

BUDDHIST PARABLES AND SIMILES.

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IT does not appear that the historians of any ancient literature have made a special study, comparative or otherwise, of the illustrative imagery contained therein. Parables, figures, similes have been considered incidentally to style and matter. It may be that separate treatment has been comparatively neglected through choice; it may be that choice will change. In any case the wide field covered by those general investigations precludes the possibility of any special analyses. But it is only yesterday, so to speak, that witnessed the commencement of a comparative treatment of the folk-lore story or fable, and of its analogues in, or travels to, different countries. The proverb has already received some separate consideration. To go no further back than 1904, there lies before me Colonel Gerini's monograph on Siamese Proverbs and idiomatic expressions,¹ many of them having survived unchanged from the date of their importation through the vehicle of Buddhist literature. Incidentally again, several figures and similes come into this interesting work. But their day of independent consideration may yet be said not to have come.

There is nevertheless no hard and fast line to be drawn between the fable and parable on the one hand, and the simile and metaphor on the other. Every child knows that the first two are told to make interesting some lesson that is good but dull, or strange, or both. But the last two may be considered as fables and parables condensed. It is quite easy to condense the latter into the former or to expand the former into the latter. Nathan's dart, "Thou art the man!" feathered with the touching story of the ewe-lamb, might have been compressed into, "For even as a rich man who, to give sup to his guest, were to slay, not from his own flocks, but the one

¹ *Journal Siam Society*, 1904.

ewe-lamb of his poor neighbour, so hast thou, to whom" etc.² The simile might even have been condensed into a word, "O thou Wolf!"—an epithet not less pregnant of rebuke than that in a later message, "Go ye and tell that Fox. . . ."³ Such expressions as "lion-hearted," "unlicked cub," are, so to speak, midget composite photographs, which it is interesting to compare with similar pictures in remote, if not wholly alien literatures; "monkey-hearted" (*kapi-citto*), for example—an Indian mind-picture for capriciousness or curiosity—and again *migabhūtena cetasā*⁴—"become in heart as a creature of the wild," applied to those who had renounced all worldly worries. All such expressions are capable either of calling up in the memory familiar fables or anecdotes, or of being easily expanded into tale or instance. And hence, whether we expand or condense, the more briefly worded imagery seems to possess a claim on investigation differing, at most, in degree from the better recognized claim of illustrations that are more fully embodied.

As an aid to those who may wish to pursue investigation on these lines where the harvest is specially rich, the present writer has just completed, for the Pali Text Society's *Journal*, a thematic index to the illustrative passages in the Sutta Pitaka. This collection—the heart of the Buddhist canonical scriptures—includes the four great collections of discourses and dialogues attributed to the Buddha, the Jātaka, and several shorter poems, including the Dhammapada and Sutta Nipāta, which are now fairly well known to European readers. A moderate acquaintance with Pāli, and the assistance of such translations as are yet made in English and German of these thirty volumes, will place the materials at the disposal of the investigator. And he or she will scarcely be disappointed. One literature will differ from another in fertility and aptness of imagery. But a literature which, in the first centuries of its being, grew, not at the point of style or pen, but in the mouths and ears and memories of its compilers, is likely to woo hearers and court remembrance by way of attractive images. And if, at the same time, those images have found expression in the vernacular of the regions where the literature took birth, and not in any diction reserved for priest or poet, if they are redolent of natural and social environment, if the greater part of them are employed to bring into

² Sam. xii.

³ Luke, xiii. 32.

⁴ Pronounce *chitto*, *che'tasā*. *Miga*, specifically antelope, means generally all wild things, e. g., *siho migarājā*, the lion king of the beasts. "Deer-hearted" would here be misleading, fearlessness being essential to the state of mind referred to.

relief an impressive body of ethical doctrine, deeply felt and earnestly disseminated, the results of such an inquiry should prove interesting in several ways.

