

CRITICISMS AND DISCUSSIONS.

BUDDHIST LOANS TO CHRISTIANITY.

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO RICHARD GARBE.

In the October *Monist* Professor Garbe, of Tübingen, admits a Buddhist basis for the Christian legends of Saints Christopher and Eustace. In the early part of the same article he also admits Buddhist influence in the Christian Apocryphal Gospels, but denies it in the Canonical ones. I herewith submit two passages from the Gospel of Luke which appear to me to agree as closely with the earliest Buddhist texts as do the saint-legends admitted by Garbe.

The first parallel is taken from my now forgotten pamphlet of 1905, *Can the Pāli Piṭakas aid us in fixing the Text of the Gospels?* The second is from my *Buddhist and Christian Gospels*, as indicated in the first edition (1902) and partially printed in the third and fourth (Tokyo, 1905, and Philadelphia, 1908).

THE ANGELIC HERALDS AND THEIR HYMN.

Luke ii. 8-14.

And there were shepherds in the same country abiding in the field, and keeping watch by night over their flock. And an *angel* of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good tidings of *great joy* which shall be to all the people: for *there is born* to you this day *in the city of David* a Saviour, which is *Christ* the Lord. And this is the sign unto you; Ye shall find a babe wrapped in

Sutta Nipāto, Mahāvaggo, Nālaka-sutta (known only in Pāli, but with analogues in later Buddhist books).

The heavenly hosts rejoicing, delighted,
And Sakko the leader and *angels* white-stoled
Seizing their robes, and *praising* exceedingly,
Did Asito the hermit see in noonday rest.

[He asks the angels why they rejoice, and they answer:]

The *Buddha-to-be*, the best and matchless Jewel,

swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace, divine favor
among men.

Is born for weal and welfare in the world of men,

In the town of the Sākya, in the region of Lumbini:¹

Therefore are we joyful and exceeding glad.

The parallel is further carried out in the narrative. The hermit, like the shepherds, goes to pay his reverence to the newborn Saviour.

Considering that between the Greek of Luke and the Pāli of the Sutta Nipāto there may lie some lost book, the words in italics are practically identical. The Pāli words *hita-sukhatāya* ("for blessing and happiness") are a convenient phrase, often recurring in the texts. We here translate them "weal and welfare" for the sake of poetic effect, but they mean much the same as the English phrase, "peace and prosperity." Now if Luke, or rather his Oriental intermediary, did actually use the Pāli poem, it is evident that omitting *jāto* ("born"), we find a very good equivalent of the line:

Manussaloke hitasukhatāya jāto,

in the line:

ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς εἰρήνῃ ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκία.

It is thrown into the form of a Hebrew parallelism, in which peace on earth and divine favor among men are interchangeable terms. It is well known that the oldest manuscripts of the New Testament are at variance here over the word *εὐδοκία*. Some read *εὐδοκίας* (genitive) and then we must render: "among men of good will" (or the divine favor, i. e., the elect, as Alford says).

This is the reading of the Vulgate and of the English and American Revised Versions. It is because *εὐδοκία* in the Septuagint means so often the divine good pleasure that the Revised Version has "men in whom he is well pleased." But the old King James reading (following the *textus receptus* afterwards fixed by the Dutch printers Elzevir) is borne out by the analogy of all Hebrew parallelisms. This is therefore a passage wherein the Pāli Pitakas can probably aid us in fixing the text of the New Testament.

This parallel is ignored by Garbe, though he mentions that of Asito and Simeon, which is connected with it in the Pāli. But the

¹ A pre-Christian inscription was lately discovered, marking the site of Lumbini.

Lalita Vistara and other late books relied on by Garbe, and by Sanskrit scholars generally, do not contain the Angelic Hymn. I admit the weakness of the Asito-Simeon parallel, when taken by itself; but its strength consists in its organic connection with the Angelic Hymn, both in Luke and the Sutta Nipāto.

In *Buddhist and Christian Gospels* (4th ed. only) I have shown that Luke's alteration of the Buddhist legends is no more than his alteration of the Synoptic tradition (Mark xvi. 7, compared with Luke xxiv. 6).

