on to say that it is the Buddha's teaching alone that can give the necessary answer. That, as we know, is on the doctrinal side, essentially the law of becoming.

It is therefore clear that the ariyan during his contemplations always sees Nibbana before him in its illuminative aspect of the penetration into the truth of becoming. This is the substance of his enlightenment. He is conscious only of this ultimate while he rejects all thoughts of one which is a personal being, such as Brahma, as something irrelevant, or even useless, according to what we have seen from the above story.

So much for the ariyan's conscious known ultimate. But what happens to it at the highest moment of realisation, that is, in the highest ecstasies ? Using once more the explanation given by Buddhaghosa we find that the three last trances, namely that of nothingness, of neither perception nor yet non-perception, and of cessation, witness a most important change. In the realm of nothingness the law of becoming is realised so completely that everything

(1) Digha, Kevadha Sutta, Warren, p. 308.

is reduced to a simple fact, that of perpetual change and flow and happening, without identity, or even a moment's permanence. In this complete light nothing is sure, for there is no being but only a becoming; and then with subtlest eastern logic, even the law of becoming itself is quickly attenuated. Hence the stage is called the realm of nothingness, the most thoroughly logical and the highest realisation of the truth of becoming. Then comes the realm of neither perception nor yet non-perception which is only a very short moment of transition to the last trance, lasting only for two flashes of thought.

The last is the trance of cessation. "Here all thought has ceased," which puts the matter finally. "All perception and sensation have ceased. It is also above speech, for it cannot be said either that it is conditioned or that it is unconditioned, either that it is worldly or that it is transcendent." There is then no term or concept for it just as there is no thought; no such activities can reach its substance on account of the "non-existence of any positive reality." The conclusion is that there is only something, a state, a fulfilment in which everything on the level of consciousness has ceased, or rather has been assimilated, including the final vision of the truth of becoming. But, again, to recall what has been said earlier, it is a most actual and "transcendental" state, the Buddha even saying that it is an infinitely happy one. The happiness or *piti* is now known to be a sense of complete intellectual satisfaction because of a victory and by reason of having achieved "the object felt as desirable." This object is the Nibbana which abides above the changes of becoming, on levels other than those of the finite consciousness. Having *piti*, the trance of cessation is not only possessed of an actual ineffable quality but it is also a state of spiritual well-being, victory; therefore is it called "Nibbana in this present life." This naming of it as Nibbana makes the state the very thing that the ariyan has from the begin-

ning believed to be the pure ultimate. All the time the truth of becoming has only been a way and a concept set up for that end. Now, in the highest trance, that concept no longer exists, for Nibbana has been realised. All that can be known about the matter at this point is that it is a subjective state of salvation which implies the most perfect results. It is the attainment of "transcendental consciousness which is above the three worlds." More than this cannot be said. As soon as the arahant returns from that Nibbana the truth of becoming once more lays hold of his mind; the truth is now completely understood and acts as an enlightenment which destroys all bonds. Here is therefore the final truth concerning the ariyan ultimate at the time of contemplation and ecstasy. The ariyan began with Nibbana as an intellectual quest, which means the understanding of the truth of becoming, for he is always certain that such an understanding will save him to the uttermost by converting Nibbana from a truth existing in the mind into a realisation, a life. Then, in the highest ecstasy, what he began with disappears just as everything else connected with the finite consciousness has done; at this infinite moment the great realisation takes place and the arahant enters Nibbana. This is followed by every good and profitable result.

It is now possible to compare on a proper basis the progress of the ultimate from concept to realisation as this takes place during the ecstasies of St. Theresa and the ariyan. Using a simple figure the general impression can be described as that of two lines starting from quite opposed centres of belief and continually approaching towards each other until they meet at the point of a similar essential experience which produces similar outward results. That gives the outline approximately. There remains now to explain its chief parts, which are the beginning, the line, and the point of contact.

a) Firstly, as regards the beginning, two things are noticeable, a similarity and a difference. The similarity consists in this, that in each case the point of beginning is nothing less than truth under its most ultimate form, according to the particular conceptions of the religion teaching it. So we find that for St. Theresa it is God, the precise and traditional Being of christianity; and for the ariyan it is Nibbana as meaning chiefly the truth of becoming. Each of these is a concept from which a whole religion begins while all the other teachings of that particular religion are only so many corollaries arising as a matter of course as soon as men took up that one truth and believed and speculated earnestly about it. This explains how behind every proper christian belief, act or feeling, there is always the constant hold upon a God who loves and acts in everything, who, in fact, upholds this world of relations in every necessary way because He loves and is therefore willing to save. So also all buddhist truths are what have sprung in course of much thinking from the truth of becoming just as buddhist salvation can be known to our consciousness essentially as a penetration into this truth. It is therefore clear that the two religions are each founded upon one great concept, that this concept is for each of them its highest understanding of the ultimate, and it is this concept that the ecstatic in each case uses as the starting-point for his experience. In other words both experiences begin with the ultimate as conceived by their respective religions. From this point of view then they are similar. Needless to say each conception is unlike the other in its contents, a fact which must be quite understood by this time. Hence arises the difference. Stating the latter shortly, the christian concept is a Person, with pre-eminently personal attributes, the greatest of which is love, and therefore the way of the christian mystic is chiefly that of love, as of one person for another. The ariyan, on the other hand, sees the

ultimate as a subjective state which, to the consciousness, is primarily an enlightenment as regards a law, and therefore to be realised not by love but by complete penetration, which is the way of the intellect. Such are the two principal concepts, showing how they agree and differ.

From the point of view of mysticism it is the similarity which is important. The two concepts, by claiming to hold the one universal truth itself, come to gain a universal application. This fact alone has proved very helpful to mysticism. Thus, what is perhaps the greatest result is that it has a remarkable power to unify. By means of the universal concept the mystic is able to collect all mystery into one supreme mystery and all endeavour into one supreme endeavour, bringing together in this way the two terms which make up all successful seeking, especially of the highest, a unified object and a unified endeavour. Next, it is not only unity that is created by this means but universality, the important fact that the object is verily an ultimate, the one truth made manifest by means of the highest known term. It takes the search and therefore the knowledge coming from it to the root of every matter where alone ultimate truth can be said to exist. Indeed, the search should do so if the knowledge is to be final. Surely this is a great advantage which exists simply because the mystic seeks for what is ultimate and hence true always and in everything. And when he claims to find this absolute truth, it is at the time when he also claims extraordinary powers to know absolutely by means of a perfect vision and even by becoming the object itself. Thus again two elements are brought together into the same moment, creating an opportunity for great results, namely, truth which is absolute and the power to know it which is likewise absolute. In other words all the illumination that the mystic receives by means of his disciplines and graces is kept continually busy around the one truth. For all these reasons the concept as it is found in the two experiences is really necessary.

b) Starting then from those two beginnings which have in common the ultimate as contained in the highest concept known to each, St. Theresa and the ariyan enter their respective contemplations. Then, as they progress in them, a change takes place in both their concepts, and this goes on continuously, the nature of the change depending on the levels attained. What has been said is particularly true in St. Theresa. Her orthodox christian God soon becomes a series of clear attributes, and then the same attributes more completely seen which makes them dimmer and harder to understand. This is the stage when God is still present in thought as well as in concept, and consequently still identifiable. In the next the confusion which has begun grows with the growing interior realisation until it leaves speech behind and remains as a thought, a pure perceiving without conceiving. God is now felt as an utter confusion, a darkness, without form or attribute and therefore void. Thought here represents the highest finite act of the mind in contact with infinity itself and assimilating it as best it could. The result as expressed in words is a darkness which is a seeing of all things. The final stage which then follows is the overthrow of even that last finite act, that is to say, of thought in the same manner as speech and symbol. What remains is an utter realisation. It is not possible to think or say more since thought and speech are finite, and now finiteness has been passed and there is only the infinite.