The simile or parable, for instance, is there to throw light on some point by way of analogy.⁵ "I have made a simile for thee that thou shouldst understand my meaning," the Buddhist teacher is often made to say. And sometimes the Buddha adds the words—a simile "that is original and spontaneous." Being, as in sooth they are, such as "come home to men's business and bosoms" even across the seas and centuries, they can serve this, their original purpose, not ineffectively with readers of to-day. Their deep-lying esthetic effect on those countries and cultures, where they were imbibed as an integral part of traditional doctrine, can of course by Christians be only imagined. But we can also try to imagine to what an extent, for Christians, the teachings of the Gospels would be remote, abstract and colorless, had they never been assimilated through the medium of those eighty to ninety similes, that range from the lamb and the lilies to the hen and chickens and the cup. We shall then be at a better point of view to understand something of the corresponding perennial charm which has won for the teachings of Gotama the Buddha their age-long hold over all the countries of their adoption.

This fact, again, that the imagery used is true to nature, drawn from the life, from the natural scenes and every-day life of a certain area of ancient civilization, indicates the high value that lies in these materials for the historian. It is well known how hypothetical are the conclusions of scholars as to the dates assigned to the great literary works of ancient India, from the Vedas to the Mahābhārata, and as to the areas within which they were compiled. Much of the evidence for such conclusions as can be made, depends on incidental allusions in one compilation compared with those in another. And these allusions occur very largely in illustrative imagery. The lion and tiger are instances, and so are the lotus and the palm-tree (fan-palm or palmyra). In the Rigveda, supposed to have been compiled before the Aryan immigration, lion-hunting is mentioned, but the tiger is not alluded to; the lotus (*pundarika*) is named thrice, but there is no mention of the palm. In the later Atharva-veda, the tiger rivals and tends to supersede the lion, as the chief of wild beasts. In Buddhist imagery, the tiger is scarcely mentioned.⁶ The

⁵ The generic Pāli term for illustration, *upamā*, is nearly parallel to the Greek *analogon*; *upa*, towards, *mā*, to think.

⁶ Only in the explanatory stanzas *added later* to the longer Jātakas does such a verse occur as, "All hail, ye lions and ye tigers fell."

lion is still the lordly, lonely, fear-inspiring creature, and to him is now given the title "king of the beasts," a name he retained throughout the journeyings of fables from East to West, and which invests him, even at that early epoch, with the mythical halo of a remote half extinct creature. Lotus and palm are not infrequent in Buddhist imagery, but their poetic prominence is slight compared with later treatment. The Ganges, again, its "four great river tributaries," and "river" generally form one of the most frequent illustrations in the Sutta Pitaka, the older Vedas being silent on the subject. Snow mountains, as well as a season of snowflakes and frost, are sung of in the Rigveda as *choses vives*. In the Buddhist imagery, the snowy summits greet us once more, but only as distant visions. "Like to the snowy peak the good shine far."⁷ The magnitude of the Himalayas—"Himavā king of the mountains"—is referred to in anthologies, but when brooks "up in the mountains" are spoken of as rushing down in spate to fill the rivers running to the ocean, the agency called in is not melting snows, but, in the idiom of the plain and the little hills: *deve rassante* (Jupiter pluvius), the rain.

A classification of such incidental allusions will go far to locate a literature in the place and period of its origin. It has been carried out in the case of Vedic literature in Zimmer's *Altindisches Leben*, but similar analyses are yet needed for the Upanishads and the Pitakas, on an equally thoroughgoing system.⁸

Once more, the various forms in which the illustrative imagery of the Pitakas is expressed are not without interest for comparative literature. Pali lends itself easily to compound adjectival phrases. "Wise as serpents and harmless as doves" could in Pali find expression in phrases like "crow-wise" (*kākaṇṇo*)—a term alluding to the story of a very unwise bird,—and "having-forest-gloom-darkened-eyes" (*vanatimiramattakkhi*). Both simile and metaphor, however, occur as substantives and as distinct phrases:

"He is the radiance supreme"

"To fellow-men a torch-bearer
Ever hath honored been by me"

"As the dewdrop slips from the lotus"

⁷ Dhammapada, verse 304.

⁸ Analyses covering only part of the field, either in subject matter or in sources consulted are Dr. Fick's admirable *Sociale Gliederung im nordöstlichen Indien*, based on the Jataka, and the author's "Early Economic Conditions in Northern India," *Journal Royal Asiatic Society*, Oct. 1901, and *Economic Journal*, Sept. 1901.

"Even as the carter who has strayed...into a rough track broods over his broken axle"....