When all this has been studied as carefully as older points of Gospel criticism, the day will come when school-children will know that "Peace on earth, good will to men" is a Buddhist text.

THE LORD'S THREE TEMPTATIONS.

Luke iv. 1-3.

Classified Collection, Book of Temptations (Pāli and Chinese).

In the Wilderness.

And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan, and was led by the Spirit *in the wilderness* during forty days, being tempted of the devil. And he did eat nothing in those days; and when they were completed, he hungered.

At one season the Lord was staying in the land of the Kosalā, *among the Himālayas*, in a log-hut. While thus living *in hermitage retired*, the reflection arose within him: "It is really possible to exercise dominion by righteousness, without slaying, or causing slaughter; without oppression or the making thereof; without sorrow or the infliction thereof."

Temptations to Assume Empire and Transmute Matter.

(In different order in Luke and the Pāli.)

And the devil said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, *command this stone that it become bread*. And Jesus answered unto him, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone. And he led him *up*,³ and shewed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. *And the devil said unto him, To thee will I give all this authority, and the glory of them: for it hath been delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship before*

Then Māro, the Evil One, perceived in his heart the thought which had arisen in the heart of the Lord and he approached the Lord and *spoke thus: "Lord, may the Lord exercise dominion; may the Auspicious One exercise dominion by righteousness, without slaying or causing slaughter; without oppression or the making thereof; without sorrow or the infliction thereof."*

"What seest thou in me, O Evil One, that thou speakest thus to me?"

³ Matthew has: *unto an exceeding high mountain* (thus agreeing with the Pāli idea of the Himālayas).

me, it shall all be thine. And Jesus answered and said unto him, It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

"Lord, the Lord hath practised the four principles of psychical power, hath developed them, made them active and practical, pursued them, accumulated, and striven to the height thereof. *So, Lord, if the Lord desired, he could turn the Himālaya, the monarch of mountains, into very gold, and gold would the mountain be.*"

[Buddha replies:]

"The whole of a mountain of gold, of fine gold,

Twofold, were not enough for one;
Let him who knoweth this govern his life.

He who hath seen Pain and whence its rise,

How could such a one bow to lusts?
He who knoweth that the substratum of existence is what is called in the world 'Attachment,'

Let that man train himself in the subdual thereof."

Then Māro, The Evil One, said, "The Lord knows me; the Auspicious One knows me." And he vanished thence, unhappy and disconsolate.

Temptation to Commit Suicide.

(Continuous in Luke).

And he led him to Jerusalem, and set him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence: for it is written,
He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, to guard thee:
and,
On their hands they shall bear thee up,
Lest haply thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Book of the Great Decease: Long Collection, Dialogue 16; Chinese, No. 2. (Three months before Buddha's death).

Now not long after St. Anando had gone, Māro, the Evil One, approached the Lord, and standing beside him, addressed him thus:

"O Master, let the Lord now die the death of an Arahāt,* let the Auspicious One die the death of an Arahāt: now, O Master, is the time for the Lord to die this death; and moreover this word was spoken by the Lord: 'O Evil One, I shall not die the death of an Arahāt until my

* *Parinibbātu*, literally "become extinct," conveying the double idea of physical and passionial death. See note in *Buddhist and Christian Gospels*, fourth ed., Vol. II, p. 99.

And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

monks and nuns, my laymen and lay-women become wise and trained disciples, reciters of the Doctrine, walking in the doctrine and the precepts, walking consistently, living out the precepts.....

"And now, Master, [is this the case]. O Master, let the Lord now die the death of an Arahāt, let the Auspicious One die the death of an Arahāt; now, O Master, is the time for the Lord to die this death!"

When he had thus spoken, the Lord said unto Māro, the Evil One: "O Evil One, be content; the Tathāgato's Arahāt-death will not be long: at the end of three months is the time for the Lord to die the death of an Arahāt."

The Devil Disappears.

And when the devil had completed every temptation, he departed from him for a season.

