



twb010
newsletter

The Friends of the Western Buddhist Order
president
Ven Sthavira Sangharakshita

Newsletter 10

December 1970

published at
Sarum House 3 Plough Lane Purley Surrey
01.660.2542

BUDDHISM: RELIGION OR EVOLUTION ?

(or, how I learned to stop thinking and love my ego)

If there is one question that rears its grey head before a group like ours more times than any other, it is this: do you seriously think you are going to alter the life of the average western man one tiny fragment, and how do you imagine you are going to do it ? The answer to the first part can be given very quickly and categorically: yes, we do. To answer in some degree the very important second part, I have written the rest of this article, and I hope I may be forgiven for it.

Buddhism has been hovering dangerously on the edge of the British way of life for some sixty years now, and from time to time it has even been admitted to exist by some eminent and much respected British authorities. But, very luckily for that Way of Life, the matter has not got much further than that. It is a notorious fact that great things happen very slowly, often so slowly that they can scarcely be seen to be happening at all. But then, when you consider the enormous inertia of something as big as a Way of Life, it is a miracle that it can even be shifted one inch (sorry, I mean one centimetre.) But recently, scientific measurements have in fact been carried out, using the very latest techniques, and it can now be categorically stated that the British Way of Life has moved significantly during the last decade.

Now many people may not welcome this fact. They may eschew and abhor it, or they may stand naked on street corners and shout down with it at the top of their voices, (no one will bat an eyelid.) as befits their temperament, but no one, absolutely no one can truthfully deny that it has changed.

Now before I am accused by serious minded people of being too flippant for a Buddhist magazine, I will now state very seriously one or two points, before I alienate the entire readership at one blow.

(1) True Buddhism, as representing the heart of the Higher Evolution of Humanity, is a totally alien concept to the vast majority of western people, even to those who claim to know, and quite justly, something about its teachings.

(2) Religion, as a word, is anathema to any group wishing to be taken seriously by established, more or less scientific institutions.

(3) The last thing that 99% of the human race wants to do is evolve.

(There should now be a short interval for drinks and a fag while those three statements take effect.) I am sorry to have to write such a serious article in this manner, but I really feel that the appeal to humour is by far a more effective technique than the appeal to reason, and I wouldn't like to say why; but I know that it works: just compare

the circulation figures of Punch and the BMJ, and you'll see what I mean.)

I will now attempt to elucidate the three statements above, and hope that something logical comes out of them. (if it doesnt, dont blame me, blame logic.) First of all, it is obvious that Buddhism as a philosophic teaching, and Buddhism as an interwoven pattern of ethnic traditions are two totally different animals, and neither look nor smell the same. No other religion has had so many changes in its external appearance; no philosophy has evolved in so many different ways, in so many different countries and times. Yet, like the lettering in the fabled Blackpool rock, there is something which is constant all the way through, running like a gold thread through the many hues and textures of the fabric.

That one constant factor is not expressed in any of the doctrines, nor in any branch of any of the most esoteric schools that have ever existed. The reason is that only that which is not expressed as a teaching will survive through all possible contingencies, and reappear unharmed and untainted after undergoing any catastrophe known to man.

This preservation of essential teachings by the method of non-formulation is at the heart of all true religions, and most of all at the heart of Buddhism. And that is why the 'real' Buddhism -what it is all about- will never be captured by minds not ready for it. In other words, the essence of the teaching we call Buddhism is neither a religion nor a philosophy: it is beyond both categories, and by being beyond them -indeed, by being beyond all conceivable categories- it transmits perennially its truth to the perennially enlightened mind.

Evolution is something which does not happen automatically. Up to a point Nature gives us a few kicks in the right place, and at the right time, but beyond that point, -Brother, youre on your own! So religion can be conceived as a substitute for those kicks, the difference being that here you have to give yourself the kicks, at the right time and place, and that is not so easy. I would think that about 0.1% of religious people follow their religion in this spirit, though I wouldnt vouch for the figure. Viewed in this light, Buddhism doesnt show up too well on the world population chart. But who cares about numbers anyway ?

