

NO. 14.—NOVEMBER, 1893.

THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

AMERICAN SECTION.

ORIENTAL DEPARTMENT.

SECOND YEAR.

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General Secretary American Section,
144 Madison Avenue, New York.

THE BOOK OF THE GREAT DECEASE.

MAHA-PARINIBBANA SUTTA.

(Concluded from No. 13, June, 1893.)

CHAPTER III.

VERSES 1—3. Now the Blessed One robed himself early in the morning, and taking his bowl in the robe went into Vesali for alms, and when he had returned he sat down on the seat prepared for him, and after he had finished eating the rice he addressed the venerable Ananda and said, "Take up the mat, Ananda; I will go to spend the day at the Chapala Chetiya". Ananda, assenting, took up the mat and followed step for step behind the Blessed One. And when he had come to Vesali he said to Ananda, "How delightful a spot, Ananda, is Vesali and the Udena Chetiya and the Gotamaka Chetiya and the Sattambaka Chetiya and the Bahupatta Chetiya and the Sarandada Chetiya and the Chapala Chetiya.

"Ananda, whoever has thought out, developed and practiced, accumulated and ascended to the very heights of the four paths to *Iddhi*¹ and so mastered them as to be able to use them as a means of mental advancement and as a basis for edification, he, should

¹ Note, *Iddhi* means power, as *Siddhi* in Sanskrit.

he desire it, could remain in the same birth for a kalpa or for that portion of the kalpa which is yet to run. Now the Tathagata has thought them out and thoroughly practised and developed them, and could therefore, should he desire it, live on yet for a kalpa or for that portion of the kalpa which has yet to run."

Verses 4—6. But even though such an evident suggestion was thus given by the Blessed One to Ananda, the latter was incapable of comprehending it, and he besought not the Blessed One, saying, "Vouchsafe, Lord, to remain during the kalpa. Live on through the kalpa, O Blessed One, for the good and happiness of the great multitudes, out of pity for the world, for the good and the gain and the weal of gods and men"; so far was his heart possessed by the Evil one. A second and a third time did the Blessed One say the same thing, and so far was Ananda's heart thus hardened. And the Blessed One said to the venerable Ananda that he might leave him awhile, and Ananda, saluting him, rose and sat down at the foot of a tree not far off.

Verse 7—10. Not long after Ananda had been gone, Mâra the Evil One approached the Blessed One, and standing there addressed him :

"Pass away, Lord, now from existence: let the Blessed One now die, even according to the word which the Blessed One spoke when he said, 'I shall not die, O Evil One, until the brethren and sisters and the lay disciples of either sex shall become true hearers, wise and well trained, ready and learned, versed in the scriptures, fulfilling all the greater and the lesser duties, correct in life, walking according to the precepts; shall be able to tell it to others, preach it, make it known, establish it, open it minutely, explain it and make it clear; shall, when others start vain doctrine, be able by the truth to vanquish and refute it and to spread the wonder-working truth abroad'. And now, Lord, all these brethren and sisters have become all and are able to do all this. Pass away, therefore, for the time has come, even according to the word of the Blessed One when he said, 'I shall not die until this pure religion of mine shall have become successful, prosperous, widespread, and popular to its full extent; until, in a word, it shall have been well-proclaimed to all men', for thy purer religion has now become all this, and the time has come for the Blessed One to pass away".

And when he had thus spoken, the Blessed One addressed Mâra and said: "O Evil One, make thyself happy; the final extinction of the Tathagata shall take place before long. At the end of three months from this time the Tathagata will die". Thus the Blessed One while at Chapala deliberately and consciously

rejected the rest of his allotted sum of life. And on his so rejecting it there arose a mighty earthquake and the thunders of heaven burst forth. And on beholding this the Blessed One said this hymn of exaltation:

His sum of life the Sage renounced,
The cause of life immeasurable or small;
With inward joy and calm he broke
Like coat of mail his life's own cause.

Verses 11—12. Now the venerable Ananda thought: "Wonderful and marvellous is this mighty earthquake, and that the thunders of heaven should burst forth! What may be the proximate and remote cause of this?" Then he went up to the Blessed One, and after saluting him seated himself respectfully at one side and asked him what was the cause remote and proximate of the earthquake.

Verses 13—16. "Eight are the proximate and eight the remote causes for the appearance of a mighty earthquake. What are the eight? This great earth is established on water, the water on wind, and the wind rests on space. And when the mighty winds blow they shake the mighty waters, and by the moving waters the earth is shaken. These are the first causes, proximate and remote. Again, Ananda, a Samana or a Brahman of great power and who has the feelings of his heart well under control; or a god or *devata*¹ of great might and power; who by intense meditation on the finite idea of earth or the infinite idea of earth has succeeded in realizing the real value of things, he can make this earth tremble and be shaken violently.² These are the second causes, proximate and remote.