Classified Collection (in sequence above).

Here we have, in the Pali and the Chinese of the Classified and Long Collections, representing two Buddhist sects of great antiquity, the following root-ideas:

1. Appearance of the Tempter to the Saviour in a wilderness.
2. Temptation to assume empire.
3. To use mystical power to transmute matter.
4. To commit suicide.
5. Disappearance of the Tempter when foiled.

Now Luke has these same root-ideas, though expressed differently in the third case (or, in his text, the first): viz., the transmutation of stones into bread instead of into gold. Matthew also has them, but he interpolates Luke's third temptation (that of suicide) between them. I therefore give the text of Luke, because it agrees with the Buddhist association, as Luke so often does.⁴

It is imperatively necessary to study these parallels by means of their earliest sources; viz., the Pāli and Chinese Hināyāna texts

⁴ See the article *Luke and Buddhism*, in the General Index to the fourth edition of *Buddhist and Christian Gospels*. Of course there is the possibility that the Temptation scenes of Luke and Matthew (they are not in Mark, though he mentions the Temptation) belong to a lost book whereto both are indebted. I believe scholars generally consider that these scenes were not in the Logia source. My own belief is that Luke was the first to introduce them, and the editor of Matthew adopted them from his text.

on the one hand and the Greek Gospels on the other. Seydel made the great mistake of dealing with late books like the *Lalita Vistara*, without distinguishing its lesser value for the comparison. Even so learned a scholar as Garbe still holds to the Seydel tradition, and consequently makes short work of the Temptation parallel by quoting these later legends (*Monist*, October, 1911, pp. 517, 518).

I maintain that there is as much striking agreement between Luke and the Hinayāna texts as there is between the Jātakas and the legends of Saints Christopher and Eustace, except that the latter are much longer and furnish more details for comparison.

In the temptation story there is the same Christian coloring as in the saint-legends, and yet the root-ideas agree. The Christian coloring consists in making the Master quote scripture, whereas the Buddhist idea requires him to state some truth. Again and again in the Jātakas do we find the same magical efficacy ascribed to the calm enunciation of a truth which the Brahmins ascribe to the words of the Veda and the Jews to those of the Torah. In the Zend-Avesta the Tempter uses a similar sacred word, but, as hinted elsewhere (*Buddhist and Christian Gospels*, 4th ed., Vol. I, p. 106), the Mazdean temptation story is only like the Christian one in its theism and its quotation of scripture. The earliest account of the temptation of Zoroaster is in the Vendidad, and it consists of only one, viz., that of empire. Before the temptation the fiend makes a vain attack on the prophet's life, and after it the prophet declares that he will defeat the forces of evil by two things:

1. The eucharistic utensils and sacred drink ;
2. A magical word taught him by the Godhead in a past eternity.

While all this is of fascinating interest to the student of religion and of the New Testament in particular, yet it is by no means so close to the Christian stories as are *the earliest* Buddhist ones.

The Classified Collection and the Decease Book represent home-grown primitive Buddhism. And with these does Luke agree rather than with the geographically and theologically nearer Zoroastrian account.

In two other cases does Garbe neglect important parallels from the Pali Nikāyas. On page 521 he gives us interesting evidence, from his Sanskrit reading, of the Hindu character of the idea of walking upon the water, and says (as since amended) that it "belongs not only to the India of Buddhism, but to that of Brahminism also." He ought to have added that the power to walk on the water is among the gifts of a pious Buddhist, ascribed to him by Buddha

himself, in the sixth sūtra of the Middling Collection in the Pāli (No. 105 in the Chinese version of A. D. 397)—a Hindu book far older than the Brahmin Mahābharata (though not of course than its ancient nucleus).

