

THE FORCE OF LOVE

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INTRODUCTION

Which is better: to live with Love or to live with Hate? It is clear that should this question be put to any sane person the answer would certainly come out in favour of the former. But despite this general attitude on the part of everybody we seem to be overtaken at times by hate, which we shun and want to escape. The ironical fact can be seen in our world today, when hate has become a dominating force, almost all alone and almost everywhere. Even where there may be seen some degree of love remaining, that love is still impregnated with rigid selfishness, being confined to one's own group of relatives, friends and fellow-countrymen, with the callous indifference towards others' troubles and sufferings. Hence the inevitable results in the form of cheating, corruption, extortion, taking an unfair advantage of one another, malicious propaganda based on exaggerated, distorted facts as well as shameless lies, crimes or violence and civil wars. The world appears to be approaching its end, in the most horrible way, through the work of its own inhabitants. The fact is obvious to everyone, yet no one can do anything worthwhile to save himself and his planet.

Looking back at religious teachings most overlooked nowadays, we shall see that they all preach the doctrine of Love, Kindness and Service. It is an inflexible rule in all religions that one who will be delivered from all suffering must have his mind bathed in the force of Love towards mankind, regardless of nationality, race, caste or creed. Buddhism, however, may be said to have gone one step beyond that, since the Buddha advocated the extension of Love or *METTĀ* or Loving-kindness, call it what you will, that must be absolutely infinite and unbounded, reaching towards animals as well.

It is true that there are still many people who traditionally profess one religion or another, but it is equally true that not many have put to practice the virtues of religions they are supposed to profess, most paying only lip service. They do not realise that *it is an implicit contempt for their own religion to have declared their professions of faith in it but not to follow it.* Having treated their religion with such contempt, they certainly cannot go with impunity. And what punishment they are suffering is to be seen in the appalling unrest and miseries in the world today.

Another fact *unknown to most people on earth is that the forces of evil, unseen as they are to us here, are plainly visible in the mental world. The sinister force discharged from the evil minds in this world is accumul ating and spreading ominously over areas on earth, polluting the mental atmosphere in the manner far more horrible than cars' exhausts and industrial dust and clouds of big and crowded cities. With not much more of this added, the world would be set aflame and destroyed.*

Before the coming of a significant event, whether good or evil, it will be seen in advance by those in the astral world. Such events as the outbreak of an epidemic, a war, the birth of a sage or a 'satan', the death of everybody on earth are known first by beings there who are interested in them. Where communication with them is possible, those able to do so will also be informed. This fact has been known for thousands of years. Accounts of a Bhikkhu named Phra Malai, which Buddhists in some places still listen every year in sermons, also refer to this, saying that when the world is nearing its end, the celestial beings will warn the people of the catastrophe, letting them know decades or centuries in advance.

Progress of the present civilisation, which is marked by great strides of scientific achievement, reveals that mankind has developed so much as far as intellectual capacity is concerned. However, while this aspect of a modern man's progress is congratulated, another less obvious fact--- that he is at the same time far more primitive than his forefathers with regard to the mental and spiritual development --- cannot be denied. It is natural that a person, elated by success in any one aspect, should be ignorant in other affairs not relating to it. Those who are blessed with wealth, beauty, fame or power and are carried away by it are naturally ignorant in other matters, especially in the evil of allowing their minds to be carried away in that manner. The more infatuated they are, the more ignorant they become. This is true of scholars in secular, material subjects today, who are elated by their success and recognition, little dreaming how they are ignorant in religious and spiritual matters. Just consider how much people today have become distrustful of one another, to say the least, and we shall see whether they have progressed or regressed as far as spiritual development is concerned. *How is it possible, then, that a modern man can attain to peace and bliss he dreams of, when he has progressed so much in*

material knowledge but has regressed equally much, or even more, in spiritual development? The Buddha once said to the effect that only when there is no hatred or violence can peaceful co-existence in this world be expected. This is freely translated from the verse, "*Abyāpajjaṃ Sukhaṃ Loke Pāṇabhūtesu Saññāmo.*" Literally translated, it reads: Blissful it is to be without hatred and to practise self-restraint in all beings. In Christianity we learn that Christ also said, "Love thy neighbours as thyself."

We would like to urge the readers to compare religious teachings with the teachings of some materialistic cults based on hatred and violence and then stop to think which one should be better, more sensible and more human. Of course, we are unable to command others to follow our way of thinking and doing, but is it advisable that, having known what is good and what is evil, we should surrender ourselves to the evil, subhuman doctrine of hate, envy, violence and the like? Shouldn't it be more profitable in all respects that we follow the righteous and uplifting way of loving-kindness, compassion, truthfulness, gratefulness and the like? Who in the end will be delivered from suffering and attain to the peace and bliss desired by all?

