

# The Open Court

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

Devoted to the Science of Religion, the Religion of Science, and the  
Extension of the Religious Parliament Idea

Founded by EDWARD C. HEGELER

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# THE GOSPEL OF BUDDHA

By

DR. PAUL CARUS

*Pocket Edition. Illustrated. Cloth, \$1.00; flexible leather, \$1.50*

This edition is a photographic reproduction of the *edition de luxe* which was printed in Leipsic in 1913 and ready for shipment in time to be caught by the embargo Great Britain put on all articles exported from Germany. Luckily two copies of the above edition escaped, and these were used to make the photographic reproduction of this latest edition. While the Buddhist Bible could not in any way be considered a contraband of war yet the publishers were forced to hold back many hundred orders for the book on account of orders in council of Great Britain.

When the book was first published His Majesty, the King of Siam, sent the following communication through his private secretary:

"Dear Sir: I am commanded by His Most Gracious Majesty, the King of Siam, to acknowledge, with many thanks, the receipt of your letter and the book, *The Gospel of Buddha*, which he esteems very much; and he expresses his sincerest thanks for the very hard and difficult task of compilation you have considerably undertaken in the interest of our religion. I avail myself of this favorable opportunity to wish the book every success."

His Royal Highness, Prince Chandradat Chudhadharn, official delegate of Siamese Buddhism to the Chicago Parliament of Religions, writes:

"As regards the contents of the book, and as far as I could see, it is one of the best Buddhist Scriptures ever published. Those who wish to know the life of Buddha and the spirit of his Dharma may be recommended to read this work which is so ably edited that it comprises almost all knowledge of Buddhism itself."

The book has been introduced as a reader in private Buddhist schools of Ceylon. Mrs. Marie H. Higgins, Principal of the Musaeus School and Orphanage for Buddhist Girls, Cinnamon Gardens, Ceylon, writes as follows:

"It is the best work I have read on Buddhism. This opinion is endorsed by all who read it here. I propose to make it a text-book of study for my girls."