"Like to a lump of foam borne down by this Gangā river."

The great majority of illustrations, whether in prose or verse, take the form of the last three instances. But in about a dozen cases the illustration is given as a story of "once upon a time." These all occur in the three or four great "Gospels" reckoned as among the oldest,⁹ and, through some unknown cause, have not been included in the great collection of tales known as Jātakas, or Birth-stories.

Of other illustrations, a few are given in what may be called the method of the object-lesson, as when the Buddha takes a pinch of sand, a handful of pebbles, or holds up his hand unwavering to make some comparison in magnitudes or in conduct. Thus he is shown as visiting his son, Rāhula, whom he left as a baby, and who early joined his father's order. Washing his feet with water brought by the youth, Gotama leaves a remnant of water in the pan, throws it away, turns the pan upside down, then back again, with each action admonishing his son how small, how thrown away, how topsyturvy, how empty, is the religious profession of those who can deliberately tell lies without shame.¹⁰

Of those classed above as constituting a great majority, upwards of a dozen are, in form, so like the parables in the Gospels that it may be of interest to give an instance in full. This may be called the parable of "the border town and the messengers"¹¹ and it is prefaced by another illustration, which is also included among the Jātaka tales.¹²

A bhikkhu inquired of first one brother and then another, by which way (of meditative discipline) insight might be purified. Discontented with their diverse replies, he appealed to the Buddha, who forthwith answered: "'Tis just as if, friar, a man who had

⁹ Digha, Majjhima and Sanyutta Nikāya's, e. g., see that of the landsighting bird sent from the ship, in *Dialogues of the Buddha* by Rhys Davids, p. 283.

¹⁰ Majjhima Nikāya Sutta LXI.

¹¹ Sanyutta Nikāya, vol. IV, p. 194. Pali Text Soc. Edition.

¹² *The Jātaka*, ed. by Cowell, ii p. 184. The others, contained in this and the Majjhima Nikāya, may be entitled The Anthep and the Digger (the seeker after salvation); The Herd of Deer, the Bog and the Guide (the saviour); The Trapper and his Snare (the snares of evil); The Wound and its Treatment (the good physician); The Plowman (the Work of the Teacher); The Burden and its Bearer (the body); The Escape of the Fugitive (the World and Salvation); The Way of the Pilgrim (comfort in difficulties); The Knife of Insight; The Chariot of Righteousness; The Floating Log and the Bather (the dangers in the way).

never seen a judas tree (*kinsūka*) were to ask, what is a judas tree like? and were told by one and then another: 'It is dark like charcoal,' 'It is red like flesh,' 'It is white like the acacia,' 'Its foliage is like the banyan's'. . . each replying as the tree looked at that season. Even so have these good brethren declared insight to be purified according as each man's disposition had made experience thereof.

"'Tis even, friar, as a border town, having strong walls and towers and six gates, with a wise and prudent gatekeeper, keeping out strangers, welcoming friends. Thither should come from the East a swift pair of messengers, asking for the lord of the city. They are told, he sits in the midst at the crossways. And they twain, having delivered in very truth their message, regain the way by which they had come. And other swift twin messengers come from the West, and from the North, and so deliver in very truth their message, and so depart.

"Now I have made a parable for you, friar, that you might discern my meaning. And this is the meaning. The town is this body; the six gates are the six senses, the gatekeeper is consciousness;¹³ the messengers are calm and insight; the lord is mind;¹⁴ the message in very truth delivered is Nirvana; the way is the noble eightfold Path."

There can of course be no question of multiplying instances long or short, where space is limited and the field so rich. Even that richness, when spread over the forty-five years assigned to a ministry interrupted, it would seem, only by sickness, gives a record that is nearly as scanty in proportion as are the brief logia chronicled of the three years' ministry of Christ. But if the attempt be made to picture merely a day in the life of the Sage, as revealed in the Pitakas, it can be seen how naturally the imagery used by him springs from the scenes that will have met his eye. We can picture him setting out, while the day is yet cool, from his cell (*vihāra*) in some park, his leafhut in forest glade, his cave on the hillside, with little bowl and staff, like the humblest of his disciples:

". . . gentle and slow,
Radiant in heavenly pity, lost in care
For those he knew not save as fellow-lives,"

till, perhaps, he gains the riverside, where flows Mahi, Achiravati, or other tributary of the Ganges, or great Gangā herself. Nearly

¹³ *Sati*; to have *sati* is to be *conscious sibi*. *Sati* and *hiri* together are the equivalent of our "conscience."