Let us take courage, therefore, and fear not. It makes no difference whether others will follow us or not. Doing what others cannot do, we are entitled to enjoy when others cannot enjoy. Death, which comes to all, is not the end of life. There is a society or a world of virtuous men existing, if not here, then somewhere beyond. Keep ourselves on the path of the virtuous. Beware of side-stepping from it. Having done our best to inform and serve others, we can rest satisfied. It is not our business whether they will take heed of our warning or not. If they still prefer to walk the path of evil, it is their own affair. We can help only those who realise they need help. To all of us life brings what we deserve most.

There must be no delay. It is now time we earnestly commenced the campaign of love, kindness and selflessness in order to make it overshadow the force of hatred, which is seriously polluting the spiritual atmosphere of the world. Failure or more delay to do so would mean to invite the global disaster in the near future. Do not be distressed when you encounter others' indifference or when you are made fun of. Let us start with ourselves. Then we shall be on the safe side. If we are sincere, earnest and coura-

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geous, in time there will be some who can 'sense' our good will and then will follow. Thereafter more and more will be encouraged, with the consequent encouragement stimulating us to more and greater sacrifices.

This booklet is meant to be something of a Happy New Year Greeting on the occasion of the year B.E. 2520/1977. It may serve to replace or accompany your New Year Greeting card to friends and relatives. May all the readers extend their loving-kindness to all, friends and foes alike.

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"Love is a many-splendored thing." It leads to birth, which ironically leads to death. As long as there is love, so long is hate lurking somewhere. So the many-splendored thing, in the sense it is generally understood, is not without its drawbacks.

The Force Of Love

Looking at all forms of life on earth, whether man, animals or plants, we shall come across an obvious fact to be seen everywhere. This is the fact that **Life is born of Love; the Love of Life being the fountainhead from which Life springs.** It is a facet of the Truth proclaimed by the Buddha for the first time shortly after his Enlightenment. The *Dhammacakkappavattanasutta*, wherein it was mentioned that Desires leads to Re-birth (*Taṇhā Ponobbhavikā*), testifies to this fact.

From the above it has been accepted by Buddhists that as long as there is a grain of this "love" inherent in the mental process, so long will there be life,—continuously, incessantly. The so-called death is not the end of life. It is but a prelude to the building up of another form or manifestation of life. In fact everybody's life had a beginning even before the beginning of the Earth. It will continue to be even after the planet is destroyed, without any so-called life left on it. For if it could not exist in the crude, physical form, then it would remain in the subtle, "invisible" manifestation. And this, let us not forget, is true not only of the life of man, but of that of animals and plants, there being these forms of life in the planes of *Opapātika* (the subtle, invisible or mental) as well as in the Earth plane.

Life springs from Love i.e. the Love to live, to be something more, to have something more, to know or learn something more etc. These are expressions of what is called *Taṇhā*, which Buddhism says is inherent in the *Santāna* (deepest recess of the mind) of every form of Life. With the ability to be acquired from the development of advanced *Samādhi* (Meditation), we shall see the truth of this statement and prove its validity. *For at the moment of the so-called death (which is but a transition), from every life that has*

not eradicated its *Tañhā* or the Love to Live there will be a subtler, mental body arising. This points to the less obvious cause of life: what it springs from. It also explains why the Buddha has declared the Noble Truth that it is *Tañhā* that leads to ceaseless re-births.

There is a word of caution here. It is not only the Love or Desire (*Tañhā*, that is) of one's parents that leads to rebirth. At the moment of re-birth after death, the new body being formed has nothing to do with its parents or with anybody. It is born absolutely of its own "Love to live". Even in the case of birth as a human being, the *Tañhā* of parents are not enough, being themselves but instrumental causes. It needs as the prime factor the *Tañhā* of a human-being-to-be as the original, productive cause. In support of this fact we may refer to the Buddha's saying to the effect that, besides parents and the natural, physical causes, the *Viññāṇa* (Consciousness,—force of the "Love to Live") of each individual has a place in the re-birth process to make a mother's conception possible. Now, what makes *Viññāṇa* or this "Love to Live" force express itself in re-birth is the ingrained force of *Tañhā*. Without this as the agent, *Viññāṇa* would have no force to build more life-forms for itself. What is behind the re-birth process, therefore, is the force of *Tañhā*, the Desire or the Love to Live, the producer or the creator of Life.