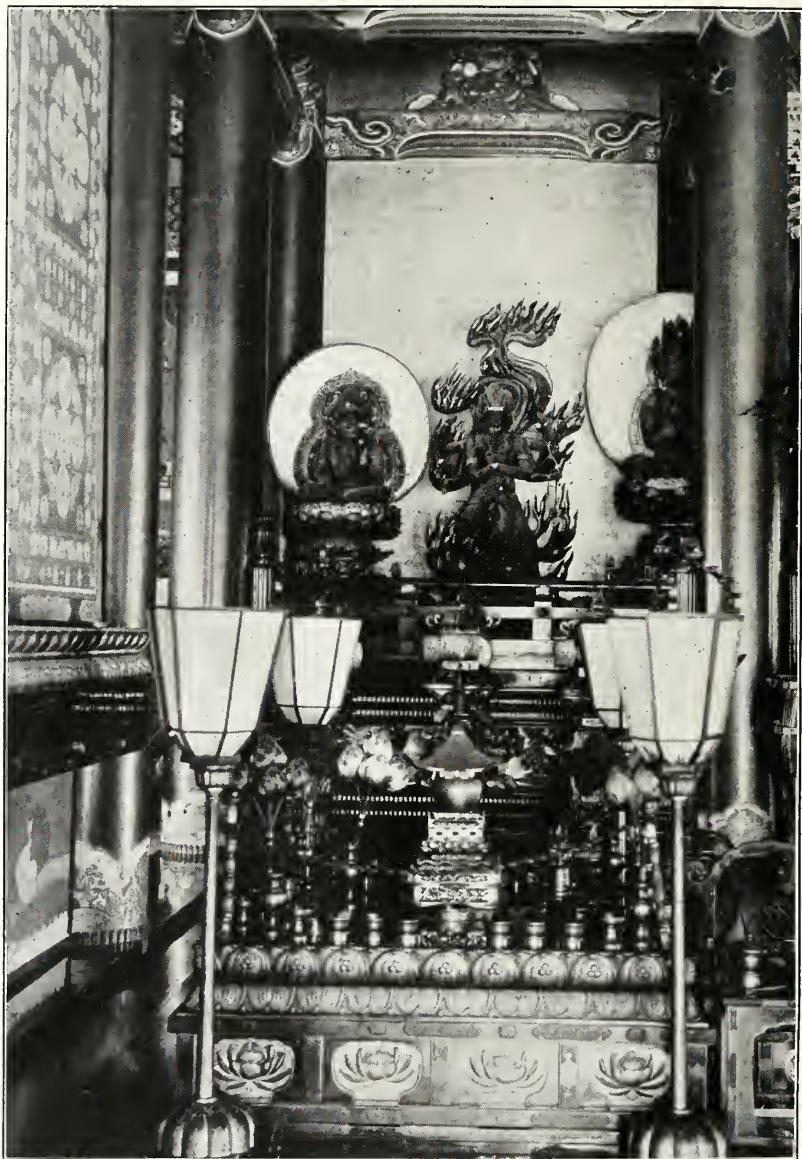
## THE OPEN COURT PUBLISHING COMPANY

122 S. MICHIGAN AVENUE

CHICAGO

ILLINOIS





INTERIOR OF THE KONDO, CHIEF SANCTUARY OF KOYASAN MONASTERY.

*Frontispiece to The Open Court.*

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## THE WORD OR THE SWORD?

BY FRANKLIN KENT GIFFORD.

IN the year 40 A. D., as now reckoned, the King of Parthia sat in his cabinet, awaiting the coming of his Vizier, and meanwhile breaking his fast with a small dish of flat, unleavened bread and a cup of wine. A noiseless attendant bestowed these things; and then, at a sign from his master, withdrew, leaving the King alone.

Though a cabinet, the room was spacious, making with its rare and costly hangings a fit setting for this majestic man, the King. The front of Moses or Jove, the calm, stern eye, touched with benevolence, and all the hall-marks of a powerful, reigning personality were in this man. Neither was anything assumed; but all was natural, unforced, and unconscious.

Presently, the Vizier entered, saluted, and paused at attention, while the King held him in a contemplative glance.

The Vizier was a young man of about thirty, with features stamped with idealism. Austerely clad, in spite of his office, he was a fine, flaming picture of unfallen youth, such as might once have belonged to the King yonder.

But if the thought occurred to the monarch, his countenance remained impassive as he motioned his minister to a seat. Then, drawing from beneath his robe a small roll of papyrus, he tossed it down beside the bread and the wine, saying:

"This roll was found in thy quarters and handed to me. I have therefore summoned thee to explain if thou canst, the presence of this revolutionary document among the papers of a king's officer."

The young man turned pale, and sat a moment with his eyes held by the fascination of the roll of papyrus, lying on the table



before the King. Then recovering himself, in part, he began his defence:

"Your Majesty has been so good as to commend certain acts of my administration, whereby the realm has been eased of injustice; and the cry of the poor has been heard; and the hire of the laborer is not kept back. But Sire, if aught has been done that is worthy of your praise, the honor is due to the words of yonder roll which men call 'The Good News.'"

A great shadow swept athwart the face of the King; his eyes blurred, and his royal robe heaved with a powerful emotion, till presently, it passed and left him as before, serene and august.

"It is high praise for a small roll of papyrus," he observed. "But smaller rolls have hurled kings from their thrones, ere now; and who shall say what this one may do, if it be not rigorously suppressed?"

The Vizier was silent.

"Speak!" said the King. "Canst thou honestly deny that the doctrine of this roll is destructive of all kingship?"

"Sire," returned the Vizier, like a man fronting death without fear, "the day will come when kings will be no more; but meanwhile, even kings may learn from this roll how to govern."

"Well spoken!" said the King. "It is weariness to hear evermore nothing but lies; and because thou art a born truth-speaker, I have chosen thee out of all Parthia, when many are made for thy office. But one fault thou hast: a too easy confidence in men. And therefore have I summoned thee before me: not to convict thee of possessing this notorious document. What are papyrus rolls to me? No, but to bid thee beware of thine enemies. Hide yonder roll where no eye may see it but thine. Or better yet, burn it at once in yonder brazier."

"No! No! your Majesty! No!" protested the young man, pale with apprehension. "Already, this roll is your Majesty's salvation! It hath made us countless friends; and the whole people rallies around the King. To burn it now would be to burn—nay, to crucify our saviour!"

Again the great shadow darkened the face of the King, whose blurred eyes dwelt on vacancy.

"Friends!" he echoed, grimly. "Ay, and enemies too! Hide it, then, young man, deep as the grave; and learn from me the reason why. Yea, why it is necessary to do good by stealth, or be cut off untimely, like your Nazarene of the papyrus yonder. Young man, I have read thy roll; and thinkest thou it hath told me aught?"

Ay, as some old lesson that men learn and teach and so forget, till they hear it, one day, on the lips of others."

The Vizier's troubled amazement was decently veiled, but not hid from the King.

"Young man, if it sound like madness—what I am about to relate—believe me, as thou believest yonder roll, I, the King of Parthia, can tell a tale which is fellow to that. Thy Nazarene, his good news and life and death—what is it but my very own?"