Finally, a quick glance at statement (3) way back there. One thing it shows us is that 1% of the human race is in for a pretty rough time. Another and more relevant observation is that you dont get somewhere if you dont really want to go there. A very useful question to ask yourself when you have nothing particular to do is: well, why the hell am I playing this game anyway ? A good honest answer to that gets you quite a bit further than washing the car, but its not too good for the ego. In short, if you dont want to evolve, why bother with all the rest of the props ? Buddhism is only

the same old evolution thing in a new disguise, so why play the game if you don't want the payoff? And anyway, the time for religion went out a few centuries back, and it's not very likely to reappear this side of eternity. I guess there's nothing else for it but to get down to it and just plain evolve; throw away all those nice coloured candles brother, reality's waiting just around the next corner!

And man, if that doesn't alter your life - I'll be a Buddha!

ANANDA

BUDDHISM AND ART

Buddhism and Art both effect a two-dimensional expansion in consciousness; the practical results that they achieve are of the same kind, however greatly such results may vary in degree, and however dissimilar may be the methods employed by Buddhism on the one hand, and Art on the other to bring them about. Buddhism effects an expansion of consciousness by acting directly on the understanding and the will; Art produces a change indirectly, by appealing to our sense of beauty.

Since man possesses an emotional as well as an intellectual and volitional nature, and is capable of response to beauty no less than to truth and goodness, it is necessary for him to develop and expand simultaneously the emotional, intellectual and volitional aspects of his nature. Buddhism and Art, therefore, are both indispensable to a balanced spiritual life.

Not that we intend to suggest an absolutely exclusive distribution of functions between them, allotting to Buddhism the sole responsibility for developing the mind, and to Art the sole responsibility for developing the emotions. Every thought possesses emotional colouring, however obscure. Buddhism, though acting primarily on the intellect, certainly makes a powerful secondary appeal to the emotions, especially to the devotional feelings, which are developed as fully, though not so onesidedly, in members of the Buddhist community as in people belonging to religions that appeal more to the heart than to the head, to faith rather than to reason. Art, though it operates on the imagination directly, does not fail to influence the understanding. In poetry especially, it is impossible to dissociate the emotional impact of a work of art from the framework of objective reference to which it is attached and which constitutes its meaning for the intellect.

Whether the life of any particular person will be dominated more by interests pertaining to Buddhism or to Art is a question that will be determined by the relative strengths in him of reason and emotion. We are concerned only to insist first, that the meaning of Buddhism coincides with the value of art; and secondly, that the development of insight through the one, and of imagination and receptivity through the other, is, for modern men and women, in whom the emotional and the intellectual life are of almost equal vividness, not only a need, but almost a necessity.

SANGHARAKKHITA

(based on part of a lecture given in Calcutta in 1953)

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE FRIENDS: A Personal view of the Sangha
from Michael Kennedy, Millbrook, Cornwall

Dear Friends,

The idea of writing came during a recent short visit to London when I stayed with several of you. When the urge to write was beginning to wear off (as it so easily does!), I was encouraged to persevere by a book which I read while there, Herman Hesse's novel A Journey to the East. The novel gave point to the thoughts I was having about our respective paths. The theme of the book is the journey to the East of a group of people calling themselves 'The League'. Their destination is obviously spiritual, the journey itself symbolical, and the organisation and laws of the group esoteric. I interpreted it as in part an artistic expression of the Buddhist Sangha, the kind of Brotherhood of Man towards which we are all consciously striving. The end of the journey is, in fact, enlightenment. Hesse's treatment of the subject brought it home to me that the quest we are on is an art in itself, that we have to make our way of life more creative every moment. We have glimpsed so often the latent potential, but our efforts to realise it too easily splutter out, like damp fireworks. Perhaps we never get near enough to the Source to realise how foolish we are to drift away again! I am certain that we never get near enough to one another, and I was stimulated by the efforts you are making in this direction through the communities you have formed, and the various activities you organise.

I was struck during my visit by a certain latent excitement, the impression of people beginning to feel more deeply than before the potential referred to. The feeling seemed a healthy one, of the kind that is fostered prior to a last ditch-stand, a gathering of momentum in preparation for a breakthrough; perhaps breakthrough is impossible without this kind of driving force which impels us to the brink of creation, and finally, if we value it, and nurture it with full awareness, provides that final impetus for us to make the plunge into the Unknown, so that we experience ourselves in an entirely new way.