The ariyan's ultimate as a concept also goes through a change in succeeding stages. At first the continual vision of the truth of becoming only grows clearer, although more abstract, more in the world of unbodied ideas. This continues until in the realm of nothingness the one truth is perceived in its widest application to life, for there the illusion of reality utterly passes away since whatever is is only a becoming. So the formula holding the truth is no longer present but only the truth itself which

thought sees as existing in everything and changing whatever it appears in into a nothingness. Here then is again a case of thought that has passed beyond formula, in other words, the highest act of the finite mind when face to face with the infinite. All this is of course remarkably like the christian's perception above words when it sees so perfectly that it sees nothing. The ariyan likewise is sure that his perception at this stage is the highest and most perfect possible, and it is found to be in character precisely a seeing of nothing, for which reason the stage is called the realm of nothingness.

The two lines of progress have definitely approached each other the moment they thus enter into a common darkness. But there are two more stages in the ariyan progress. The first of these, the realm of neither perception nor yet non-perception, is the transition to the other. As its name declares this is a most curious moment, it being possible to call it with truth the psychological moment of the passing away of thought or perception. In the realm of nothingness the ariyan saw a truth which in its nature was empty. But now there is no perception nor yet is it non-perception as we have been told. Thought is seen manifestly disintegrating, and in the very act of a transition which removes its usual lines and qualities and everything else that gives it a name. For this reason the ariyan can only indicate it by using many negations which are meant to limit each other. Then, lastly, thought altogether ceases just as all other finite activity has done in the trance of cessation. The ultimate is here no longer a concept, a law fully grasped and applied to the extent of creating a nothingness, but a realisation, namely Nibbana, the indescribable, the mystery of which it is even a sin to consider because it must be always very far away from either thought or the understanding.

c) So in the last stage there appears the point of contact. The two lines which have continually approached each

other all throughout the contemplations at last meet. " Christ's disciple enters the buddhist salvation " (1). Both St. Theresa and the ariyan leave it at that, namely a fruition, a bare perfect experience unreached by any word or thought, and yet most actual, producing the richest fruits in both cases and therefore dynamical in a way that no theory of simple unconsciousness can wholly explain. For both, the experience is nothing less than life made perfect by the attainment of the pure ultimate, not on the known levels but higher, " in transcendental consciousness which is above the three worlds, " as the buddhist explains. There is no wonder then that its contents are not knowable in any finite way; St. Paul's words after his own experience will always be true that such things cannot enter into the heart of man. What enters so is the knowledge which is an overflowing as it were of that experience into the finite levels. It is the beginning of the mystic's knowledge and also of the other fruits. They are distinctly called overflowings from the experience into the intellect or into any other part as the case may be (2). These fruits or overflowings are all known, but the infinite part of the experience, that which is the true and essential " eternity lived in a moment, " will always be closed to finite questionings. It is in the nature of what is infinite to do so. M. Recejac's saying is very true that " the ultimate eludes the consciousness, but the good fills it completely " (3). Here is precisely the fact concerning mystical realisation, for however much the ultimate might be experienced it cannot yet enter the consciousness except in the assimilable form of the good, the true, St. Theresa's blessedness, or the arahant's emancipation. This stage then is the climax of the two progressions. Everything else has disappeared leaving the pure

(1) Leuba, *Le Revue Philosophique*, Novembre 1902, p. 470.

(2) *Ascent of Mt. Carmel*, bk. II., ch. XXXII; also *John of the Cross, Spiritual Canticle*, Stanza XIV., p. 80.

(3) *Les Fondements*, p. 287.

ineffable experience as the highest realisation of the ultimate. And at this point, when the ultimate is most deeply possessed, the two lines meet.

d) As soon as that moment is over consciousness returns together with its old habits and forms of thought. The old formulæ are all there as still the only means by which anything can be told. At the same time the mystic feels that he owes to himself " a rational account of his relations to the ultimate " (1). It must be told, and the manner of the telling at once takes the form and the reasoning which have long become the bases upon which his religious consciousness has been erected. Any other manner, from that particular standpoint, would not be rational and would therefore be impossible, for plainly the consciousness could not accept anything that even called to question those thoughts that are its bases. Thus arises the after-time explanations in which once more the strictly theological God, or the doctrine of becoming and the four ariyan truths, take their accustomed places. All this rebuilding of the experience after the latter is over by a discursive and arguing way is, as St. Theresa says, *founded upon a certitude of the presence of something which was not known at the actual time when the experience is most deep*. She also admits that the certitude is unconnected with either the memory or the understanding. The certitude is surely real—St. Theresa's honesty would not allow any doubt whatever about it; yet there is the attempt to give a fact without the only things which can enable it to succeed, namely the memory and the understanding. So one sees well that the certitude, being apart from the two things which alone can make it reliable, is nothing else than the reaction of the consciousness to the experience taking place beyond it, and its attempt to seize and assi-

(1) *Les Fondements*, p. 53.

milate intellectually that experience as best it can, so as to be able to give an account of it to itself and also to others, as it were, to justify the ways of God to man.

Yet, essentially, those explanations are true, for, after all, they are the only way of *rationalising* the experience that is to say, of describing it as *a logical fact*, for it has to be in terms acceptable to the given understanding. It is this alone which can explain the significant fact that every true mystic, when the occasion for it arises, is able quite successfully to maintain in any dispute what he has described as true during his experience. It also explains a thing which is still more important, namely that some of the deepest mystical truths have found their really fit formulae in the objective language of religion. A good example of this is St. Paul's well-known saying, " I live, yet not I, but Christ that liveth in me. " Again the words are true and inevitable when the vedantist turning to the sky says " Tat tvam asi—that art thou, " or when the Buddha repeats to himself " Passing away, passing away " as he leaves the Bo-tree.

Conclusion.