Again on page 517 Professor Garbe says: "Christ fasts forty days *before* the Temptation, Buddha twenty-eight days *after* the Temptation." But in the thirty-sixth sūtra of the Middling Collection we read that Buddha fasted nearly to death before his illumination, and therefore before his Temptation, which latter occurred after he was Bhagavā (the Lord).⁵

No one who studies the *Periplus of the Erythræan Sea*, a captain's log book of the first century (now newly translated by Wilfred H. Schoff of Philadelphia) will be able to agree with Professor Garbe (p. 524) in his limitation of the probability of Indian influence on Palestine to later times. The Periplus agrees, for the sixties, with Strabo, who saw 120 ships ready to sail from a Red Sea port to India in the twenties of the first century. And, as Wilfred Schoff has shown in his article on another page of this issue, the Roman Empire had a sort of Indian craze at that very time.

In *Buddhist and Christian Gospels*, the Lalita Vistara and other later books are treated in the Appendix as "Uncanonical Parallels," while the body of the book deals with canonical parallels, translated from the Pāli texts by myself and compared with the Chinese version of another ancient recension of the Buddhist scriptures (the Hindu original of which is lost) by Professor Anesaki of Tokyo.

When Rhys Davids's *Buddhist Suttas* (Sacred Books of the East, Vol. XI) were sent me by my bookseller in 1881, I found therein a vigorous protest against any attempt to trace Buddhist loans in the New Testament. This made a great impression upon my youthful mind, and acted as a deterrent in that direction until nearly the end of the century. Then, in 1899, Rendel Harris astonished me by postulating a Buddhist influence in the Acts of Thomas and (save the mark!) in the Gospel of Luke! I was stunned at first, then rallied myself and returned to my old objections. During the next seven years, however, deeper research caused me to change; and when in 1906 I observed the double quotation in John,⁶ I admitted that here at least was tangible influence. It was anent the essay which I then wrote that Rhys Davids said

⁵ Samyutta Nikāyo, already quoted. Had the Temptation occurred before the Illumination we should have read *Bodhisatto*.

⁶ See "Buddhist Texts in the Fourth Gospel," *Open Court*, May, 1911.

to me: "The evidences in favor of intercommunication are growing every day." (I asked his permission to quote this, and he granted it). Paul Carus, in *The Open Court*, October, 1911, has adduced a remarkable picture from a Greek vase, portraying a goddess with water for her lower body, and he thinks that both the Buddhist and Johannine texts may be dependent upon some such ancient idea. So they may, but the strength of my case lies in the fact that the Fourth Gospel's express quotations from sacred literature (*Law and Scripture*). Instead of admitting that the quotations are from the Buddhist writings, where I have found them, several of my critics prefer to ascribe them to some lost apocryphal Jewish book. But the time is rapidly passing when scholars will feel compelled to adopt any hypothesis rather than admit the greatness of ancient India and the supremacy of Buddhism which, at the time of Christ, was the most powerful religion on the planet and the dominant spiritual force upon the continent of Asia.

In *Buddhist and Christian Gospels* (4th ed., Vol. II, p. 237) we read:

"A collection of [uncanonical] parallels would probably suggest a Christian influence upon later Buddhism; and indeed we know that, in the eighth century, a Chinese emperor had to forbid the two religions to be mixed. (See Takakusu's note in his *I-Tsing*, Oxford, 1896, p. 224.) This whole field needs very careful working, more than I am able to give."

Two Anglican clergymen, the late Samuel Beal and Arthur Lloyd recently deceased, have maintained this position. The fact is that after Kanishka's Council a new type of Buddhism, predominantly Mahāyāna, gradually supplanted the earlier. This new type was largely foreign, as the primitive type had been native Hindu. Before the Scythian invasions at the end of the first century, the Buddhism of Asoka, with its Pāli texts, had been in the ascendant; and as, in the first century, Christianity was in a formative stage, while Buddhism was settled and aggressive, the loans went from east to west. But afterwards there was a change. In the first place, a different race of sailors appeared in the Red Sea ports,⁷ bearing with them the newer Buddhism which they themselves were helping to modify; and, secondly, Christianity itself was becoming a rival to Buddhism, and was beginning to assert itself.