It was clear that much of this was due not to the isolated individual; it has been generated by the positive interaction of individual energies within the group. I realised that, despite the problems, the communities you have formed are working, and that it is worthwhile for outsiders like myself to come into contact with them. Yet it is partly the feeling that the communication lines could be much clearer, that prompts me to write this letter.

The London group of the FWBO is more self-sufficient than others, naturally, because it is the headquarters, and has the blessing of the continual personal guidance of the Founder President. Those of us who do not live in London,

and only come into contact with the Friends at a retreat, or the occasional lecture, feel (I hope I do not speak only for myself) anxious to maintain the contact that already exists, and, if possible, to improve it.

The fact is, of course, that one's own path is not always very clear; hence the need to experience that of others, and while giving what we can, learn from them as much as we can. I see my own path at present as more individual, less organised than yours. I prefer to live with my own family in the country, in a house large enough to accomodate, for long or short periods, friends of like mind, in a peaceful place where we can divide our energies between keeping ourselves comfortably, happily alive, and discovering and widening our creative outlets. If the two can be eventually combined, as ideally they should be, so much the better!

Yet I also like to think of a community such as this as a unit in a larger pattern. We are fortunate at present to have several friends living in the same village. My own view of the expanding Sangha is of the increase of similar groups roughly in the same area of the country, close enough anyway for real contact, close enough for valuable exchanges, deepening of friendships, and the mutual reinforcement of ideals.

The connection between these smaller country groups and the FWBO should perhaps be informal, and one of free association, motivated by mutual inspiration, rather than reactive dependence. But, as I have already stressed, it would be a great pity if, through lethargy or apathy, we allowed ourselves to be cut off from the source of inspiration flowing from the London group.

I have confined myself in this letter to the statement of a view, and can offer as yet no practical suggestions which might lead us towards a more vital awareness of the meaning of the Sangha. I hope, however, that the statement is objective enough to be of interest. It is good, surely, that our paths diverge. If we are all creative in our own way, healthily independent of one another, yet open to the benign influence, the occasions on which our paths converge, be they only relatively few, and of short duration, will be all the more fruitful.

yours in the Sangha,

Mike Kennedy.

SCHOPENHAUER AND BUDDHISM by BHIKKU NANAJIVAKO
The Wheel publication nos 144/146. Kandy, 1970
Reviewed by Sumedha

Schopenhauer: to those familiar with the works of the illustrious 'Sage of Frankfurt', the sound of this word operates like a mantra, evocative, full to the brim with meaning. Whether you have read the philosopher or not, Bhikku Nanajivako's booklet (over ninety pages of text, printed in clear, readable type) is a buy you certainly wont regret making.

After an introduction, in which the venerable monk gives us biographical details of Schopenhauer, and some illuminating comments on the identity of Schopenhauer's thought with basic dhamma, he continues, in his first chapter ("Schopenhauer's approach to Indian philosophy") to examine further the resemblances between Schopenhauer's philosophical system and the insights of the Buddha.

The remainder of the book consists almost entirely of Schopenhauer's thoughts; dealing with the Four Noble Truths, expressing himself so eloquently and effortlessly that one feels that one is not so much reading lines of print as talking to Arthur Schopenhauer himself, as he helps us to understand (albeit from a theoretical point of view) what the teaching of the Liberated One means: the unquestionable fact that life is the manifestation of irrational, insatiable life forces, and that, precisely because of this fact, suffering, in innumerable forms and guises, predominates.

Throughout this excellent booklet, Bhikku Nanajivako has evidently been at pains to demonstrate conclusively that Schopenhauer had penetrated into the very heart of the dhamma, and therefore was in a position to communicate his understanding to others. It is a fact to be regretted that Schopenhauer has been so utterly neglected for such a long time. Nevertheless, this admirable work will do much to remedy that, since it will serve to re-introduce the west to Schopenhauer, one of our hemisphere's greatest philosophers, who died a hundred and ten years ago, in Frankfurt-am-Main.

(It may interest readers of this newsletter to know that there is a Schopenhauer Society in this country. The Hon. Secretary's name is Lieut. Colonel E.F.J. Payne, and his address is: The Beacon South, Beacon road, Crowborough, Sussex. Naturally, it would be appreciated if you enclosed an SAE.)