The Vizier's face was a study in astonishment which he vainly strove to curb into the semblance of understanding.

"It is true, Sire," he stammered, "that the Nazarene himself has prophesied concerning many who should bear his cross: and . . . ." he paused in confusion.

"And of these," prompted the King, "it is possible I am one? Ay, it is possible!" he smiled, with a secret irony. "He bore, as thou observest, my own name which, indeed, was common in that country, where I dwelt in my youth. And I bear, as thou mayest note, certain marks in my hands."

Whereat he spread them out, eyed them with stern thoughtfulness, and added:

"Likewise in my feet. The marks of the Romans, which few have borne and lived to tell the tale.

"And the Romans bear," he continued with the wild light of justice crossing his countenance, "the marks of my sword. A defeat so crushing as they have but newly received at the hands of a Parthian king, they will not soon forget."

The face of the young Vizier wore a mingled look of incredulous horror and compassion for the King who bore the marks of a crucified slave. Then the King drew the royal robe over his scars and resumed his narrative.

"Young man, thou art touched with this passion of the Nazarene for a thankless world. Have I not felt it? Yea, and as good as died for it. These scars bear me witness how I won the hatred of the Roman assassins and the good people of the little province I had hoped to save from its littleness. I was a young dreamer, like thy Nazarene, whose garbled speeches thou readest in the little papyrus thou art so zealous to hide. But have no fear of the King. These thoughts were my own in those days. Mine, say I? The thoughts of all generous youth, with souls awake to the world-passion. Ay, surely, thy Nazarene was a man."

"Ay, your Majesty," said the Vizier; "and some there be who begin to call him a god."

The King nodded with a certain colossal irony. "If so, it would not be the first," said he. "It was ever the way of men: to first crucify and then deify a son of man; and so return every one to his own way, and make the cross of none effect.

"In those days, mark well, my sympathies were with the world. The poor, damned world of suffering, blundering fellow men! What better could I do with my life than lay it down, if need be, for these my friends?

"But trust me, young Sir, he who has given his life, and then contemplates the result, will feel otherwise. His sympathies will return, at last, to himself; to one man against the world. Why not? When David fought Goliath, that vast bully and braggart, is not our sympathy with David against the giant, who says to the generous youth: 'Come to me, and I will give thy flesh to the birds and beasts.' One man against the world, that vaster Goliath! Yet the man outwits the monster and brings it to its knees! Harken, young man, to the story of that battle; and if thou art still convinced that the world may be conquered by such weapons as generous youth would employ—why, go to your Nazarene and be crucified. I warn thee, it will come to that."

"Ay, and why not, O King?" said the Vizier calmly.

"My tale shall be thy answer," returned the King, with an equal calm. "Thy Jesus died; but had he lived? Had he survived the Roman cross, as I did, by a sort of miracle, or chance, or favor of God? Call it what thou wilt. When will the world cease to quarrel about words?"

"Once upon a time, a spirit came to the young man yonder and offered him a sword. Thinkest thou it was no temptation? With the Romans in the land, robbing, killing, enslaving a once free people? A people, mark thou, whose genius was to the Roman as Hyperion to a satyr. With the sword of David on his thigh, what might he not have done? Yet the young man refused the sword, and called him Satan who offered it.

"Ay, but had he lived, as I lived and survived the Roman cross, what would he then have called him? For I too have met him and turned him away; and long afterward I met him again; and his face was as the face of an angel. I took the sword he offered and smote the Romans; and young man, I reign; and the earth still holds a nation that causes the Romans to quake in their beds; and that nation is Parthia."

The Vizier sat pale and confounded by this fabulous past of his august master, the greatest mind and strongest hand of the



whole East. It was a tale, the like of which he had not read in parchment or vellum: this escape of the rebel and gallows-bird to a throne!

"Ay, thou mayest wonder," said the King, as he took up his parable which he had lived. "But hast thou ever wondered how I earned these scars? Men say, in battle. Ay, but no such battle as late I fought with the Romans, and rode them down to the last man; so that he who escaped the sword, the arrow overtook. And there was weeping in proud Rome, and lamentation among her mothers; and as they had done to others, so did we unto them."

The young Vizier winced, and held his peace with an effort; but the wound did not escape the keen eye of the King.

"Thou wincest!" said he. "At this reversal of the Christian rule by one who has taught it to others! Ay, but hast thou never marked how the baser lesson succeeds, where the nobler fails with such as the Romans? Even as a contentious woman, that mocks at kindness and rewards the hard hand with her obedience—ay, and with her love!—such, O young man, is this Roman world of ours, where all lessons are lost but one. And that one?" He lifted the right hand that had slain the Roman legionaries, and let it fall like retribution.