Love Creates Everything

Look at the various aspects of 'nature' in the world:- trees and flowers, birds, land and sea, animals and peoples, with their innumerable variety of kinds and characteristics. Then stop to consider what is at the background of their being as they are.

- What is the power that creates them, displaying them in such an immense variety?
- What power is it that transforms a mother's red blood into a stream of pure white milk for her baby?
- What makes the taste of sensual pleasure superior to all other tastes for ordinary worldlings?
- What is the determining power behind all progresses and developments in the world?
- What is that power which makes man always love to live although he knows how life is beset with sufferings?

Think of these facts. Ponder upon their causes. Contemplate them in as many aspects as possible and you will see for yourself that which is the tremendous power which answers those puzzling questions. This is nothing but the power of Love. It is the motivating power, the creator of joy, delight and happiness. This kind of creator can make a paradise on earth, up to

whatever degree we want it to be. On the contrary, hatred, ill will, revenge and envy are instances of the negative powers which go a long way toward destroying all happiness, progress and prosperity. Should these negative, destructive forces be allowed to grow and expand, covering all families, societies and races, polluting all the mental atmosphere, then the result would certainly be a hell on earth. Consequently, human beings who allow their minds to sink to such a depth will be engulfed in the hell they have created, both before and after their departure from this world. They are bound to burn in the hellish fires of their own creation: the sinister fires of hatred, ill will and others consuming the minds that give them birth.

To illustrate the power of love, think of a happy family, a group of joyful boys and girls, playful children, energetic people working indefatigably, parents who gladly encounters all sufferings for the sake of their children. What is there behind these happy examples? Certainly it is nothing but Love, the power of which, being creative, has made them what they are.

The Transcendental Force of Love

Consider the following verses as a saying of the Buddha from the Pali Canon. Paraphrased, the verses read as follows:

One whose thoughts are motivated at all times by Love untrammelled and uncontaminated (by selfishness) will eventually win through to the Absolute Cessation of Suffering.

In Pali terms, the verses are:

*Mettāvihārī yo Bhikkhu
Pasanno Buddhasāsane
Adhigacche Padam̐ Santam̐
Saṅkhārūpasamam̐ Sukham̐*

Literally translated, the verses read:

A Bhikkhu who dwells in METTĀ, taking delight in the doctrine of Buddhism, will attain to the condition of Peace (*i.e. Nibbāna*), where the conditioned cease in Bliss.

METTĀ in the above passage implies the pure, unselfish love, the kind to be seen in the love of parents towards their children. This is an instance of a noble love, one that transforms through the nature of its purity the red blood into a stream of pure white milk. It is the fact made clear to everyone by nature. It is because of this natural fact that has led me to be confident that only through the pacifying and unifying power of Love can the world of human beings avoid the wholesale massacre and bloodshed. This is the only way by which we can avert a holocaust, threatening the whole world at present.

Just how or to what extent Buddhism advocates the extension of this kind of "Love" can be seen in the following passages in the *mettasutta*. They are too long to be quoted here in full, but in effect they read as follows :

"Just as a mother with the only son will certainly love and be dedicated to him in the same manner as she does her own life, so let us Buddhists extend that kind and degree of love to all kinds of beings, animals as well as men, and enemies as well as friends."

Another source of 'love-story' in the sense implied above may be seen in the *Jātaka* story called *Suvaṇṇasāma*, wherein the Buddha had explained in detail the beneficial results of *Mettā*. So touching were the narrative passages of the Buddha that many will be moved to tears reading them.

I have described so far the importance of love and its manifold results in the positive, constructive aspect. But there is also a word of caution. Like other things in the relative, conditioned world, some aspects of the so-called love are not without drawbacks which should be carefully guarded against. This is to prevent a person being led astray by some negative aspects of the so-called love, which will be conducive to the increase, rather than the removal, of suffering.

Levels of Love ; Its benign and malign forces

Against the earlier mentioned fact that love with its gentle, beneficial force can create happiness and prosperity and can make a paradise of the earth, there is also to be mentioned the fact that some aspects or levels of love can also have a malevolent power and produce the adverse effects, making thereby a hell on earth, not to mention the realms of woe in the after-life. Thus, whether the world will be turned into a paradise or a hell depends on the nature and degree of the so-called love cherished by human beings themselves. Even such problems as the standard of living, corruption, crimes of violence and others can also be satisfactorily dealt with if the people involved can satisfactorily improve the nature of their "love", making it more positive and constructive. It is advisable, therefore, that we should know something more about the nature and development of what we call love.