SUMEDHA

EVOLUTION IN NORTH KENSINGTON

Bhante's latest lecture series, "Aspects of the Higher Evolution of the Individual" was brought to a conclusion last Friday at Centre House, Kensington, with a talk on the role of the spiritual teacher in the development of the individual. The series, which has run for eight consecutive weeks at Centre House has been one of the most popular ever given by Ven. Sangharakshita, and the room was filled to capacity on almost every occasion.

The series is a follow-up to the lectures given in 1969 called The Higher Evolution of Man, and has dealt with a more personal investigation of the difficulties which arise

in the course of individual spiritual development.

We would like to take this opportunity of thanking all those friends who ensured the smooth running of these evenings by their tireless help and co-operation. In particular, we express our gratitude to Nora and Christopher Hills of Centre House; Brenda (Gotami), for acting as chairman; Paul (Dharmapala) for taking care of the money matters; Des Crowe and Jenny Kane for catering and tea making; and of course Bhante, for doing all the speaking, and placing his wisdom and eloquence at our disposal.

MEDITATION CLASSES

It is a long time since any report about meditation classes appeared in these pages, and readers not personally in contact with them might have wondered if this was due to any falling-off of numbers, or interest. Such is far from being the case however. On the contrary, despite even Ven Sangharakshita's lengthy absence in the United States during the first half of the year, the process of growth and consolidation has continued without intermission.

This applies particularly to the beginners' class, which continues to meet at 6.30pm each Tuesday. The evening begins with a forty minute meditation session, preceded by brief instruction. This is followed by a break for light refreshment and personal contact, after which Ven Sangharakshita answers questions and leads discussion. From comparatively formal beginnings, the discussion period has become an opportunity for exploration, in depth, of problems both philosophical and personal.

As it is no longer possible to accomodate everybody in the Shrine Room, part of the beginners' class now meets separately in the new room which we took over in the summer, and which has been painted and decorated by Desmond Crowe. At the request of members of the class who had attended the summer retreat, proceedings on Tuesday now close with half an hour of chanting.

The intermediate class, which meets on Wednesday at 7pm has also steadily grown. The shrine is in fact nearly always quite full. Proceedings consist of two fifty minute sessions separated by a short break, the first session being preceded by chanting. There is no discussion. As most of the members of this class have been attending for about two years, the atmosphere generated often reaches a high level of intensity.

The advanced class, which meets on Thursday, is by far the smallest of the classes, being attended mainly by members of the Order.

All these classes are conducted by Ven Sangharakshita, who is available for interviews an hour before each class. In the case of the beginners' class, he is assisted by Paul Thomson (Dharmapala), Brenda Fernay (Gotami), and David Crowley (Devendra)

COURSE IN HUMAN COMMUNICATION

Most of the more than three hundred people who have attended our Easter and Summer retreats confess to having been greatly benefitted by the exercizes which Ven Sangharakshita introduced quite early in the history of the retreats, when he noticed that people seemed out of touch with one another, and suffering from a lack of general vitality due to blockage of energy. Until very recently, however, these exercizes were available only at retreats, where they formed an increasingly important part of the programme, many friends deriving greater benefit from them each year. In response to very strong demand, and many enquiries, Ven Sangharakshita recently agreed to hold a special weekend course in London, to be followed if successful by further such courses.

Accordingly, from 7 to 10pm on October 31st, and from 10am to 1pm on the 1st of November, fifty people gathered at Conway Hall, Holborn, to do the exercizes under his guidance. Many of those who had done them before came with a certain amount of hesitation, not to say trepidation. For all, the three hour sessions passed with amazing rapidity, and practically everybody experienced a perceptible increase in their capacity to communicate, and an enhancement of general vitality.

It was agreed the experiment had been a success. Further courses will therefore shortly become a regular feature of our London programme. Complementary to meditation, they will help provide our ever-growing circle of friends and members with further opportunities for human enrichment and balanced spiritual growth.

SARUM HOUSE CELEBRATES

We do not presume to have established a western tradition for Buddhism - not yet anyway; but within our own context, we already have the seeds of an entirely indigenous 'culture'. It is too early yet to define that culture, but we are very aware that we have our 'ways' and attitudes, based on the sum total of our group experience of Buddhist teaching. This 'way' is essentially very personal: we eschew imitation, but at the same time try to absorb everything which we see as 'Harmonic', promoting peace of mind, creative, and in the spirit of true community.