The chief finding in this part has been that the ultimate, which begins as two very different concepts in the contemplations of St. Theresa and the ariyan, is realised in the final ecstasy as an experience which is the same in both instances, for it is only describable as fruition which is the tasting of all fruits. The finding is in connection with Pere Poulain's third point which declared God to be the object of the felt knowledge, or the mystical ultimate. The analysis has shown that what Pere Poulain says is not finally accurate, but requires to be put differently. For God is not the pure ultimate but only a concept, and that pure ultimate

has been found to be a subjectivity. That being so, St. Theresa and the ariyan have the same ultimate at the moment of fullest ecstasy, namely, the realisation and the fruit-bearing which follows it. This establishes an agreement between them on the third and last essential point in mystical experience.

PART IV.

The Ariyan and Mother Juliana of Norwich

CHAPTER I

Introductory.

1.—So far almost all our thoughts have been given to the search for a common basis between the mystical experience of St. Theresa and that of the ariyan. This is clearly the first step in a comparison such as is now undertaken since its object is to arrive if possible at a wider definition of mysticism, that is, at something which will include the essential parts of the two mysticisms and nothing more. Therefore, the inquiry has been first of all for the points of contact in matters which are essential. After this the general course of ideas will be sufficiently fixed to allow us to study the differences without losing the perspective. The first part of the work according to the above arrangement has been done so that the second part is now possible.

The principal line of difference between the two mysticisms has already been pointed out. In substance it is that christian mysticism, meaning particularly St. Theresa's, is based upon love as existing between the mystic and the ultimate, while the buddhist's is based upon an intellectual realisation of the ultimate. Love and intellect may be said to indicate fundamentally the nature of the difference if we understand those two words in the way in which they have been explained. Now this being the case the difference is sure to be brought out very fully if a christian mystic is selected whose life is as much as possible a pure and constant seeking by means of love. St. Theresa is certainly a good example, but her very completeness makes her less

representative of any special peculiarity of mysticism. Sooner or later she finds herself utterly lost in that common ground of all mysticism where there are no peculiarities whatever, but only a bare experience. However invaluable this fact may be from the point of view of understanding what is essential, it yet tends to blur those lines which are peculiar and different so that they are not as visible as they might be. Now, as regards a christian mystic who is not so complete, in the sense that his thoughts are wholly given to one form of experience and no other, his differences from those who seek according to other methods will be seen very clearly. For such a mystic will hardly think or speak of anything else besides that one way leading to one form which his spiritual life means to him. There he will possess his whole reality. If, as in the present case, the mystic believes only in love and sees only a lover or a beloved he will give all his mind to it; he will relate the facts of his experience to that one figure in whose presence he lives and moves and ceaselessly has his being; and in describing those facts he will always use words which explain his one emotion. As much as possible this mystic will act in the above manner, especially if he has not the psychologist's instinct for the actual analytical fact as St. Theresa has. Consequently, such an example will be most useful for showing the peculiarities of love-mysticism, and also to prove that in the midst of all that is different there are always those features which have been found to be essential to mysticism as a whole. We have one of these examples in Mother Juliana of Norwich, an English mystic of the fourteenth century. Her mystical experience is simple, single in object, and is at all times a form of love for Christ, either the longing for him, or its fulfilment. She does not know of any other relations. It can therefore be said that she represents this type of mysticism in its simplest and most christian sense, that is to say, as a relationship of love which exists between the soul and God

who is always the historical Christ, and which leads in the end to a direct " experience " similar to that between lover and beloved.

2.—Juliana then provides an opportunity to study what is certainly one of the most remarkable movements in mysticism. Whatever might be said for any other, love has been, without doubt, the greatest power so far in the mystical life. That impression remains after having read the mystics of different times and countries. It is not a fact to be analysed here, but only to be accepted as it exists. One might, I think, argue without being too wrong that this predominance of love is just due to certain religious and psychological circumstances in which mysticism has so far grown, but that would not in the least make the fact less important. Love is there as a great and special power and consequently it must be taken account of in a special way.

CHAPTER II

Juliana's life.

As much as is known, which is indeed very little, Juliana was born in 1342 or thereabouts. This date is a calculation based upon what she says about her revelations, namely that they took place in May, 1373, and that she was at the time "thirty years old and a half." The year of her death is not known. According to an old manuscript she "was yet in life" in 1413.

It is gathered from a historical source that Juliana was "an ankeress and a strict recluse, and had two servants to attend her in her old age." She thus lived in a little house attached to the church of St. Julian in the parish of Conisford, near Norwich. Her life before she became an anchoress is historically a blank and there can only be conjectures. But as regards spiritual things there is sufficient evidence in her book that Juliana led a life of prayer, strict, "meek and continuant." Her mystical progress itself was a continuous prayer. In fact there were no stages, but only an asking and a receiving. She asked principally for a revelation and she received it to her great happiness.

The revelations.

The great event of Juliana's life was the series of 16 revelations which took place when she was thirty years

old. All that is known of her mysticism is connected with these revelations so that their importance is clear.

We are first told that the witness of the revelations is " a simple creature, unlettered. " Before they occurred Juliana had prayed constantly for three gifts of God. "The first was mind of His Passion, the second was bodily sickness in youth, at thirty years of age, the third was to have of God's gifts three wounds, " which were the wound of very contrition, the wound of kind compassion, and the wound of steadfast longing toward God. The first gift was in order that she might share the cross and its sorrows with her Lord and also with His other lovers; " therefore I desired a bodily sight wherein I might have more knowledge of the bodily pains of our Saviour and of the compassion of our Lady and of all His true lovers that saw, that time, His pains. For I would be one with them and suffer with Him." That was the only reason why she desired a revelation which would be acceptable to her only in that one form of the crucified Christ. " Other sight nor shewing of God desired I never none. "

At the beginning of May, 1373, Juliana fell ill with a very serious illness. It lasted for seven days at the end of which her condition was judged as so hopeless that the last sacrament was given her. On the eighth of May, the memorable day for her, the curate was sent for. " He set the Cross before my face and said : I have brought thee the Image of thy Maker and Saviour: look thereupon and comfort thee therewith. " She did as she was asked and marvellously a great change came upon her. She felt herself restored in a strange manner, every pain had passed away, " and I was as whole as ever I was afore. " She saw the figure on the Cross in a concentrated light; everything else in the room was lost in darkness. Then came 15 revelations which lasted for five hours. She gives the list herself.

1. “ The first is of His precious crowning with thorns: and therewith was comprehended and specified the Trinity, with the Incarnation, and unity betwixt God and man’s soul ; with many fair shewings of endless wisdom and teachings of love.

2. “ The second is the changing of colour of His fair face in token of His dearworthy Passion.

3. “ The third is that our Lord God, all love... verily doeth and worketh all thing that is done.

4. “ ... the scourging of His tender body with plenteous shedding of His blood.

5. “ ... the fiend is overcome by the precious passion of Christ.