Love on the crude, animal level. This refers to the nature of the so-called love in the realms of woe. In the world of human beings, this is obvious in the kingdom of animals such as cats and dogs. Generally, it is self-centred, bearing no responsibility, being based on no moral values whatever. They come to 'love' only when they have a 'desire' such as during the mating season. Even wild animals, when they come together to

live in a pack. are guided by the desire for mutual interest. The leader of a wolf pack, for instance, *is respected because it is feared*, and occasional fights for food between other members of the pack can still be seen. When a leader becomes disabled or is feeble by age, it will be replaced by a coup, so to speak, being “challenged to a duel” by a younger and stronger member of its own pack. There will be a fight, a decisive fight which results in the leader being forcefully dethroned. He may be killed or, if he happens to survive, he must be chased away, an exile leader caring for himself in isolation. In such a ‘society’ there is no respect for superiors, no sense of gratitude, no room for moral values. “Big fishes eat small fishes” –that’s the only law known to them. After all, physical strength decides and determines everything. The animal kingdom knows no better philosophy than this.

Love on a higher, better polished level. It is worth noting that animals, being as they were described above, are never in a position to deliberately practise any moral value. They cannot tolerate a moral training as such (i.e. unless they are also motivated also by fear etc). Possibly this was why the Buddha indicated that they are hopeless and helpless as far as attainment to Insight is concerned. It may be concluded that animals, no matter how or to what extent they are trained, can never deliberately observe even Precepts (*Sīla*), the first stage of moral training. The *santāna* (state or level of

mind) confined in an animal frame forces them to think only of their interests, guided by instincts and impulses. For them it is impossible to care for others' benefits, to think of the 'Golden Rule' and to be logical or reasonable in their way of thinking and behaving. An Aesop's fable, the Wolf and the Lamb, wittily epitomises their pattern of thought and behaviour.

But man is not, or rather need not be, on the same level as animals, ---not until he allows himself to sink to that depth. He is intrinsically intelligent enough to think, reason and understand. He can be taught the Golden Rule; he can learn to be sympathetic; and he can be trained to practise any moral virtue, from the Precepts (*Sīla*) to Insight (*Paññā*). Charity, sacrifice, kindness and others are not beyond man's capacity to practice if he should listen. This is the major and decisive difference between a pack of animals and a society of man. Whereas there can be no acquired moral virtue in animals, there can be seen indications of moral training and acceptance in man. There might be in fact, in some higher animals such as dogs, instances of what seems to be a moral virtue. They are grateful to their masters and appear to be more 'human' than most other animals. This is true of higher animals but their 'morality' is just emotional or mechanical, their capacity for reasoning and self improvement being still far

under-developed. It will not be much developed as long as they are confined within the animal frame. This is the decisive difference, the borderline differentiating man from animals.

The sense implied by the word 'love' used here is derived from the Pali term *Taṇhā*, which has a very wide scope of meaning. It implies love, desires, lust and all kinds of wishes, whether they are based on moral values or not, and whether they are conducive to beneficial or evil results, as long as they do not belong to the Noble Disciple of the highest i.e. the *Arahat* grade. However, for the Noble Disciples of the three lower grades, their *Taṇhā* that is conducive to the realms of woe is absolutely eradicated, since they are never in a position to violate any Precepts or *Sīla*. Their 'love' towards other man and animals is always based on METTA. If ever we wish to use the term 'love', it must also be understood that it is not self-centred, being purified, based at all times on moral values. Whatever suffering (on the part of the 'lover') should arise from this 'love' is reduced to a minimum in case of the three lower grades of Noble Disciples or is totally abandoned in the case of the *Arahat*.

The term 'love', therefore, has various shades of meaning, one of which can be vastly different from another. This lies in whether it is based on, or born of, self-centredness or self-denial, and also how much.

Characteristics of TANHĀ

Men and animals are all submerged in the tide of *Taṇhā* like fishes born in water and being unable to leave the water habitat all their lives. This is true of the lower grades of the Noble (or *Ariya*) Disciples as well as all other worldlings although there is such a vast and inconceivable degree of difference between the two categories. The only exception to this is the Noble Disciple of the highest grade called the *Arahat*. The reason behind this is the degree of *Taṇhā* left in the *Santāna* (mental process; deepest recess of the mind) of the former category. Even highly evolved beings in the advanced realms of bliss, be they celestial beings or *Brahma*, are also spurred on by *Taṇhā*, which, of course, is based to a great extent on moral values. Compared with the *Taṇhā* based essentially on instincts, impulses and self-centred emotional desires, theirs is poles apart, being, according to a Scriptural idiom, "far from each other as the earth is far from the sky." From the relative point of view, it may be said that in extreme cases the similarity is totally overshadowed by the difference. So much so that the similarity, though existing in the ultimate standard, can be relatively considered negligible, something like a recurring decimal, which for practical purposes can be neglected.