Towards this end, Sarum House has, in the past, been the natural focus of community events, those events which bring people as close together as they will allow themselves to be brought, and simultaneously fostering feelings of reverence, love, and worship. In May we had Wesak celebrations, with a hundred people talking, singing, meditating, playing music, listening to traditional scripture readings, offering flowers and the eight traditional gifts to the Enlightened One;

In June, we had an intensive meditation weekend. In October again, a weekend seminar with the emphasis firmly on physical

work, (just to show that Zen doesn't have all the good things!) in which forty friends and members of the Order displayed their Buddha Nature to great profit, both to themselves and to the movement. The weekend was brought to a climax with a full size Puja ceremony which involved the building of a twelve foot square Mandala on the floor, inside which eight initiates chanted for an hour the words of an experimental Sadhana in English devised especially for the occasion.

The occasion proved, above all else, the great value of bodily as well as verbal and mental involvement for liberating and refining the vast, unreachd energies of the mind. But there is much more work to be done in this field, and we are coming up with new ways of realising ancient knowledge almost daily. And every revelation opens undreamed of possibilities, like endless vistas of glittering caverns....

THE FOURTH ROOM

We are very much indebted to Desmond Crowe for his unfailing assistance and practical Dana, and the astonishing amount of energy which he put into converting the ground floor room at Sakura into a beautiful meeting room cum shrine room. The present extension, although an interim measure, is already fulfilling a vital need on behalf of the beginners' meditation class, which now has a regular attendance of more than forty people. We convey also our thanks to all friends who worked on the project, thus providing for the expanded consciousness an appropriately expanded space.

POSITIVE FEEDBACK

This magazine has a known circulation of seven hundred, and probably a thousand people all over the world read each issue. It is also the only link many people have with our group, and the only evidence which those abroad have of our existence.

This being so, we would like to know what you think of us, and of our - or rather our teacher's - interpretation of the perennial truth of Buddhism. In particular, we would like the opinions of our Buddhist friends in the East, for we do not forget that, in spite of some re-dressing, our faith had its origin in India, and for five hundred years, was strongly influenced by Indian thought. So what about some Oriental feedback? We feel sure that our Western Buddhism must provoke some feelings, and we are interested in your feelings, whoever you are, wherever you are; you are part of our roots; if we forget your part in our growth we inevitably cut off part of our vitality. We are not a stagnant pool, but a flowing stream, forever absorbing new energy, and transforming it into new forces for universal enlightenment.

Do you think we are on the right path?

Do you think we are corrupting the faith by re-dressing it

in bright new clothes?

Do you think the east has something that the west has never known? Or vice versa?

Whatever you think, your views are important to us; if we get some interesting replies, we will try to publish them in our next issue, whether we agree with what you say, or not.

For if we forget you, O Jerusalem.....

We should stand on the heights of our mind...

And know there is nowhere and nothing that is other. (Sumedha)

NEW SAKURA PLANS

As those in regular contact with our movement will be only too aware, our shrine and meeting room at Sakura, Monmouth St. has its days numbered. We are thus faced with the necessity of finding new premises before June next year (1971).

With this newsletter we are circulating an appeal for support, not only financial, but practical as well. Our Teacher's work in this country alone, has been of immense value to countless people, and it is not untrue to say that his work has hardly yet begun.

Our movement, which is itself the product of his guidance and energy, is yet little more than an embryo, no more than a prototype of the final model. If we wish to see that model complete, we must put a vast amount of energy into its realisation.

We hope you will respond appropriately, in the way that you feel best able to help that realisation.

When you can see the tree and your body as one

And know that you are the earth and the Sun

Then give thanks to your teacher, his job well done. (Chanda)

ACTION COMMITTEE

At a meeting on 29th October, to draw up a plan of action for acquiring and converting new premises for the FWBO headquarters, a committee was set up to organise an appeal, follow up replies to this appeal, inform property agents of our requirements, and organise the work of subsequently converting the new building to its new function. The committee was eventually limited to six members: Ven Sangharakshita, Paul Thomson, Stephen Parr, Desmond Crowe, Jennifer Kane, and Hugh Evans.

The group will meet very frequently to consider possible lines of action, and will form ultimately the working party nucleus during the period of conversion.