6. “ ... the worshipful thanking of our Lord God.

7. “ ... our often feeling of weal and woe... with ghostly understanding that we are kept all as securely in Love in weal as in woe by the Goodness of God.

8. “ ... the last pains of Christ and His cruel dying.

9. “ ... the pleasing which is in the Blissful Trinity by the hard Passion of Christ and His rueful dying: in which joy and pleasing He willeth that we be solaced and mirthed with Him...

10. “ ... our Lord Jesus showeth in love His blissful heart even cloven in two, rejoicing.

11. “ ... a high ghostly shewing of His dearworthy Mother.

12. “ ... our Lord is most worthy Being.

13. “ ... our Lord God willeth we have great regard to all the deeds that He hath done.

14. “ ... our Lord is the ground of our prayer.

15. “ ... we shall suddenly be taken from all our pain... and we shall have our Lord Jesus for our need and be fulfilled with joy and bliss in heaven. ”

When these visions were over her physical pains returned. There was also a dry feeling, and then doubt as to whether she had not merely been delirious. That night she had a dream which tortured her still more. But the next day faith and certainty were again real; and in the night she received the sixteenth revelation which was the last of the series and which confirmed all the others. Its substance is

16. " that the Blissful Trinity, our Maker, in Jesus Christ our Saviour, endlessly dwelleth in our soul, worshipfully ruling and protecting all things, us mightily and wisely saving and keeping, for love; and we shall not be overcome by our Enemy. "

Another trial of faith came again, because this last vision too was followed by a doubt. But she was delivered from it by the help of the crucifix and the repeating of the articles taught by the Church. After that she became permanently established in faith, hope, and charity; " anon all vanished away and I was brought to great rest and peace, without sickness of body or dread of conscience. " This continued for the rest of her long life.

CHAPTER III

Juliana's mysticism.

The whole of Juliana's mysticism is a form of love as has just been said. But here it is necessary to see the fact further as the most important in connection with that mysticism so much so that there is nothing outside and independent of love. Juliana writes explicitly that in all the " shewings " which were granted to her " Love was the Lord's meaning. " What the soul saw was " by grace of loving " (1). It was shown by love; it showed love; and its purpose was love. And the lesson that Juliana learnt from the revelations is given in these words that were spoken to her—" Wouldst thou learn thy Lord's meaning in this thing ? Learn it well : Love was His meaning. Who shewed it thee ? Love. What shewed He thee ? Love. Wherefore shewed it He ? For Love. Hold thee therein and thou shalt learn and know more in the same. But thou shalt never know nor learn other thing without end. " Such is then Juliana's message which is repeated everywhere in her book, lest we forget. And not forgetting, we come to understand how very true it is that love is actually the sum of the whole matter. Even when those shewings were over the thought and the lesson remained dominating everything else just as before. " I knew well thou wilt live for my love, " says Christ to Juliana's soul,

(1) Revelations of Divine Love, p. 176.

thus asking for a dedication of her whole life to that one passion (1).

Now it is not enough to say that Juliana's mysticism is in substance the love of God. A closer understanding of it is necessary. For instance it must be known precisely as to what love means in such a case, that is, as to what is its nature, object, and results. These three points, it seems to me, are the most necessary to be explained. I cannot therefore do better than to take them as the divisions of the explanation which is to follow; all the facts in connection with Juliana's mysticism can be grouped under one or other of them.

1.—The first point is the nature of Juliana's love. In this connection it is necessary to know that Juliana belongs to the great movement for an emotional understanding of mysticism in christianity which took place during the middle ages. Love then came to mean wholly the love of Jesus. That was the feeling common to the movement, keeping together by its strength mystics who belonged to different years and places. Among all of them the love of Jesus existed as the one passion, the one form of life and these mystics are said to belong owing to that reason to the same movement towards love which is greater and more personal. Thus St. Bernard in France, St. Francis in Italy, Mechthilda in Germany, Juliana in England, all had the same passion of a peculiarly personal nature for the person of the human Christ. Now, although what has been said is true yet it is not all, for the love of Jesus took different forms, both in language and in conception, with the different mystics according to the way in which each of them considered the matter. But it was conceived most often as a love existing between lover and beloved who are sometimes united and sometimes separated from each other. This way of loving was wide-spread, chiefly in Germany and Italy.

(1) *Revelations*, p. 197.

In considering Juliana's love for Christ it is very important to make a distinction between the form it assumes and that which has just been described ; in fact the attitude taken by Juliana is made clear only by this means. Before anything else it must be explained that in her book there is no mention whatever of Christ as the bridegroom of the individual soul. She does use on some occasions words like spouse, fair maiden, His loved wife (1), but these never refer to the soul but to the whole body of the church, for we know that here Juliana is just speaking after the manner of St. Paul. When she describes her love she is always the child and Christ her courteous Lord, her God, her Master, her Mother. There is a special importance attached especially to the thought of Christ as a mother. Juliana explains it in a way which shows well how she thinks of her relations with the object of her love. She dwells a long while on it, repeating the thought and even the very word Mother again and again, being evidently satisfied by it. " The mother, " she says in one place, " may suffer the child to fall sometimes, and to be hurt in divers manners for its own profit, but she may never suffer that any manner of peril come to the child, for love. And though our earthly mother may suffer her child to perish, our heavenly Mother, Jesus, may not suffer us that are His children to perish " (2). That is the similitude which collects all that is devotional in her feelings. Her mysticism itself is as it were a child's experience of its mother's love, a complete trusting, both physically and spiritually, without any thought besides that act of love immediately known, and like "a meek child" she can only call out constantly " My kind Mother, my gracious Mother, my dear-worthy Mother " (3). This is all that she can and must do,

(1) Revelations, p. 143.

(2) Revelations, p. 150.

(3) Revelations, p. 154.

for the will of God is that she " use the property of a child that evermore of nature trusteth to the love of the mother in weal and in woe " (1).

Here then we see the real meaning of Juliana's love. Its highest symbol is motherhood, for the soul is a child and Christ its mother. In christian mysticism this is singular. Love took other forms for the other mystics and suggested a relationship between bride and bridegroom, lover and beloved, father and son, saviour and saved, servant and master. The mystic seeking for a proper symbol always took up a figure of speech which was already in the bible; the expansion which followed of course depended upon his leanings and the nature of his love. Juliana's uniqueness lies in this, that she thought of a symbol which is not biblical and which, as much as we know, was her own; at least it is certain that she used it as it has never been done in christianity. For the first time the idea of Christ as a mother enters actively into mystical life. By the choice much was lost of passion, of that beauty and endlessness which are associated with the love of the man for the maid, but also much was gained at the same time. A view of love was opened out in christianity which had never before existed there. Besides it cleansed mysticism of a deal of wrong emotion which was at the time threatening to make the mystic's love almost sensuous. Love consequently remained as supreme as ever before, but sweeter, saner, and kept particularly spotless from the world. It is here a lovingkindness for the reason that Juliana is always a child who loves instinctively, in the most practical way, and without knowing how nor why. There are no subtleties in it, no begininng and growing and climax, but only a concrete love, that of the little child whose whole existence is an act of loving and trusting—

(1) Revelations, p. 154.