The Vizier winced again; but the King paid no heed, till presently, rousing as from a dream, he resumed:

"Not so was the battle of my youth, wherein I obtained these scars; but it happened in this wise.

"He that refuseth the sword hath already put his trust in the word,—a mightier weapon, if it take time to its ally. Such was my weapon in those days; and with it, I braved the might of Rome; yea, and of mine own oppressed native land. And yet, I made head against them all; for the common people heard me gladly, even as your Nazarene, until tribulation and persecution....

"But why tell what is better told in yonder roll? Of a young man's sublime hope? His faith in men? His betrayal? His condemnation? His cross? Ay, and why not? Thousands have hung there for less; and why not I, for bearding the Romans and their lackeys, and preaching release to the captives? This was ever the way to the cross; and shall be for ages to come. And yet, I planned to right the ageless wrong, and that within the lifetime of a single man! Neither did I shrink from the utmost penalty of my calling, but paid it in full.

"To cherish a vain hope, to fail by treachery, to bear a cross in weakness, to feel the nails driven home, to hang eternities long,

to call on God in vain, and then to call on Death. .such, O young man, is the reward laid up for him who would preach release to the captives of a Roman world. At length it was finished; and the noble youth was no more."

"But his resurrection, Sire?" interrupted the eager Vizier. "Could such a youth remain in the grave?"

"Thousands! Whom the world hath forgot;" answered the grim old King. "Or if a single one be remembered, the hand of God must intervene against the ingratitude of Man. Did I share this intervention with your dreamer? Perhaps. Who can say? There remained, however, this difference.

"The disciples of your Nazarene dispute, I have heard, as to the manner of his resurrection. Be that as it may: I rose in the body. Or to tell it as it happened, I found myself lifted on the shoulders of men or angels and borne from the cavern where I had been laid. After that I slept and dreamed endlessly, and awoke at last in a remote village among friends. When sufficiently recovered, I joined a caravan with which I journeyed to a far country. So I regained my bodily strength and practised myself in feats of horsemanship. Ay, and of arms!"

The Vizier sat in growing fascination, his countenance of a marble pallor, while the King resumed his tale.

"He that awaketh from the dead after his crucifixion will awake a new creature. Perhaps a better, perhaps a worse; but certes another man; and which of these awakened with me, let God be judge.

"I had died, mark well, for the people; the world; the truth; and now I found myself alive—risen, as it were, from the grave—the question rose with me: 'Was it worth while?' Not that I had died in vain. At any rate, I had died for the supreme passion wherewith men are tempted for the welfare of Man; the greatest, my friend, to which man can yield. And now I woke from death with that passion somewhat cooled; and asking myself: 'Was it worth while? Is the world worth saving—in that way? Was he a devil or was he an angel who offered me the sword?'

"So musing, I found myself in another mood of mind toward men I had formerly condemned. Toward Cæsar, for example; the great Julius, who employed the one force to which the men of his day were prepared to bow. Other talents he had, as thou readest in the scroll of vellum yonder. If not so great as mine, why great, none the less; but what availed they against the Beast whose name was Rome? To plead in the Roman Senate or Forum for justice,

mercy, and a humble walk with God,—what should that bring him but the fate of the Gracchi, of whom thou readest in the same chronicles? Ay, and not their death alone, but their failure? The fruitless sacrifice that awaits all noble youth who perish for brute beasts which obey naught but the lash!

"Yea, and it came to me that the enemies of mankind do more assist them in these brute days, than all the friends they do betray and crucify and forget!

"Nay, young man, I know the word on thy lips. Thou wouldst say: the Nazarene is an exception. Him, at least, they have not forgotten? Nay, but he is no exception; for what have they done but make him Cæsar? And to have made him Cæsar is to have forgotten him."

So saying, the King paused in stern triumph that challenged contradiction; while the young Vizier cleared his throat and with dry lips faltered out:

"It is true, Sire, that many have forgotten; and are content to endow him with a kingly crown; but others there be who remember."

"Ay, and thou art one," smiled the King. "One in a million of his followers who shall more and more content themselves with the shadow of power and glory such as men squander on every base usurper. Thinkest thou he ever sought such baubles, or valued them? Nay, not even the crown wherewith that devil-angel tempted him, did he value for itself, but that he might right the wrongs of men!" cried the King with an up-wave of passion that leaped and fell like a dying fire.

Then, as if ashamed of the rare outburst, he resumed his normal tone of dispassionate calm.