Now, there must be something that characterises *Taṇhā*, that makes us recognise and detect it although in some cases we may prefer to abandon it as a recurring decimal. This may be known from the Law of Dependent Origination or *Patīccasamuppāda*, wherein we are told that whenever there is *Taṇhā*, there is *Upādāna*, which refers to Attachment or Grasping, as opposed to Release or Exemption. Its synonyms are, among others, Bondage or Slavery, which are opposed to Deliverance or Liberation. Whatever is *not* accompanied by Detachment or Equanimity, --- be it love or hate, goodwill or ill will, success or failure, reveals the fact that it is still overpowered, more or less, by *Taṇhā*. For it betrays the fact that it is also influenced, again to a more or less degree, by *Upādāna* or Attachment. When there is still a grain of *Taṇhā* or *Upādāna*, there is to be a grain of *Dukkha* or Suffering remaining. This is looking at the matter from the absolute or ultimate point of view. When an action, even of pure goodwill and unselfish love, can still affect the mind when it is interrupted, delayed or is a total failure, then it shows that the mind being affected has not absolutely done away with the *Cause* of Suffering i.e. *Taṇhā*. In other words, the tests for the existence of *Taṇhā*, and for that matter of *Upādāna* and Suffering, are: to be associated with the unpleasant, to be dissociated from the pleasant and not to achieve what one wants

to. The mind still affected by any of these tests is the mind not absolutely delivered from Suffering. Being still affected reveals the fact that it is not yet detached. Lack of detachment results in the inability to control thoughts, and consequently emotions. At the hour of departure such a mind cannot help being attached to its thoughts (including, as a matter of course, emotions). This inevitably (although unconsciously) leads to birth in another plane of existence, which is appropriate to the nature of its thoughts-emotions. This is in accordance with a formula in the Law of Dependent Origination, which says, "There being *Viññāṇa* (Consciousness, which includes thoughts-emotions), there is *Nāma-rūpa* (name-and-form i.e. another aggregate of body and mind)."

The Starting Point of Love

As a rule, everybody loves himself first of all and most of all. So said the Buddha, "*Never is there any love as great as self-love.*" Second to this kind of love is the love of parents towards their offsprings. This is obvious even in animals and there may be some who prefer to think that it is even stronger than self-love. That it appears to be so is because the offsprings are a representation of parents. Instinctively, man, animals and even plants want to live, not to die.

This is the expression of what is called *Bhavataṇhā*, the desire or the 'love' to live. Again instinctively, every life knows that it cannot live for ever. The struggle to bear offsprings to live on is the instinctive urge as a compensation for its own defect or inability to live on by itself. The love for offsprings is consequently the compensation, or the extension, of self-love, and is at times as powerful as self-love.

From self-love as the starting-point spring a countless number of its expressions. It may be in the form of the love to live, the love to be and the love to have, with a countless number of things as complements of the verb 'be' and objects of 'have.' Happiness, fame, riches, power and so forth are typical examples. As a result, there is bound to be attachment to whoever or whatever can gratify the passion of love. The greater its gratification ability, the stronger the power of love, and for that matter of attachment. Hence the endless growth of *Taṇhā* due to the grasping power of its own tentacles, even after a countless number of re-births and re-deaths. Unchecked it grows and grows, for it cannot stop automatically. This is what is meant in the Buddha's saying. "*Never is there a river as great as that of Taṇhā.*" Whereas the river of water can at times overflow its banks, the river of *Taṇhā* is at all times insatiable, its banks always

receding to take in more water. Such is the condition of *Tañhā* unchecked or uncontrolled.

Poverty, Corruption and Other Miseries Outcome of Degraded Love

As earlier mentioned, the animal's love is based essentially on selfishness, without any responsibility, and knowing no reason or moral values. A man's love, while it is not divorced absolutely from selfishness, still knows some responsibility and reason and also understands some moral values. How close to or far from an animal's love is a man's love in a particular case may be seen in how much or how little it understands reason, accepts moral values such as self-restraint and can shoulder responsibilities. As a worldling, who is still imperfect in many ways, a man's love will naturally contain some drawbacks, revealing his imperfection. But if he tolerates control for the sake of moral virtues, then it befits him as a man. In advanced cases, where it is imbued with a sense of shame and fear of evil (as opposed to shame and fear of man's criticism and the country's law), it has attained to the level of what is called a celestial being's love. A verse of the Buddha reads as follows :

“They are equipped with Shame and Fear of Evil, being established in moral virtues. They

are self-controlled, imbued with the practices of a virtuous man. By the wise they are regarded as being endowed with the characteristics of a celestial being (i.e. a celestial being in a human frame).”