“ for of nature the child despaireth not of the mother’s love,... of nature the child loveth the mother ” (1). Summing up the whole Juliana says that she understands “ none higher stature in this life than childhood, in feebleness and failing of might and of wit ” (2). We are able to understand from this how the new form of love kept itself free from those seekings which so often lead the mystic very far away. Its quality is “feebleness and failing of might and wit.” There is in consequence the continual act of loving, and nothing else, that is to say, the mystic, being always a child, thinks in the simplest, directest, most actual way of his “ mother ” and his mind does not dwell subtly or effusively on his love or its object. We do not hear Juliana speak of the divine darkness as speculative mystics do, or of sweet embracings as those whose love is lyrical, but only of love that keeps the soul in its everyday life, being in this sense purely devotional in character. Her whole thought is limited to life as it is lived practically. She feels God’s will leading her to love within those limits, in a manner suitable to them—“ He willeth then that we use the condition of a child : for when it is hurt, or adread, it runneth hastily to the mother for help, with all its might... And He willeth then that we use the property of a child that evermore of nature trusteth to the love of the mother in weal and in woe ” (3). In this child-mysticism we therefore see one singular feature, the maximum presence of emotion, of love, of trust and faith, and the minimum of the “ intellectual ” elements, those which in other mystics lead to deeply speculative thoughts or to passionate imagery. Its highest conception of God is prompted by an emotion and is almost bare of anything intellectual. Thus Juliana says, “ With this sweet enjoying He shewed unto

(1) Revelations, p. 159.

(2) Revelations, p. 159.

(3) Revelations, p. 154.

mine understanding in part the blessed Godhead, stirring then the poor soul *to understand, as it may be said, that is, to think on the endless love* " (1). It has been already found that the mystic knows God by a feeling which is the work of all the inner forces. The christian mystic, it was also found, as a rule makes love the force which dominates the others while for the arian it is the intellect. Now, the truth of this is well seen in Juliana. Before going further it should be made clear that Juliana does not disclaim the intellect, for it takes part in her mystical experience just as really as the other powers do (2). And yet, although God busies all the powers it is for one end, which is love. Wisdom itself is understood as the prompting of the emotions to cling all the more closely to Christ. In one place Juliana says "The certainty and the clearness of the Truth and Wisdom maketh him to see and to bear witness that he is made for Love: in which God endlessly keepeth him" (3). So here is as complete a case as possible of love which forms the substance of the mystical experience. The process of assimilation which in St. Theresa's case continues to such a perfectly logical end is in Juliana arrested at love; that is to say, while all the other elements of the "feeling" are assimilated love always remains definable, and in fact becomes increasingly clear if that is possible. There is not a moment when Juliana forgets that she loves; she is to the end true to her child's ideal of knowing only the immediate reality before her in her daily life and of adapting the consciousness to it. God speaks to her "as if He said, Behold and see! Here hast thou matter of meekness, here hast thou matter of love... Let be all thy love, my dearworthy child : turn thee to me—I am enough to thee" (4).

(1) Revelations, p. 51.

(2) Revelations, p. 140.

(3) Revelations, p. 93-94.

(4) Revelations, p. 74.

The above position contrasts very much with the ariyan's. What the latter believes has been explained. For him intellect over-rules everything else until the process of assimilation ends finally in a liquifaction. While in Juliana even wisdom is understood as a vehicle for love the ariyan, as we know, fashions his love itself out of the presence of wisdom. The contrast therefore is perfect. Following Juliana's suggestion it may be said that the difference is like what exists between the child and the man, limiting the comparison strictly to the form of consciousness. Juliana is, as she herself has said it, like a child in her consciousness of God; she realises Him as the child does its mother, by a simple act of loving and trusting without consciously thinking of it but only knowing that it loves and trusts in concrete practical ways—"When it is hurt, or adread, it runneth hastily to the mother for help, with all its might." The ariyan on the other hand is one who "being a man, hath left behind childish things." It is the realisation of a truth that he seeks. The realisation is not through a contact as of two persons, nor by an experience of a lovingkindness, all of which have chiefly an emotional value; it is known as an enlightenment and therefore in its bases the work of the understanding.

2.—The second point is the precise identity of the being whom Juliana loves. It is material to know this clearly for reasons which were given when dealing with St. Theresa. The value of any mystical experience must depend greatly on the ultimate that is realised during the experience. For instance, a mystic who continually sees the symbol without ever reaching what for him is the truth behind that which symbolises must for this very reason be accounted as being still away from the pure realisation. It is an obvious thing to say that the nearer the knowledge gets towards the ultimate the more it will have left behind all concepts, most of all those that are personal, concrete, and non-universal. So long as the ultimate is identified with

a person, however much he might be a symbol of all that is true so long will the ultimate share the limitations of a man. This will indicate how important it is to study the progress of the mystic's ultimate, to know it not only in its beginning but all throughout and especially as it is at the highest point of realisation.

Up to now it has been said that the object of Juliana's experience is always Christ, the historical person who suffered and was crucified. Let us see how far this is true psychologically and whether any development takes place as in St. Theresa's case. Beginning then with the subject matter of the shewings it is found that all of them are concerned with "Christ and His cruel dying." The connection is evident even if it is not always direct. More than this, Juliana while explaining the things she saw makes it perfectly clear that Christ as one who suffered is everything to her (1). That Person, she says, "is the highest, to my sight," that is to say neither her visions nor her thoughts went higher. In fact, she always guarded herself strictly against any stepping beyond the figure of the historical Christ and attributed all desire to do so to the lower understanding. She even excluded God the father except as seen in Christ—"It is in Christ that the Father is" (2). Following the same thought Juliana sees "all the Trinity wrought in the Passion of Christ" (3). Her meaning is therefore perfectly clear as regards the object before her—it is Christ, at every conscious moment. God, the trinity, the unity, heaven, love, all are but a seeing and a possessing of the one person whom she visioned so physically in those revelations, "the endless fulfilling of all desires" (4). This is, indeed, the very summit of a personal devotion.

(1) Revelations, p. 54-55.

(2) Revelations, p. 47; cf. 42.

(3) Revelations, p. 50.

(4) Revelations, p. 147.