¹⁴ *Vīññāna* or cognition. (Feer's text omits the South quarter.)

a century of similes group themselves along the banks. There is the broad-bosomed stream, mighty in power like the current of human desires, in which the heedless are borne away and sink; against which the strong-hearted "upstreamer" fights his way. Eastward, sea-ward bound flow those great streams; a host of diggers could not turn them westward, nor kings or millionaires turn back the heart of him whose "face is steadfastly set towards Nirvana."¹⁵ See that log drifting past! As its chances of reaching the sea, undelayed and intact, so are those in the career of the convert, as one of the parables shows in detail. Crossing the stream is also a fertile source of imagery: the hither shore of perils and the further shore of the "fearless" desired haven; the brave and timid swimmers; the strong causeway¹⁶ and the frail woven raft. The temporary use of the raft, prompting the rescued man to leave it stranded and not bear it away, is likened to leaving the beginnings of mere law-prompted living and "going on unto perfection."¹⁷

The fisherman busy with hook or net, the dumb¹⁸ gasping fish, the wriggling eel and prudent tortoise, the dreaded crocodile and *susuka*, the sheaves of cut reeds, the floating masses of grass and bubbles of foam, the overhanging trees, all render service to the Man who saw.¹⁹ But not all the calling of the man wishing to cross, would ever induce the inexorable law-bound further shore to come over to him, just as no priest ever taught righteous conduct by invocations to Indra and his compeers.

And now the cowherd, having in his charge the cattle of a whole community, as in Alpine pastures in the summer time, brings his herd to the ford to manœuvre a safe crossing. The Teacher watches, and points out some eleven qualities, lacking which no herd deserves his trust, no bhikkhu is worthy of his calling. And the plaintive calves and anxious mothers remind him of the need his newer disciples have of him and of his care for them, a more famous simile being that of child and nurse.

Adjoining the pastures is the *khetta*, or arable ground of the community, into the young corn of which bullocks stray and are

¹⁵ Literally, "whose heart has long been set towards detachment, self-control" etc. (the simile occurs in different settings).

¹⁶ *Setu*. No bridges are mentioned.

¹⁷ Heb. v. 1. "Leaving things *quâ* lawful, let alone what are lawless," are the words in the original; as it were, "getting beyond 'Good' and 'Bad.'" See Majjhima-Nikâya, Dr. Neumann's translation, I, 223.

¹⁸ Fish are repeatedly so characterized, a rendering now, I believe, disallowed (*ἄλλοπος ἰχθῆς*) in the famous lines of Empedocles.

¹⁹ Simile for "the Teacher."

chastised, pointing a moral. Here again a great crop of rural images greets us. For the laity, the *khetta* is the world of teachers and all in holy orders, the field, that is, of opportunity for pious acts. For the teachers the hearts of all men are the field where they may plow and sow seed. And the seed, as in Christ's parable, meets with various fates, and again, seed, when representing the person, not the thing taught, is of varying soundness.

The farmer, while his plowmen and their oxen rest and dine, challenges Gotama to show he has earned his bowlful by plowing, and the ready response comes entirely in metaphor.²⁰ The farmer, be it noted, is a Brahman; a token that the age is anterior to the proscription, for that caste, of agriculture and trade.

He enters one of the gateways of the town, gates compared as in Bunyan's allegory, to the avenues of sense, and we get another swarm of figures, from the street, the house, the market place. The wheel of cart or chariot follows the hoof like dogging retribution; and revolves about its linchpin, as beings in birth cycles are bound to their karma. The rich man's well-trained carriage thoroughbreds, the rāja's well-trained elephants come often into the pictures of an ethic of self-mastery, as does the sensitive temperament of the high-bred horse compared with the dullness of the plodding hack. The chariot of righteousness, driven by the Dhamma, by Reason, or by the Master, supreme charioteer, goes its way along the road that is called Straight, to the land of No-Fear, its syce, Right-Views, running before. The king's seven relief posting chariots, in readiness for a forced journey, are as the seven grades in the study of the holy life.