A still higher kind of love may be seen in one that is *not* stimulated by lust or sensual attraction of any kind. Not looking forward to any requital, it looks only for more service. It is unbounded, not confined to relatives, friends or people of the same race or creed. It extends to even enemies, or those with ill will, animals as well as men. It knows no hatred, enmity or the like. Most important, it does not produce any sorrow or suffering to anybody cherishing it. This level of love characterises those who have attained to the level of Meditation called *Jhāna* or those who are the Noble (*Ariya*) Disciples of the Buddha.

It is a pity that most people are bent on amassing and defending their own interests, caring little about others' loss or sufferings through their self-centredness. This is evident in the circles of those who in their hearts deny religious values, brushing aside all beliefs and teachings concerning the hereafter. In extreme cases, where the influence of dialectical materialism holds sway, they will stop at nothing and can stoop to doing anything, however brutal or inhuman, in order

to 'liquidate' whoever stands in the way of their ideological achievement. Nothing, however barbarous or subhuman, is too much for them. This is just to satisfy their 'love' for that ideology,--- *a love that categorically denies and wants to 'bury' all moral and religious virtues, a 'love' that ironically produces only hate and enmity until it becomes hate itself.*

This is diametrically opposite to the way of those who are imbued with religious virtues. They may on occasions disagree, as well they might, with others' viewpoints and practices, but they will never condescend to adopt any inhuman practice. Only as self-defense measures and as the last resort will they turn to a degree of violence. Unlike the extreme materialists, they do *not* enjoy doing so and their self defense measures are consequently tempered with kindness, being, as its name implies, not motivated by an aggressive desire or vengeance purpose. Such measures are bound to be limited by degree or quantity and also by time. That they have to resort to self-defense in that manner is their birth-right as worldlings i.e. imperfect beings, who cannot yet take the absolute or unconditional practice of restraint. But that they have done so with a far different motive and pattern cannot be ignored. *On the whole, the difference markedly outweighs the similarity.*

Co-existence based on Unselfish Love

This leads to a marked difference between man and animals. Whereas man can be trained to accept moral and religious values, animals definitely cannot. Besides, man-training does not have to depend on anger, hatred and violence. If he wills it, man is in a position to live his life in an unselfish love. Such negative powers as ill will, anger and vengeance are veritable hellish fires consuming the mind that gives them birth. Selfishness, --- the thought of self-interest accompanied with the callous indifference to the troubles and sufferings of others, the unwillingness to render any help unless adequately paid, is another negative power darkening the mind and dragging it to 'the Pit' of its own creation.

To such a mind it is inconceivable how blissful it is to be bathed in an selfish love of all beings. This is the parental love, the fraternal love, the friendly love and the love we usually have towards children or the young ones in general, no matter whether they are the children of our own, our friends or our enemies, or even the young ones of animals such as the tiger's or the bears' cubs. In as much as the fires of hate and enmity consume the mind that has given them birth, the water of love in the manner mentioned above will always cool the mind that cherishes it, promoting its health,

carrying it through ordeals, and bathing it with a blissful peace.

For anyone to understand the nature of an unselfish love it is advisable that he should mingle with children, playing and chatting with them, no matter whether they are his children or not. With such an unselfish love accompanied at all times with goodwill extended to all beings, animals as well as men, enemies as well as friends, you will be able to know for yourselves that *there is no need to surrender ourselves to hatred, envy, vengeance and the like and then be consumed by them. The world will be much better without these negative forces. If instead we should strive to clothe our own minds with the positive forces of goodwill and an unselfish love, what a peace and bliss we would have all over the world!*

It is true that Love, however unselfish or pure, may not be able to eradicate differences in some cases with regard to beliefs, interests and others. But with the gentle power of Love present, hatred, envy and malicious fault-finding will be absent, and confrontation will be replaced by co-ordination, a sensible approach to study various aspects of the problems. Social ills such as poverty, corruption, crimes of violence and others,---in fact all problems, will be better dealt with if attempts to deal with them should be tempered with Love or

Kindness or METTA, call it what you will. This is the most sensible solution with long-lasting effects.