Again, when a Bodhisatta consciously and deliberately leaves his temporary form in the heaven of delight and descends into the womb, then this earth shakes and trembles. These are the third causes. And when a Bodhisatta deliberately and consciously quits his mother's womb, then also does the earth tremble. This is the fourth cause.

Verses 17—20. Again, Ananda, when a Tathagata arrives at the supreme and perfect enlightenment, then the earth quakes and trembles and is violently shaken, and this is the fifth cause. And when a Tathagata founds the sublime kingdom of righteousness is there a trembling which is the sixth cause. Again, when a Tathagata consciously and deliberately rejects the remainder of his life, the earth quakes, and this is the seventh cause. And

¹ Note, *devata* means one of the nature sprites.

² Note, one of the first practices given to the Buddhist disciple is to meditate on the earth both as an abstract idea and as mere earth.

when a Tathagata passes entirely away with that utter passing away in which nothing whatever is left behind, then is the earth shaken violently. This is the eighth cause.

(Ed. At this point there is a break in connection and the next verse continues abruptly with another subject. The translator says it suggests the manner of composition.)

Verses 21—23. The eight kinds of assemblies are as follows: of nobles, of Brahmanas, of householders, Samanas, the angel hosts of guardian angels, the great thirty-three, Mara, and Brahma. Now, Ananda, I call to mind that when I used to enter into an assembly of many hundred nobles, before I had seated myself or begun conversation, I became like unto them in color and in voice. Then with religious discourse I used to instruct, incite, and fill them with gladness. But they knew me not when I spoke, and would say, "Who may this be who thus speaks, a man or a god?" Then having instructed and gladdened them, I would vanish away, at which they wondered". And referring to all the other kinds of assemblies, the Blessed One told how he used to appear there, teach, and vanish away.

Verses 24-32. There are eight positions of mastery over the delusions arising from the apparent permanence of things.

When a man having subjectively the idea of form sees externally forms which are finite, pleasant, or unpleasant, and having mastered them is conscious that he sees and knows, that is the first. And when in the same way he sees forms that are boundless, unpleasant, or pleasant, masters them, and is conscious that he sees and knows, that is the second position. When without the idea of form subjectively, the same as above is the case, these are the third and fourth. When without the idea of form he sees forms that are blue in color, blue in appearance, and reflecting blue as the Umma flower or a piece of fine Benares muslin, and having mastered them and is conscious that he sees and knows, that is the fifth position. The sixth, seventh, and eighth positions are explained in identical words with those for the fifth, except that yellow is substituted with red and white for blue, and for the Umma flower are given the Karika flower, the Bandhu jivaka, and the morning star as examples.

Verses 33—42. Now these stages of deliverance from the hindrance of thought arising from the sensations and ideas due to external forms are eight in number.

First, a man possessed with the idea of form sees form. The second is, without the subjective idea of form he sees form externally. Becoming intent on what he sees, with the thought

“It is well” is the third stage. By passing quite beyond all idea of form, putting an end to all resistance, paying no attention to the idea of distinction, thinking “It is all infinite space”, he mentally reaches and remains in that state of mind in which that idea alone is present, it is the fourth stage. Passing beyond the last stage, thinking “It is all infinite reason”, reaching and remaining mentally in that state of mind, is the fifth stage. Passing quite beyond the stage of infinity of reason, thinking “Nothing at all exists”, he reaches mentally and remains in the state of when nothing at all is specially present, this is the sixth stage. The seventh is reached by passing beyond the last stage and remaining in the state to which neither ideas nor the absence is present. By passing quite beyond the state of “neither ideas nor the absence of ideas” he reaches mentally and remains in the state of mind in which both sensations and ideas have ceased to be—this is the eighth stage of deliverance.

Verses 43—55. “On one occasion, Ananda, I was resting under the shepherds’ Nogroda tree on the banks of the Neran-gara immediately after having reached the great enlightenment, when Mara, the Evil One, came and addressed me, saying that I should pass away from existence, for which the time had come. But I addressed him, Ananda, and said that I should not die until not only the brothers and sisters of the order but all the lay disciples had become true believers (here he repeats what is before). And now again to-day, Ananda, the Evil One came to me and addressed me in the same words, to which I replied that he could make himself happy, as I should die in three months. Thus I have to-day, at the Kapala Chetiya, consciously and deliberately rejected the rest of my allotted term of life.” And then Ananda addressed the Blessed One and asked him to remain for the rest of the Kalpa for the good and happiness of the world, out of pity, for the gain of gods and men. But the Lord replied: “Enough now, Ananda; beseech not the Tathagata; the time for making such request is past”.

Three times in the same way did Ananda request him to remain on earth, receiving the same reply, until the third time when the Blessed One asked him if he had faith in the wisdom of the Tathagata, and Ananda saying he had, the Lord asked him why he had asked him to the third time. When Ananda repeated what the Blessed One had told him of the ability of a Tathagata to remain during the Kalpa, or its remaining portion, the Lord asked him again if he had faith, to which Ananda replied, Yes.