PUBLICATIONS

Bhante's lecture on 'Mind, Reactive and Creative', originally given at Reading in 1967 had proved to be one of the most popular he has yet given in this country. It explains the remarkable mechanism of 'reaction' in the conditioned mind, and demonstrates how this complex process affects our daily life, and also how we can be free of its insidious clutches by practicing 'deconditioning techniques' such as meditation.

This talk is now available in booklet form, and the price will be determined shortly. (please include return postage costs in all orders for booklets)

Some other of Bhante's writings in process of printing or reprinting are listed below.

'On Glastonbury Tor', a narrative poem written by Bhante in 1969 after a midnight pilgrimage to this ancient pre-Christian tower.

'Buddhism and Art', a forty page booklet originally published in India in 1956. Reprinting December.

'Where Buddhism begins, and why it begins there', also originally published in India. Reprinting 1971.

'The Three Jewels', Bhante's very popular introductory handbook on Buddhism is now being re-issued in paperback in the USA by Doubleday Books. It is to be distributed in this country also and should be available mid-December. German and Finnish translations of this book are also forthcoming.

FREE LITERATURE is available from us for the cost of a SAE.

Copies of the following are available from Sarum House:

Hrydaya (heart sutra) in Philip Kapleau's English translation, arranged for chanting. A Japanese version is also available.

The triple refuge and Lay Precepts, in Pali plus English translation.

Mangala Sutta, in English translation by Sangharakshita.

Sevenfold Puja of Shantideva, English translation by Mrs.A.A.G Bennett. Arranged for chanting.

Tri-Ratana Vandana, (Threefold Salutation to the Three Jewels) arranged for chanting in Pali, with English translation by Sangharakshita.

Dhammapada (The Way of Truth), sections 1 to 6, in an entirely new English translation by Sangharakshita. This is to be collected later in book form.

'The FWBO: Answers to some of your questions.' Copies of this popular leaflet explaining the origin and function of the Western Buddhist Order have now been reprinted. Please ask for as many as you want.

The Tibetan Wheel of Life, an ink drawing with explanatory notes.

CONTRIBUTIONS

We hope very much that this newsletter will continue to represent the outlook of its readers, and to this end we are continually asking for creative contributions of a high standard. Yet it is not, at this stage, an 'arts' magazine: it is essentially a news letter. This means that we want to know what you are all doing in the field of Buddhist activity and 'creative evolution'.

Please therefore let us have your letters and thoughts towards this end, so that we shall keep this publication a living organ, and not just a lifeless list of words. Like everything else which lives, it must evolve, and even those who produce it have little knowledge of where it will all end!

To make the work of collation somewhat less monolithic, may we request all contributors to write or type their copy on one side of the paper only, double spaced, and including at the end the number of words used. And please remember to sign your copy, using Buddhist name if appropriate.

TAPES

KARMA AND REBIRTH

This new lecture, given in July, is so comprehensive in its treatment of the subject that it virtually constitutes the 'definitive edition' of any work on rebirth in the West. It was given after repeated requests for a restatement of the traditional attitudes, but with his characteristic thoroughness, Bhante includes a survey of the evidence for rebirth from a Western point of view, and also the many misunderstandings and difficulties which surround this vastly mysterious subject.

The lecture is issued on two sides of a $5\frac{3}{4}$ inch tape, and runs for 1 hour 50 minutes. Price £2.

ASPECTS OF THE HIGHER EVOLUTION OF THE INDIVIDUAL.

This series of eight talks is now complete (see article: 'Evolution in North Kensington' in this issue.) and each lecture is available separately on tape. Each talk runs for about an hour, and is followed by a group discussion on the questions arising from the lecture.

- HL1 How consciousness evolves
- HL2 From alienated awareness to integrated awareness
- HL3 Individuality, true and false
- HL4 The question of psychological types
- HL5 Psychotherapy versus meditation
- HL6 The problem of personal relationships
- HL7 The individual and the spiritual community
- HL8 Is a guru necessary?

These tapes are now normally supplied on $5\frac{3}{4}$ " reels, at $3\frac{3}{4}$ ips. Price for single tapes is £2 each. For the whole series there will be a reduction of 30%. (ie £11. 4. 0d).

We hope to be able to supply these, and eventually all, lectures on standard cassettes. Please enquire for further details to Sarum House.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the FWBO took place at Sakura on Monday November 9th. Bhante, in his president's report spoke of the need to increase effort on an individual basis. His visit to the USA had shown him that much more can be done if energy and enthusiasm are maintained. The British people in general he said, seemed to be hampered by a sluggishness which students of the higher evolution must strive hard to overcome.