And yet even Juliana is not able to restrain the whole ultimate to one static figure. So it happens at times that the vision shifts to the attributes of Godhead as apart from the figure itself. The chief attribute she sees at such times is the Goodness of God with which she deals at length. Then Juliana, amidst the completest devotion to Christ, goes searching, with the mystic's instinct, for something universal, something lying deeper than all symbols. The Goodness of God is, we find, a step to what is even more universal and therefore more ultimate still. Juliana was once told " Take it generally and behold the graciousness of the Lord God as He sheweth to thee, for it is more worship to God to behold Him in all than in any special thing... And I saw God in a point " (1). It is a clear progress for a mystic who holds firmly to one figure representing the ultimate to have come even at short moments to the stage of seeing the ultimate which is God in everything and then seeing Him again in a point. By doing so the idea of personality is given up and the ultimate seen in its non-spatial aspect, for God is seen in all things and is yet in a point. In that Juliana touches infinity as a thought.

Recalling to mind now the stages through which the concept of the ultimate passes in the case of St. Theresa and the ariyan we see the difference between the two mysticisms. The mystic who is wholly given to love, especially in its most human form, is for that reason always restricted to a purely human personified ultimate. It is in fact a condition of his love that he should restrict himself in this manner. His very ardour helps to keep the ultimate personal and living. If the latter shows signs of becoming depersonalised, of disintegrating into more universal terms as it almost always happens when mystical experience gets deeper, the mystic's love must suffer in proportion. Love

(1) Revelations, p. 71.

will be the poorer for the progress of the concept, not, probably, after the experience, but certainly at the actual moment of the disintegration. For the disintegration to be complete and the ultimate purified of all concepts and thoughts, love, *as such*, has to be altogether given up, as has been shown from St. Theresa. The ariyan attains to such a purified ultimate by the giving up of the understanding which for him is the last remaining factor. Now Juliana shows the position of a whole-minded love mystic in this matter. Being at all times aware of loving and of being loved she is continually kept to the personal symbols. She cannot quite escape them because her love is present. Yet even in such a perfect instance love cannot keep itself intact and strong during the whole experience. There is a desintegration, however slight, of the personified ultimate. Juliana, for instance, sees it at such moments as goodness, wisdom, the quality of love; at a further stage she sees it in everything and in a point, thus going beyond all acceptable ideas of personality. It shows how really irresistible the impulse towards universality is in the mystic's ultimate when it is in the course of being realised. Even the most determined lover yields to it partially and at certain moments.

3.—As the third point there are the results of Juliana's experience. They are, like in other mystics, sudden and remarkable, including even the recovery from illness (1). We are told that " the beholding of this while we are here is full pleasing to God and full great profit to us; and the soul that beholdeth, it maketh it like to Him that is beheld and oneth it in rest and peace by His grace " (2). In other passages purification is mentioned just as joy and peace. Joy is among all the most emphasised, for it is said

(1) Revelations, p. 167.

(2) Revelations, p. 169.

to be very great at all times, Juliana having always felt it deeply. The peace too is real and inseparable from the joy. These two, joy and peace, are therefore the chief results. Now, when dealing with the same subject of mystical fruits in the previous part they were divided into three divisions, moral, emotional, and the higher fruits which follow the other two; and the emotional fruits according to that division consist of joy and peace. It is then this division that is most conspicuously seen in Juliana. As for the higher fruits, of the three given, namely selflessness, a sense of detachment, and action, she does not deal with any as a result of her experience. It is true that in some exegetical places she condemns the self as the principal evil, " the elder root of our first sin, with all the sins that follow " (1). Probably even all the three higher fruits were attained, in particular the mystical unselfing. The distinction to make is that there is no direct mention of them as appearing during or through her experience. But in the case of the emotional fruits they are described at length. Such a fact is indicative. It shows how completely emotional Juliana's experience is, so much so that even the results she notices are of the same nature, things based upon a pure feeling, the feeling of joy and the feeling of peace; and being of such a single nature the more mature fruits, although likely to be present, are not noticed so much. On the other hand the ariyan whose mystical experience is the result of manifestly more synthetic forces arrives at more synthetic and therefore higher results, and he is aware of them and also of their importance. He too has peace and joy immediately after the experience, both of which are described as valuable ; but he also gives the same importance and perhaps more to the higher fruits, those that are witnessed by the growth of a new spirit, which is the work of the moral element when it fuses with the intellectual and which shows itself, for

(1) Revelations, p. 100.

instance, as an unselfing and a will to act. In Juliana's case, if she experienced such results, which no doubt she did, she is not aware of them. But she was perfectly aware of those that had an emotional value and knew how important they were.

A very interesting point arises here. It is as regards what is called mystical pain or a form of the night of the soul. We discover by its means another difference between buddhist and christian mysticisms.

To give first of all the christian idea of mystical pain it is, in short, the sense of alienation from the object which is loved, of a void appearing after a fulfilment. Then the mystic is " assailed by anguish and heaviness of heart " for he has a sudden feeling that, inexplicably, God is lost to him, and there is only the shadow of death. As for its psychology much of this pain is said to be due to a nervous reaction or fatigue and its consequences after a period of unusual activity; it is the inevitable " swing-back into a negative state. " Let us now see how this mystical pain occurred in Juliana's case. There was first great peace and joy when Juliana felt that " there was nothing on earth that should grieve me. " But after a while the reaction took place and she was in utter despair—" I was turned and left to myself in heaviness and weariness of my life and irksomeness of myself that scarcely I could have patience to live. " This state too was temporary; she was soon comforted most completely. But again it changed to despair—" And then the pain shewed again to my feeling, and then the joy and the pleasing, and now that one and now the other, divers times—I suppose about twenty times. And in the time of joy I might have said with St. Paul, Nothing shall dispart me from the charity of Christ; and in the pain I might have said with Peter, Lord, save me : I perish " (1). Such is Juliana's account of what actually happened to her.

(1) Revelations, p. 35.

Now as for the ariyan there is no instance of such a tossing between two extreme states. He practises many exercises which are at least as strenuous as those of the christian, and yet he returns from the experience full of a sure peace and harmony, and spiritually with the conviction that he will always grow and become maturer in the path, and never fall back. As already explained, once the ariyan has entered the path he is only a continual progress, from path to fruit, from fruit to higher path; and this goes on until arahantship is realised. The arahant is intellectually so sure of being successful that he even calls an early stage "Consciousness that I shall know the unknow"(1). And faithfully to all these teachings ariyan experience never gives rise to any contradictory moods as in the christian instances.

The above difference between Juliana and the ariyan cannot be explained by any theory of merely nervous exhaustion. As pointed out, if that is the case the ariyan should know more of those moods than most christians since it is plain that his exercises tell more greatly on the nerves. The explanation is more psychological. It is a part of the starting fact that Juliana's experience is chiefly emotional in its quality while the ariyan's is, speaking generally, intellectual. Now, this produces two results. 1.—The emotional element which is everything to Juliana naturally gives its quality to the whole "feeling". That is to say, all that she goes through, which we know is the work of all her inner forces acting together, is expressed emotionally, in ways suggesting the feelings as these are ordinarily understood. She loves, she longs, she is happy and peaceful. But an emotion is by its very nature unstable, incalculable, and therefore liable to changes and reactions. And as soon as the whole of the mystic's "feeling" becomes emotional it too shares the nature of an emotion; it too

(1) *Digha*, III., 219; *Samyutta*, V., 204.

begins to follow the rise and fall which is the real emotional law, the heights and then the sudden bitter depths. This is proved remarkably by the history of all love-mysticism in the West as well as in the East. The sufis who are the great love-mystics of the East are full of the same fluctuations, so much so that an eminent writer has defined the whole of sufism as a continual swinging from one extreme mood to another.