It may be that Buddhism influenced the Roman Empire by

⁷ I owe this information to Wilfred H. Schoff, translator of the new edition of the *Periplus*.

means of intermediary books, such as that of Elkesai which had a confessedly Buddhist origin ("Seres of Parthia"); but I maintain that the Nikāyas of primitive Buddhism were strong enough to make themselves felt more directly. In A. D. 149 a Parthian prince headed a long series of scholars who translated them into Chinese; but Buddhism had been established in the Greek empire (*Yona-loko*) since the third century B. C., and was quoted, chapter and verse,⁸ by a Greek king, Menander, in the second. Now, the Chinese began to translate Buddhist books immediately upon that religion's introduction into their country in the sixties of the first century; and after a generation or two of translating manuals, lives of Buddha etc., they spent three centuries (circa 150-450)⁹ in translating the Nikāyas (or Agamas). Were the Greeks less curious than the Chinese? Had not they also begun to translate the books they admired long before the time of Christ? My thesis is this:¹⁰

While a religion is in its formative stage, its founders take ideas from their environment, and especially from any system of thought that is paramount, whether in their own country or in those where-with they have intercourse. But, once knit together, and moving by its own momentum, a religion can no longer add to its primitive documents, though it may give way to new influences in later sectarian developments.

The thesis applied is this:

During the first century Christianity was in its formative stage, and was influenced by the Old Testament, the Greek mysteries, the Philonic philosophy and by Hinayāna Buddhism. After the first century Christianity was strong enough to influence another religion in its formative stage. And such was Mahāyāna Buddhism, which was, in fact, a new religion, with new doctrines and new sacred books. At the same time, Hinayāna Buddhism still existed, and indeed its votaries often cultivated the Mahāyāna too. Consequently there could be and there was a complex interchange between Christianity and Buddhism, both of them giving and taking. But the earliest interchange was when the Hellenizing Evangelists Luke and John borrowed some minor features from the Hinayāna Nikāyas, then in the ascendant.

Before closing, let me add a note on the Wandering Jew legend

⁸ So in the Pāli, though Chinese versions do not bear it out.

⁹ Anesaki in *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, 1908, p. 15.

¹⁰ See my remarks on the Imperfection of the Record (following Darwin) in *Buddhist Texts in John* (2d ed., 1911, p. 27).

among the "Uncanonical Parallels" in my *Buddhist and Christian Gospels*. I lately learned that Sabine Baring-Gould in 1866 pointed out that the germ of the legend is actually found in the canonical Gospels:

Mark ix. 1: "Verily I say unto you, There be some here of them that stand by, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Kingdom of God come with power."

Let me repeat what I said last May in *The Open Court*, and which Professor Garbe does me the honor to quote: *Each religion is independent in the main, but the younger one arose in such a hotbed of eclecticism that it probably borrowed a few legends and ideas from the older, which was quite accessible to it.* The loans are not an integral part of primitive Christian doctrine, as I said in my Tokyo preface (1905), but lie outside of the Synoptical narrative, and occur in the two later Gospels of Luke and John, both open to Gentile influences.

Even now I only put forth these parallels upon the same footing as Gaster, Speyer and Garbe's Christopher and Eustace; and if the scholars of Europe and Asia finally decide that they are wrong, I shall withdraw my venture with a good grace. But if this great admission of Buddhist influence upon the Christian Apocryphal Gospels and the Eustace and Christopher legends receives its "brevet of orthodoxy," the next step will lead a new generation of scholars back to the canonical Gospels and the canonical Nikāyas.

ALBERT J. EDMUNDS.

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

FIRST CENTURY INTERCOURSE BETWEEN INDIA AND ROME.

EDMUNDS VS. GARBE.

In *The Monist* for October, 1911, appears a paper by Prof. Richard Garbe of Tübingen entitled "Contributions of Buddhism to Christianity," the essence of which is that common material is found in the Apocryphal writings of both religions, but that no connection can be proved between the Canonical texts, and that this is due to the fact that active intercommunication between India and the Mediterranean did not exist until the second century, or, as Professor Garbe puts it, "Buddhist influence might have penetrated to Palestine by way of Alexandria, but still more probably by way of Antioch in Syria, but they" (that is, writers pointing out similari-