Soldiers in armor marching by suggest the armor of righteousness, as they did further west to St. Paul. And the evil doer they hale before the rāja is not man's only enemy that can "break through and steal." At the "crossways," the nucleus of the town, are shops (*āpana*) and workshops: the beef-butcher, as well as the mutton-butcher, is there, for these were days long before beef was tabu. The wheelwright planing knobs and blemishes out of his tyres; the fletcher molding his arrow points; the goldsmith applying the ordeal of fire to his precious metal; the potter, with his oven, his molds in two parts, his brittle wares, is here; and so are the dyer, the painter, the house-builder, the cooper, the leather dresser, and the florist. "Even as a painter paints in colors frescoes of human shapes on panel, wall or cloth, so does the worldling cause to come into being the constituents of yet another rebirth."

²⁰ Translated in Rhys Davids's *Manual of Buddhism*, S. P. C. K.

Children playing then as now with sand or mud, jealously guarding what is "mine," and a minute later knocking it no less earnestly to pieces, afford a picture of the power of self-analysis to dissipate the glamor about an object craved for, and the craving itself as well. The growing babies learn to do without leading-strings, and, from experience, to dread the fire, in these, as in Western similes, and more, to point a moral for adult disciples. These, if unwary are further compared to the mouse, whose imprudent move is looked for by the *bilāra*—pussy's Pali name—waiting on the rubbish heap. And the watch dog, chained to his post, then as now, might be bribed by a thieving tramp, as conscience is deceived by sense. If, again he winds his chain round the post, getting shorter range instead of longed-for liberty, he affords an ironic simile of that hankering after some form of after-life which did but bind the craving soul more closely to the bondage of life. For after-lives could only be conceived in terms of life as known.

If we halt with the Master at a house, another large family of images detach themselves to meet us;—the house itself, if that of a "house-father" in humble circumstances may be constructed, as were those of our Saxon forefathers a thousand years later, "of planks and withy string courses, of rushes and mortar,"²¹ enclosing a portion of space." Equally definite were the constituents of bodily form with its, so to speak, enclosed portion of mental element.²² The roof terminated in a *kūta*, or peak, a figure for a culminating doctrine, virtue or vice. Looking into the doors of two houses set close together illustrates the power, attributed to the saint, of divine power of vision as well as ordinary sight.

Fire, whether within the house or without, as servant or as master, plays a great part in these similes. Its luminance, its dependence on fuel, its power, the danger of it, and its insatiableness, are primitive conceptions appealing to a doctrine which extols the splendid function of the wise and good, insists on the universality of causation, and emphasizes the might of the passions.

The adjuncts of the household fire, the copper or brazen pots and pans, have also to play their part in metaphor, the various coatings defacing the polished surface being likened to the five great Hindrances of the bright, arduous, efficient life of the pure in heart: sensuality, ill will, sluggishness, worry and doubt. The polished surface of the *ādāsa* or mirror illustrates the importance

²¹ Majjhima-Nikaya, 28th Sutta.

²² A passage in the Upanishads, the current mythology, consigned mind, at death, to space, viewed as a fifth element.

of *reflection*, the word-play being identical with that possible to European languages. More distinctive is the metaphor of the wardrobe, or clothes-chest whence the choice of special suits or "robe-pairs" (*dussayuga*) for different occasions, is used to illustrate the well-ordered, well-stored intelligence.

The imagery grouped about the women busied round the hearth reveals a patriarchal state of society, with all the standpoints implied therein. The brethren diffident in their faith are compared to the newly-wed daughter-in-law's nervousness on entering her father-in-law's household. The housewife testing with finger and thumb the rice she is boiling, is said to have in common with all her sisters, a two-finger intelligence.²³ And the ways of women are likened, for caprice, crookedness, wantonness, seductive power and all the rest, to the path of a fish in the sea, the bends of the river, a public house or highway, to fire and flood, to the cat and other monsters. All such lore is of course Indian or Patriarchal, rather than Buddhist. Very few such similes have been fathered on the great Sage, who was quite impartial, in his appreciation of great intellect and high character, as to distinctions of sex. The degree to which women were at this time showing great unrest beneath the patriarchal regime and interest in the religious movement seething around their doors, does not come into our subject. Our central figure has regained the quiet of the woodland paths, and is either dining or taking siesta beneath a tree.