At this, and the subsequent council meeting, the following office bearers and organisers were elected, to remain in office for the following twelve months: Ven. Sangharakshita, President; Terence O'Regan(Vangisa) Vice-president; John Cooper(Marajit), Chairman; Paul Thomson(Dharmapala), treasurer; Brenda Fernay (Gotami), secretary; Keith Rowe(Nanda), printing and publicity; David Crowley(Devendra), retreat organiser. Edward Smith(Chanda) was nominated and accepted for membership of the council.

SUTRA STUDY GROUP

A Sutra Study group has been established by Mr. John Cooper, and is meeting each alternate Sunday at 3pm. at his home, 8 Tait House, Greet Street, London SE1. (between Waterloo Road and Blackfriars Road, one minute from Waterloo (SR) station.)

The present subject of the meetings is the six perfections in the Mahayana school. For further details, or applications to join the group, please ring John at 01 928 3041.

HERE AND THERE

Ven Sangharakshita has now moved from Highgate into more spacious premises at Muswell Hill, which he is sharing with friends. His new address (for correspondence only, please) is: 55 St. James' Lane, Muswell Hill, London N.10.

On October 14th Bhante made a visit to Brighton Group to give a talk on Meditation. The meeting was very well attended, and in addition to the talk, there was a Puja ceremony, discussion, and group meditation.

Paul(Dharmapala) and Brenda,(Gotami) are continuing their regular visits to Brighton to conduct meditation classes, discussions, lectures and pujas. We are happy to know that these weekly visits are very much appreciated, and do much to help members sort out their spiritual problems, as well as propagating the Buddha's teaching in other fields.

Mark Strathern,(Ratna) is continuing his period of study under Jiyu Roshi at the Zen Mission Society in California, USA. He is studying Soto Zen with the aim of becoming a fully trained teacher. We from the WBO take this opportunity of sending him our best wishes for the fruitful outcome of his training.

Bhante is considering the possibility of a second visit to France

early in the new year, to maintain contact with the Paris organisation called 'La Connaissance du Bouddhisme' which he first visited in January.

In the early months of 1971 we are again intending to hold a series of poetry events in London. Anyone interested in reading, or helping to organise these events is asked to get in touch with Stephen at Sarum House. The programme will be broadly based, and will include 'mantric' and other experiential forms.

SPRING LECTURES. Starting on January 22nd is a new series of eight lectures by Ven. Sangharakhita to be given at Centre House under the general title: "Parables, myths and symbols of Mahayana Buddhism in the White Lotus Sutra". The lectures will be given every Friday at 7pm, price 6/-.

* * * *

Due to lack of space, we are not able to thank everybody who has supplied us with leaflets, programmes and information about their centre or group. We would therefore like to thank collectively all those who have done so, and say that their information and contact is much appreciated. We would like to mention especially the Zen Mission Society, Vegan Action (Blackburn), the Sochu Suzuki Zen Group, San Francisco Zen Centre, Tathata Centre, and Centre House Community for their leaflets and magazines.

* * * *

THE WAY OF TRUTH

A new translation of the Dhammapada by Ven Sthavira Sangharakshita

The Pali Dhammapada is a collection of 423 verse aphorisms arranged according to subject in twenty-six sections. Most of these verses are found elsewhere in the Pali Tipitaka: some are original to the Dhammapada. However, all represent, according to tradition, the Buddha's teaching to his disciples on various occasions. The present version is an attempt to reproduce, in modern English, something of the terseness and directness of the original, avoiding the stilted diction and obsolete expressions that have sometimes characterised previous translations.

VI. The Section of the Spiritually Immature.

- 60 Long is the night to the wakeful, long the league to one who is exhausted (with travel). Long is the process of faring on (through repeated existences) to those spiritually immature ones who do not know the real truth.
- 61 If he who goes about (in search of truth) does not find one better than, or (at least) similar to himself, let him firmly lead a solitary life. There is no companionship (for him) with the spiritually immature.
- 62 The spiritually immature person vexes himself, (thinking), "Sons are mine, riches are mine". He himself is not his own, even; how then sons? how then wealth?
- 63 The spiritually immature person who recognizes his immaturity is to that extent mature; the spiritually immature one who thinks of himself as mature is termed immature indeed.