The Destructive Power of Hate.

On the contrary, problems cannot be effectively solved by means of the negative force of hate. This may be seen in attempts to cause disunity and quarrel, to set one party against another, to disseminate insidious propaganda concealing one's own faults while magnifying others; to stir up troubles and violence, to instigate envy or enmity, to subvert or terrorise others who have a different ideology and refuse to be converted. There is no reliable or lasting effect to be expected of these immoral and inhuman methods. With one problem or one aspect of a problem solved there are sure to arise several more, thus complicating the problem and worsening the situation. How can a dirty place be cleaned by dirty water?

Let us not forget that life, whether of man, animals or plants, springs from Love i.e. the Love to Live. From this Love come beauty, progress and all kinds of development and prosperity. If everyone of us is to progress, it is through the force of Love. The more unselfish and purified is love, the higher man will be evolved, and the more peaceful and bountiful his world will be. With hate as the prime mover, the contrary,

destructive effects will be expected, whether man wants them or not. More important, the mind that has surrendered itself to hate and its allies will not be able to go scot-free. It is destined to burn in the 'Pit' it has created. This is true in the after-life as well as in this life. The realms of woe, call them pit or hell, exist on both sides of the gate called death. Consider the following sayings of the Buddha and you will see the truth of the matter.

*Idha Tappati Pecca Tappati
Pāpakārī Ubhayattha Tappati
Pāpam Me Katanti Tappati
Bhiyyo Tappati Duggatiṃ Gato*

An evil-doer burns in both worlds. He burns here and, having departed, burns in the hereafter. He burns, thinking, "This evil I have done." Having entered the realms of woe, he burns even more.

A case to the contrary was made known in the following verse,

*Idha Nanadati Pecca Nandati
Katapuñño Ubhayattha Nandati
Puññaṃ Me Katanti Nandati
Bhiyyo Nandati Sugatiṃ Gato*

A merit-performer enjoys in both worlds. He enjoys here and, having departed, enjoys in the

hereafter. He enjoys, thinking, "This merit I have done." Having entered the realm of bliss, he enjoys even more.

From the above twin sayings of the Buddha the readers will see that for a person to do good and at the same time to take delight in doing so it is necessary that his mind be imbued with Love. This is not the kind of love that is based on selfishness, being confined to one's own wife or husband, parents, children, relatives, friends, party and the like. It must also be extended to all, friends and foes, and men and animals. It must be accompanied with reason and such moral virtues as sacrifice and detachment. It is this kind of love can make the world a better place to live in, even a paradise. This kind of love was meant by the Buddha when he said, "*Loko Patthambhika Mettā*: Metta is the mainstay of the world." What develops love into Metta or Loving-kindness, making it the mainstay of the world, can again be seen in another saying to the effect that *the world is protected by Shame and Fear of Evil*. This is the protection against selfishness in the forms of taking an unfair advantage of others, cheating, extortion, corruption and crimes of violence. Having been so protected, the world will be blessed with peace, which gives man time to work for progress and prosperity.

There is a marked advantage to be derived from Shame of evil and Fear of its results. The twin

virtues are born of Wisdom, i.e. from within. They are unlike shame of others' criticism and fear of the law of the country, both being spurred by outside, man-made factors. Enforcement of Shame and Fear of Evil, being voluntary, is long-lasting and more effective. It relieves legislators and law enforcement bodies much of their efforts and time. Governments have been trying enforcement of laws and rules through threats and penalties, all being outside, violent force. Why not try a gentle method, which is much better, much more effective, with much less budget and trouble? There is nothing good coming out of this neglect of religious values. It is not an exaggeration to say that peoples are looking down upon their own religions, relegating their valuable heritage to the background and sometimes even holding it in contempt. Indications of this attitude are plain to see. Just look at the care and attention showered upon secular education and compare it with that which is given to religious one. What is the honour and dignity accorded a scholar with a degree in scientific or other secular subjects in comparison with the kind of recognition extended to another scholar well versed in religious knowledge. And what about the public enthusiasm in secular subjects as against their interest in religious knowledge? *These are indications of a modern man's indifference to, and sometimes even contempt for, religions. The evils resulting from*

this attitude are evident now. Unchecked they will plunge the world into a worldwide catastrophe soon.