Some thirty to forty images are occupied with trees, from the folk-ethics, which compares treachery to a friend with lopping off the branch that gives you shade, to the doctrinal image of the tree's long growth as resembling that endless succession of rebirths, which the wise man, like the woodcutter, was concerned to terminate. Fruit as a simile of attainment, and the analogy of "the sere, the yellow leaf" is of the East, no less than of the West. A more distinctively Indian simile is that of such plants as the reed, the bamboo and the plantain perishing on attaining fruition, as the evil-doer is punished by his own deeds. But perhaps the most distinctively Buddhist imagery where trees play a part, is that used by the Master in discoursing to his leading disciple, Sāriputta, on the five states in which living beings exist: hell, the animal kingdom, the world of "shades" or ghosts (*pitti-visaya*), human life and life in some heaven. The first two are by the Teacher likened to a burning pit and to a pit of filth, into either of which the weary foredone traveler unforeseeing falls. The third is as a tree on barren soil, scanty

²³ A simile idiomatic in Italian.

of foliage, beneath which some such poor wayfarer finds no respite from the heat. The fourth is as the dense shade of a flourishing tree, where he would find great relief. The fifth is as a lofty terrace, where before a fine house the exhausted traveler sinks on a comfortable couch in great content. But,—and here the Buddha passes beyond the accepted beliefs—there is yet another state, likened to a lotus pool of cool translucent water, where, emerging from a fearsome forest, the wayfarer could plunge in, bathe, and drink, and then, heat, thirst, fatigue and anguish all appeased, could sit in blissful ease in that same wood erstwhile so impenetrable. This is emancipation, Nirvana;—the “rest remaining for” him or for her who has seen the one thing needful, and flung all hindrances to it aside.

It is but natural that to teachers practising the “simple life” of the open air in a subtropical climate, this image of sweet clear calm cold waters should possess peculiar attraction. It recurs over twenty times, and pictures forth various good things: not only emancipation, but also the doctrine itself, the emancipated one himself, the wise man, insight, rapture of contemplation, purity of heart, shallowness or depth of character.

Equally has the breezy silence of the mountain’s breast lent impressive similes to Buddhist teaching. The granite peak unshaken by the tempest, the inexorable heights, the Homeric horror of a mountain imminent and toppling to its fall, the broad brae supporting its forest trees, the lengthening shadows stealing over the plain, are applied, respectively, to the unfaltering arahat, to the grim facts of life and death, to the pressing facts of evil, to the benevolent patriarch, and to the remorseful conscience. But the similes most impressively felt seem to be those of the wider view, whether the idea illustrated be the expanded concepts of a higher ideal, the Lucretian consciousness of security above peril and turmoil, or the nobler vision of a world-saviour, looking down with pity and yearning.

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For the student who will treat of this fascinating theme in a book, it will be possible, not only to do more than just scratch the surface, but also to deal with it from the comparative point of view. He or she will be able to winnow out the metaphors common to the folk-lore and folk-philosophy of India which inevitably found their way into the canonical literature of the then paramount school of thought, and lay them beside others from the great store of the world:

“Still waters run deep;”

“Noisily go the little rills:
Silent goes the great deep.”²⁴

“It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks,”

“Ye would cleave a rock with your head. . . .
Ye have thrust your breast upon a stake.”²⁵

And the residuum, whether original, or annexed from the teachings of other ancient Indian schools, can be further distinguished, either as resembling images used in the religious and ethical teachings of other lands and other ages, or, so far as appears, as peculiarly Buddhist in form, in application, or in both.