- 64 Though throughout his life a spiritually immature person attends upon (or 'honours') one who is spiritually mature, he does not necessarily know the truth, any more than the spoon knows the taste of the soup.
- 65 If for a moment a wise man attends upon one who is spiritually mature, he quickly perceives the truth, as the tongue at once detects the taste of the soup.
- 66 Of evil understanding, the spiritually immature live as enemies to themselves, committing sinful deeds, the consequences of which are bitter.
- 67 That deed is not well done which, being done, one repents, (and) the result of which one suffers with tearful face and lamentations.
- 68 That deed is well done which, being done, one does not repent, (and) the result of which one receives gladly.
- 69 So long as it has not ripened, the spiritually immature one thinks sin as sweet as honey; (but) when sin does ripen, then the spiritually immature one suffers a downfall.
- 70 Month after month, a spiritually immature person may eat (his) food with the tip of a blade of (sacred) kusa-grass, (yet) his worth is not a fraction (lit. not a sixteenth part) of those who have ascertained the truth.
- 71 Unlike milk, which flows immediately (the teat is sucked), the sin that has been committed does not at once bear fruit. (Instead) it pursues the spiritually immature person like a fire covered by ashes, burning him (only after a time).
- 72 The spiritually immature person wins (theoretical religious) knowledge only to his own disadvantage; it destroys his better nature while splitting his head.
- 73 One who is spiritually immature desires a false reputation, honour among religious mendicants, authority over ecclesiastical settlements, and respect from the families (living) round about.
- 74 "Let both householders and those who have gone forth (from home in search of truth) approve what I have done; let them be subject to me in all undertakings, great and small." Such is the wish of the spiritually immature, (as a result of which) his craving and conceit increase.
- 75 One thing is that which leads to (worldly) gain; quite another the way that leads to Nirvana. Thus comprehending, let the religious mendicant, the disciple of the Buddha, take no delight in respectful greetings, but devote himself to solitude.

* * * * *

(words in brackets represent explanatory notes added by
the translator)

MEDITATION CENTRES

Below is a list of permanent meditation centres in the British Isles which offer facilities for Buddhist study and / or meditation, with instruction as appropriate. The list is by no means complete; those interested are advised to contact the centres concerned for further information.

LONDON Sakura, 14 Monmouth St., WC2. 01.836.0630

Tuesdays 6.30pm Weds & Thurs 7pm

Western Buddhist Order (Mahayana)

Also Zen sitting 6.30pm Mons. (Suzuki group.)

London Buddhist Vihara (Chiswick).

Incumbent Dr. H. Saddhatissa. 5 Heathfield Gardens W4
(Theravada)

Centre House, 10a Airlie Gdns. Campden Hill Rd. W8

01.727.3865 Weekdays 7am. Sats 8am Suns 8.15 am.

Alt. Mons starting Nov.16, open night with meditation.
Many types of meditation practised.

SURREY Sarum House, 3 Plough Lane, Purley. 01.660.2542

Weds. 7.30pm. Western Buddhist Order. Library & study.

Also public puja & meditation every full moon night.

GLOUCESTER Tathata Centre, Botloes Farm, Nr. Newent. Glos.

Tel. Newent 272. Daily programme. Library. Private
retreat facilities. (Mahayana/Zen)

SCOTLAND Samye-Ling Tibetan Centre, Johnstone House,
Eskdalemuir, Nr. Langholm, Dumfriesshire, Scotland.

Tel. Eskdalemuir 232.

Residential Tibetan Community. Large library. Study
& retreat facilities. (Vajrayana.)

We hope to keep this directory up to date, with your help. If you know of a centre, or are starting or running one yourself, please let us know full details of accomodation, facilities offered, charges, school, and full postal address and telephone number if possible. The only proviso is that the centre should follow some school of Buddhist teaching. In this way, we shall be able to make this into an informative and useful service.

* * * * *

Please address all correspondence relating to lectures and the Newsletter, (including copy for publication) to:

SARUM HOUSE, 3 PLOUGH LANE, PURLEY, SURREY, ENGLAND.

Please note that the latest date for copy to be included in the next issue is March 14th, 1971, for publication end of March.

TASHI SHOK!