It is a great pity that most people have now been hypnotised by the words of those whose minds are still dominated by lust, hatred and ignorance. Scholars and experts in secular subjects, however intelligent, know 'one side of the shield.' They are still powerless in helping themselves out of suffering, not to say helping others. But religious founders such as the Buddha, Jesus Christ and Mohammed, being selfless, are highly evolved, noble-minded persons. Their Messages have been handed down through centuries and have been known throughout the world. Why do we not experiment on their teachings and so apply their principles and spirit into our everyday life and work? Only by doing so, sincerely, intelligently, and patiently, can we realise, and make other people realise as well, how religious virtues can solve our life's problems, to the benefit of all concerned.

Perhaps it is because there are many religious persons who despite their good knowledge and good behaviour cannot express themselves in terms of modern knowledge to the satisfaction of modern students. Besides, religious virtues cannot be tested in a scientific laboratory or proved by scientific methods. The crucial test must be conducted and the absolute proof demonstrated within

everybody's mind. Possibly these have caused religions to fail to attract the attention of most students and scholars, whose interest is centred on matter rather than on mind. But the situation is by no means hopeless. With religious persons able to convey their thoughts in terms appealing to the desires of their contemporaries, it is time we turned to our forgotten heritage. We shall then be convinced that it is possible for our country to survive the present threats and upheaval. Already called Buddhists, our people need but a re-awakening to see for themselves the immeasurable value of a Gem that is put "in their own hands." This implies an enthusiastic and systematic research upon the Buddha's teaching,---its adaptability to the life and problems of a modern man, its validity and nobility in relation to individuals and societies, small and great. These reseaches, properly conducted and publicised, will help the country not only to survive but also to develop and progress. The problems of poverty, privation, corruption, the gap between the rich and the poor, and the like are not unsolvable ones. With human resources developed properly in religious virtues, solutions are possible, with far less efforts and in far less time.

Accounts of *Māra* (comparable to Satan) the Evil One and his hordes surrounding the Buddha and

threatening to dethrone him on the night of his Enlightenment are worth a careful study. So mighty was the *Māra's* army, being equipped with destructive weapons of all kinds, that even the celestial beings around the Buddha were frightened and went away, leaving the Buddha to fight his battle alone. Finally the Buddha, by means of the store of his merits accumulated so far, was able to conquer *Māra*, despite the Evil One's formidable army and weapons.

This story was explained already in one of my booklets entitled "*The Sources of Divine Power*," its English version having been publicised in summarised form in the WFB REVIEW Vol.VI.No. 1. (January -- February 1969-2512), Journal of the World Fellowship of Buddhists Headquarters, Bangkok. The readers may refer to whatever version they prefer. Hereby I assert that *our country is being protected by the Divine Power*. The how and why were already discussed in the above-mentioned book. What we must do is to join forces with those Divine Sources, making their protection a two-way affair, thus to create the force of unity and goodwill accompanied with religious virtues. It is through this benign force being adequately developed that *our country* will be carried through the ordeal that threatens to obliterate it from the map of the world as at present. We shall survive and then emerge a free and prosperous nation.

Let us, therefore, guard ourselves against being victimised by the negative forces of hate, envy and enmity. Let us extend our love, pure and unselfish, to all, friends and foes alike. Our force of love accumulated here will go to combine with the force accumulated by the Sources of Divine Power, each strengthening the other to form a more powerful, more solid unit of benign force. There may be some who are inclined to regard this force as nebulous, unreal and powerless. This is not so. Forces, be they negative or positive, malign or benign, have power in their own way, as the name of each implies. Acting on each other, the one with more accumulated power supporting is sure to defeat the other. Thus the force of love, when it is pure, unselfish and benign, and when it is adequately accumulated, can resist the violent and destructive power and nullify it in the long run. We Buddhists know that the fruits of merit dedicated by us to the deceased can reach those with receptive power in the after-life and can be of some help to them. As a matter of fact such fruits of merit are nothing but the force of love and goodwill projected to them from us here. Even though this force of Loving-kindness may be accumulated mostly or only by our people, yet supported by religious virtues of faith, purity and selflessness, it can be enough to stimulate and strengthen the same kind of force in the mental plane of the Divine Power

and together produce a more forceful power against the destructive elements, carrying our country through the disasters and calamities to a period of glory and prosperity ahead.

To repeat what was mentioned in my introduction, do not be discouraged by others' sneer or indifference. Let's start this campaign of Loving-kindness with ourselves. One grain does not fill the sack, but it helps.

And on the individual level, whenever we project this benign force to others, the first persons to profit by doing so are we ourselves who are its projectors. This irrespective of whether the force so projected will have reached and acted on others or not. This is the blessing that can be guaranteed, being infallible and spontaneous, as sure as night and day following each other.

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