Both Christian and Buddhist writings, for instance, have impressed the impartial elements, and the solicitous brooding hen into their service. But with a difference: “Love your enemies, . . . do good to them that hate you—that ye may be the children of your Father. . . . for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good” “Even, Rāhula, as men cast what is clean and what is unclean upon the earth, into the water, air, fire; and the earth, . . . or the fire is not annoyed, does not repudiate, nor bear disgust, so should you practise this earthlike, . . . firelike disposition, nor let your heart be gripped by any contact as nice or not nice. Practise love Rāhula, . . . pity, sympathy, disinterestedness”²⁶ The sublimity in the passionate yearning of the Saviour of men over the stubborn city exalts the homely metaphor of the anxious little hen to its own height. The Buddha takes her in an early stage of her motherly cares, and concerning a subject where earnestness is not so poignant. “Let a brother, if he have done his utmost in right training, not be anxious as to the result. He will surely come forth into the light in safety. Even as a hen who has duly brooded over and sat herself round her dozen eggs, may yearn, ‘O that my little chicks may break open the egg-shell. . . . and come forth into the light in safety!’ Yet all the while those little chicks are sure to do so.”²⁷

These comparisons from the esthetic standpoint would certainly prove not the lest fascinating part of this book that awaits its author. Where, in Buddhist or other literatures, can we plunge so gallantly into the color and sound, the stress and bustle of agitated mass-movements, as we do by the help of its similes, into the first book of the Iliad, with its buzzing bees, its wind waves in the corn, its refrain

²⁴ Sutta Nipāta, verse 720.

²⁵ Samyutta-Nikāya, i. 127.

²⁶ Majjhima-Nikāya, i. 423.

²⁷ Buddhist Suttas (*S. B. E.*, xi) 233.

of roaring breakers, its crests of fire running over the slopes? How different is the wealth of quiet elemental beauty in the Gospels: "The wind bloweth where it listeth" . . . "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun" . . . "I am the true vine" . . . Can any Christian possibly eliminate the personal equation in which these pictures lie enframed? Can she, with what Matthew Arnold called the "Indian virtue of detachment," discern elemental, or other beauties, subtly or broadly sketched in the imagery clustering about Buddhist ethics? Let her anyway, or him, not make too hasty a survey of figures that have not twined themselves about the growth of childhood. As a parting valediction I will translate one or two elemental pictures. In the former is a soberer loftier version of one of Heine's half sublime half ironical, wholly rhapsodical figures in the Nord-See.²⁸ "Men may use manifold speech towards you brethren, rough and smooth, kind and cruel. But ye have, towards every one of them to cultivate these thoughts: we will not let our heart be disturbed nor evil sound escape our lips, kind and compassionate will we abide, our heart affectionate, free from secret malice. And such a man will we irradiate with loving heart, and going beyond him will we irradiate the whole world with heart of love, broad, deep, unbounded. If a man sought with spade and basket to dig up and remove the whole earth how should he succeed? for deep and immeasurable is the earth. Well then, say ye, we will suffuse the whole world with a heart like the great immeasurable earth. And if a man came with paints and sought to paint pictures on the sky, how should he? for formless and invisible is space. Well then say ye: we will suffuse the whole world with a firmamental heart, grown wide and infinite. And if a man came and sought to dry up Ganges with a torch, how should he? . . . Well then say ye: we will suffuse the whole world with a heart like Gangā, deep and infinite, free from wrath and ill-will" . . .

"All the means that can be used as a basis for well doing are not worth the sixteenth²⁹ part of the emancipation of the heart through love. That takes all those up into itself, outshining them in radiance and in glory. Just as whatsoever stars there be, their radiance avails not the sixteenth part of the radiance of the moon. That takes all those up into itself, outshining them in radiance and

²⁸ Readers will recall the fiery writing on the darkening sky of the Norway pine dipped into Etna: "*Agnes, ich liebe dich!*" The following two groups of figures occur in Majjhima Nikaya, 21st Sutta, and in Iti-vuttaka, a title meaning "The little 'Thus-saids'" (of the Buddha), the latter group recurring separately in other books with varying application.

²⁹ A reference to lunar measurement of time.

in glory. Just as in the last month of rains, at harvest time, the sun, mounting up on high into the clear and cloudless sky, overwhelms all darkness in the realms of space, and shines forth in radiance and in glory. Just as at night, when the dawn is breaking, the morning star shines out in radiance and in glory. Just so all the means that can be used as a basis towards well-doing avail not the sixteenth part of the emancipation of the heart through love. That takes all those up into itself, outshining them in radiance and in glory."