"Such was now my attitude to the world for which I had lately died. I still retained my love to man; but touched now with contempt; the love of a father for a froward child that owns no rule but that of the rod. Yet for this thankless child I had poured out my blood! A wretch had betrayed me; but to whom or what? To wretches like himself. To a world of traitors with itching palms, eager to sell themselves and one another for somewhat to put in their craven bellies, ere the grave should open and swallow them.

"Thinkest thou I longer dreamed of casting pearls before such swine? Nay, but for them that are unworthy of the word, God hath appointed the sword; and of this weapon I now made proof.

"Long had I pondered these things, when the appointed day

found me with the guard of a great caravan, traveling from Arabia into Parthia. Thence, as we marched, we encountered the Roman legionaries, marching toward us. There was no escape. We fell upon them; and I, seized with an ancient fury for the wrongs of my race, caught up the sword and shield of a fallen Parthian and slew and slew. I was as an avenging angel, and Jehovah strengthened mine arm. Thrice I rallied the Parthians; and when the battle was won, and the last Roman overtaken and slain, the bleeding Parthians hailed me as saviour. They gave me a captaincy; and when the king heard of that way, he confirmed it with an oath; and in due time I was made captain of the host. Again we met the Romans; and again we let not one escape; for the arrow outran their swiftest horse.

"With this victorious army, I put myself where wisdom is seldom found: upon a throne. The king was dead in battle; the kingdom torn with dissensions; I alone could save it. I accepted the task; and none denied the conqueror of the Romans his right to reign."

The Vizier cleared his throat and stammered a question:

"But Sire, the cross? The divine sacrifice?"

"Ay, of the higher to the lower! Of man to brutes! Of God to Satan! Young man," said the King sternly, "the saviours of the future will not allow themselves to be eaten by dogs; why, then, should one of them permit it to-day? Lice, it is said, devoured Democritus; and other lice killed Socrates; but thinkest thou the children of maggots will forever have their way with the children of light? Nay, but already thou seest how a single man has known how to put maggots in their places."

The Vizier made no answer, but sat as one appalled.

"Yet think not," said the King, "that here in my day of power, I deride my youth. Never, young man! Never! And why have I chosen thee out of all Parthia to be my Vizier? Because in thee have I seen the generous purpose that brought me to the cross; and that my choice standeth approved, know all men by these signs: that in Parthia, the hire of the laborer is not kept back; and in all my realm no man ventures to devour widows' houses or trample the faces of the poor, in whom is the strength of the nation. For what shall the king himself do without his good, strong choppers and fishers and plowmen and bowmen that, whether in peace or war, do fight his battles? Yea, and the battles of all prideful fools that call themselves nobles and are not! And this, O young man, have I conquered with my sword, where once my word—"

He ceased for choking indignation ; and cleared his throat with a swallow of wine.

"Thou seest!" he observed. "It irks me yet, to think how little the world is moved by a power which, if men were men, and not brutes, would reign supreme. Small wonder if such as mine was wasted on a world like this. It was a pearl cast before swine; and verily, as thy private papyrus stateth, they trampled it under foot. But swine will have naught but a driver; and a driver they had in me at last; for whoso is deaf to the word shall harken to the sword.

"Nay, if they will, they shall be men; but so long as they are swine—" he lifted his hand and let it fall. "They shall have masters like me, seeing they will have no other. They shall lick base hands for favors, such as thou and I have granted for the sake of noble youth. Ay, and for this mustard seed of justice, the king may any day receive a dagger! A poisoned cup!"

The Vizier stirred, cleared his throat, and wetted his dry lips for a question:

"O King, live forever! Yet tell me: thinkest thou, in the days to come, when men shall put their trust in better things, it is Parthia they shall remember, or Galilee?"

"It is Galilee," said the stern old King. "The Nazarene, and not I. But thou, O young man, answer me this. In the day that now is, and in this Parthia of ours, (which can laugh and weep as well as any generation unborn), which, think you, is remembered, when the people rejoice: the Nazarene or the King?"

The young Vizier arose and, bowing low before the King, replied:

"Sire, it is thou."

So saying, he would have gone; but the King detained him.

"Stay! Thou art ghastly pale! A morsel of bread and a sup of wine before thou goest?"

And with his own hand, the King poured a cup and offered it. The youth stood marble-pale in awe-struck fascination.

"Look!" said he. "The unleavened bread!—and the wine! Sire, who art thou?"

"I am the King of Parthia," said the monarch. "Eat, my friend and drink—to the Noble Youth."





INTERIOR OF THE TAHOTO, SHOWING GOCHI NYORAI.