Now, in the ariyan's case the basis of his experience is the understanding, a cool calculable factor whose work is not subject to moods. The understanding dominates the whole "feeling" so that it gives its character to everything else, in this manner making everything stable, controlled, and according to the highest reason. How true this is may be seen from the fact that in the fruits of the ariyan's experience even those which are emotional are stable. Ariyan joy and peace for instance are permanent from the beginning and subject to no lapses since the understanding keeps them always. The difference is therefore great. For the christian, as also for other love-mystics, the emotional law prevails over the whole person, including even the intellect; the result in such a case is a constant fluctuating from one mood to another. For the ariyan it is the intellectual law which prevails and which controls the emotions as well; consequently there is system, certainty, and the removal of what could vary at will. 2.—Besides, the emotional method of seeking after God always implies a certain incalculability. Its success must be a matter of personal feeling, and feelings in this sense are liable to change. You cannot *prove* even to yourself that God has been reached emotionally. As the word itself shows, the whole must depend on what you feel at a particular moment. If the mood of that moment could be fixed forever or repeated continuously then the mystic would have indeed realised God forever. But being a mood that is not ordinarily possible. Hence there are the fluctuations, the certainty

of God and at the next moment the doubt that torments. The emotional way also reveals the great paradox of oneness with God and at the same time of infinite division from Him. By love the soul is made one with God, for love unites the lover and the beloved. At the same time love makes clear the unworthiness of the beloved all the more. There is born by the same act both a sense of fulfilment and one of alienation. The peculiarity of the love mystic is that this division is with him something felt. Consequently his mood is a question as to which of the two senses master him at the moment; if, say, he is immediately aware of a fulfilment he is happy; but if he happens to see the endless distance between his soul and Him whom he loves he dwells in the deepest night. The ariyan escapes such moods for the simple reason that his is the realisation of a fact chiefly by means of the intellect. Once attained the realisation cannot pass away, neither can it alter. The fact it reveals is always there, and the ariyan simply realises it *as a fact*. His whole object is attained when this has happened; a perpetual relationship is at once created. As for the love mystic it is not enough for him to realise the fact of God, but he has *continually* to relate himself to it, the relations being even called an intercourse or communion and therefore chiefly emotional and moral in nature. Needless to say they are less calculable than those which are established intellectually, both in themselves and in their results.

The summing up of the comparison between Juliana and the ariyan need not be long. The whole matter is that Juliana is the child who loves and the ariyan the man who thinks. Juliana herself has suggested the above way of putting it. In her love is seen perfectly, quite pure and single-eyed. All her thoughts are for one figure, that of Christ who had suffered so cruelly for her, and before that figure she is a child, thinking, acting, and especially always

loving in the manner of a child. As a consequence her mysticism exists for a single passion, a ceaseless loving, and for hardly anything else. It has owing to this reason the limitations of what is single and incomplete; for instance it seldom passes beyond the symbol of a person for the ultimate, losing thereby the idea of its universality, its presence in all things; also it practically has no other view of the ultimate than as an object of the emotions; and again, the results of its experience are, as much as it is aware of them, confined to those which are emotional, such as joy and peace. These then are the limitations. But there are also clear advantages; the continual view of the ultimate as a person who is known, to whom the mystic is tied by love and sympathy for suffering actually known and gratefulness for things actually received is without doubt very helpful in spite of its limits. In ordinary circumstances it is perhaps the best way of seeing the ultimate because it is the most assimilable. God is there made man or at least He is humanised, He comes down to the level of man's daily relations. Thus the infinite ministers to the mind and especially to the heart that are finite.

In all the above matters the ariyan is different. His is the more lonely ultimate, a bare truth existing in all things; the means by which he realises it are equally lonely and unattractive, being based upon the understanding; and the results of his experience are a proportional reward for such loneliness, namely emotional results which are at the same time stable, and those which are higher still, like detachment from all things and the reasoned will for active well-doing.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

I shall now try to bring together the conclusions reached in this study which could help to define mysticism in a manner acceptable to both the christian and the buddhist. But before doing so I wish to say that no complete definition of mysticism will be here attempted. Such a task is altogether out of the question. After all, only two mysticisms have been studied, and these in their orthodox forms. The most that could be expected from a study of this extent are certain very essential facts which, before more is known, we assume to hold true *within their proper limits* in all mysticism, and which therefore can be used as a part of a working definition. So one cannot as yet define, one can only give a certain generalisation which so far has not been contradicted by any facts of the same *class*. More could not really be said or asked for, I think, at this stage. By means of what has been said I admit that the study that has ended has been purely psychological and that this implies a certain shortcoming when it touches the question of a complete definition and understanding. For it must be mentioned plainly that there is a blame always found against the psychological method that it tries to know only the movements of "the timeless mystic soul." "Psychology," says one writer, "can, at its best, only give us one half of a movement in which it is precisely the remaining

half which justifies the whole " (1). Although we may not admit the objection as it stands yet the imperfections of the purely psychological method should be known, and that other sections, such as history and metaphysics and even sociology, will also have to contribute before mysticism could be completely understood. The part that falls to psychology is nevertheless the most important, because it alone deals with the experience as that *actually* takes place.

From the psychological point of view, then, three things are true of mysticism.

(1) It is an experience which is a unique form of knowledge.

(2) The experience is related to an object; the latter represents something ultimate to the mystic.

(3) The experience produces clear extraordinary results; in short it is an emancipation.

The starting point in actuality is the object to which the mystic relates himself. The mystic is, psychologically, a man who has trained and unified his forces by seeking a single object which he sees as the content of all that exists. In order to create that unity in his life, that experience which he calls by such names as union, deification, Nibbana, he finds it necessary to train his whole self, that is, mind, body, will, the emotions, etc. This training or the mystic way always appears as an attempt to bring about a relationship, for by its means the mystic strives with all his powers to adjust himself to his object, whether that be a person or otherwise. Relationship should here, of course, be understood in its most perfect sense, that is to say, as a harmony, a "oneing" which is absolute or at least continuously tends to become so. Thus, let us say, the

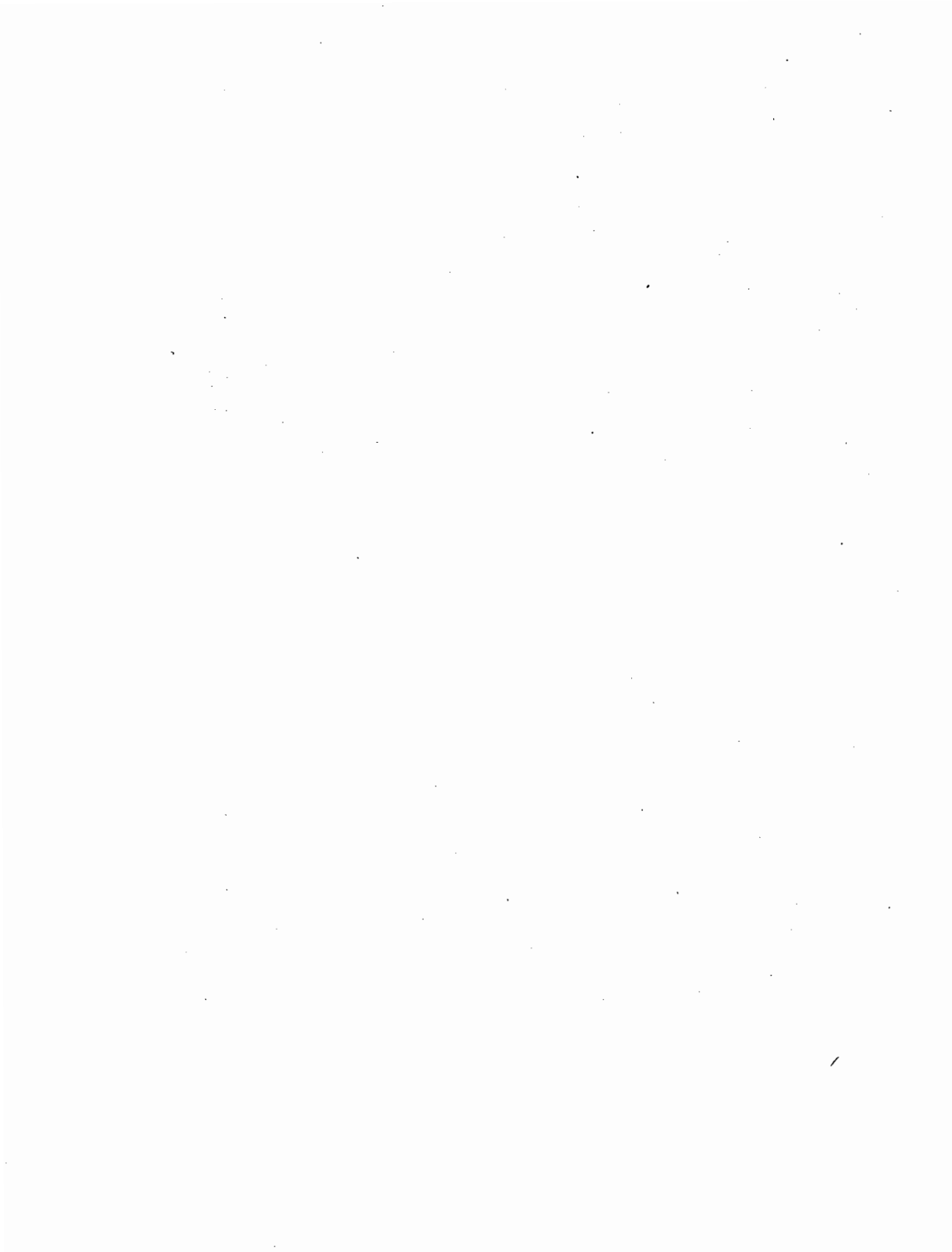
(1) E. Herman, *Meaning and Value of Mysticism*, p. 12.

mystic sets up God as his object. The mystic is one whose need is to be "united" in every sense and so to have all his desires and questionings satisfied forever. This being the case, the object which he has set up inevitably begins to represent all the things he lacks and is seeking. It is in the nature of an ideal to do so. If the mystic needs to love and be loved God is there as the mighty lover; if the need is for rest God becomes a rock that shelters; and if it is truth that is sought then God is also that. The very elasticity of the idea of God meets a mystical requirement for something which could be all things and yet remain single, a perfect symbol of unity in multiplicity. There are then two factors at the beginning of the mystical life, namely, the mystic with his whole being given to one quest which will forever satisfy him, and an object, an ideal exactly suited to the mystic's needs, being chosen and very often shaped by the latter. Now, one of the things at once needed is that the object should be ultimate in the sense that it represents for the mystic all that there is to be known. It is right for this reason to say that the mystic is "a lover of the absolute." Without this starting point there could be no mysticism as all mystical writings are agreed in saying; and logically too it is apparent, since the mystic claims a realisation which is complete, final, and the meeting of all desires, each of which words suggests something ultimate and therefore the contact with what is ultimate to the one having the experience. The mystic's position up to the present point is very much like that of other seekers, either after truth or beauty or goodness. The two starting terms are the same, the soul that seeks and the object reflecting all that is sought. The only difference so far, if there is really one, is that to the mystic both his desire and his object are in a sense ultimate, for he wants nothing less than a perfect satisfaction and his object, as he believes, can give him that since it is ultimate.

As has been said, immediately the two terms come together as a result of the mystical life a relationship of a singular kind is established or seeks to establish itself. Here arises the uniqueness of mysticism, namely its experience. Relationship in this place does not have the sense that it ordinarily has, but means a harmony created *by becoming the very object itself*, although it is also true that the extent to which this takes place varies with occasions and persons. So, essentially, mystical experience is an act of becoming the object loved or contemplated. All that is peculiar to mysticism has its source in this idea of a relationship which unites the knower and the known so completely that the knowledge which is thereby created is an intuition in the most perfect sense. It has been said that the only perfect intuition is that of one's self, because there the act of being the object known is complete. Now, the mystic claims a similar kind of intuition concerning the ultimate. The method is also the same, namely, that of being what is known by the exercise of all the man's forces, for which reason the experience is described as union, deification, realisation, and by such words and metaphors, all of which suggest the fact of becoming the object itself. The christian mystic says that he has "put on Christ," that he is a partaker of the divine nature; the ariyan strives to "make the truth become" by living it after a realisation; the vedantist is persuaded quite early that he is Brahma, the supreme and only being; and so on through the other mysticisms.

So far we have only the mystic's claim. All that is said to take place is told by the mystic himself without there being anything that is logically subject to our judgment. But this does not remain always so, for signs soon show themselves to all. Immediately the mystical experience is over there appear as a direct result of it many wonderful things, such as moral purification, peace, enlightenment, the creative will, all testifying to some power in the expe-

rience and even to a real and strange fulfilment. About the results at least there could be no dispute. Life has somehow become " real " as St. Augustine said, " because it is lived in God. " The relationship which the mystic had sought being now found the results follow. Therefore that relationship, after it has been perfected by an experience, is said to prove itself to be real through fruit-bearing.



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