“Then,” said the Blessed One, “thine is the fault in that, when a suggestion so evident and a hint so clear were given thee, thou didst not comprehend them and ask me to remain as thou just now hast. If thou shouldst then have besought the Tathagata, the appeal might have been rejected to the second time, but at the third time it would have been granted. Thine, therefore, O Ananda, thine is the fault, thine is the offence.”

Verses 56—62. The Tathagata then related to Ananda how once he was dwelling at Rajagraha on the hill Vulture’s Peak and had there spoken to him of its pleasantness and then told him how a Tathagata could, if he wished, remain in the world for a Kalpa, and yet that Ananda had not asked him. For that reason, he said, the fault and offence were Ananda’s. He then recalled specifically to Ananda’s memory nine other occasions when the same remarks had been made about remaining in the world, but that at each Ananda had failed to ask him to remain. Also how at Vesali the same thing took place on five different occasions, and now at the very place, at the Kapala Chetiya, the same words had been used and the same hint given with the same result.

Verses 63—64. Then the Tathagata reminded Ananda how he had formerly declared it to be in the very nature of things that we should divide ourselves from them, leave them. “Everything born, brought into being, and organized, contains within itself the inherent necessity of dissolution”. And then he said that he having renounced mortality and given up his remaining sum of life, it was impossible that the Tathagata should for the sake of living repent of that saying. Then he requested Ananda to go with him to the Kulagasa Hall to see the Mahavana. They proceeded then to the Mahavana, and when they arrived Ananda was sent to assemble in the Service Hall such of the brethren as resided in the neighborhood of Vesali. And when the brethren were assembled, Ananda said to the Blessed One, “Lord, the assembly of the brethren has met together. Let the Blessed One do even as seemeth to him fit”.

Verse 65. Then the Blessed One went to the Hall, and seated on a mat addressed the brethren. He told them to thoroughly master, to practise, meditate upon, and spread abroad the truths perceived by him which he had made known to them, so as to cause the pure religion to remain and be perpetuated for the benefit of the world, for the good and the gain of gods and men. Then asking him what were those truths so given by him, he repeated them thus:

The four earnest meditations;

The fourfold great struggle against sin;
 The four roads to saintship;
 The five moral powers;
 The five organs of spiritual sense;
 The seven kinds of wisdom;
 The noble eightfold path.

Verse 66. Exhorting the brethren he said: "All component things must grow old. Work out your salvation with diligence.

The final extinction of the Tathagata will take place before long. At the end of three months from this time the Tathagata will die.

My age is now full ripe, my life draws to its close;
 I leave you, I depart, relying on myself alone.
 Be earnest then, O Brethren, holy, full of thought.
 Be steadfast in resolve. Keep watch o'er your own hearts.
 Who wearies not, but holds fast to this truth and law.
 Shall cross this sea of life, shall make an end of grief."

CHAPTER IV.

Verses 1—4. Early in the morning the Blessed One robed himself, and taking his bowl entered Vesali for alms, and when he had passed through and eaten his meal he gazed at Vesali with an elephant look,¹ saying to Ananda it would be the last time he should see it. He then went to Bhandagama. There he addressed the brethren, saying that he and they had to go so long through transmigrations because they had not understood the four truths of noble conduct of life, noble earnest meditation, noble wisdom, noble salvation of freedom. When all these are known the craving for existence is rooted out, that which leads to rebirth is destroyed, and there is no rebirth. There, too, at Bhandagama the Blessed One discoursed of upright conduct, contemplation, and intelligence. "Great the fruit and advantage of contemplation, of intellect, and of conduct when set round with each other. Thus the mind is freed from sensuality, individualism, and ignorance,—the great evils."

Verses 5—16. From there he went to Hathigama, from there to Ambagama, to Jambugama, to Bhojanagara. At the last place he addressed the brethren to teach them the four great References. The first is when one says the truth is so and he has thus heard from the Master, he must not be scorned nor praised, but with calmness his words are to be compared with the scripture and the rules of the order. If they agree, then it is to be accept-

¹ "The Elephant Look" is an Indian metaphor. It is held there that the Sage is so built physically that in order to look back or around he has to turn his whole body majestically as the elephant does: hence the phrase.

ed; if they do not, you are to say that the brother has wrongly grasped the words. The second is when one says he received it from a company of brethren and elders. The same comparison is to be made as before, and if not accepted you are to say that the company of brethren and elders has wrongly grasped the truth. The third is when one says the same as to a company of elders, in which the same course is to be pursued. The fourth great reference is when one says he has the truth from a brother well versed and read, in which case the same rule is to be followed as in the others.

And there too he held a comprehensive discourse on conduct and life and intelligence and meditation. He then went to Pava with a great company and stayed in the mango grove of Chunda the smith, who when he heard of the arrival went and saluting the Blessed One sat down at one side. Then the Blessed One instructed Chunda with religious discourse, which being ended, Chunda invited him and the brethren for the next day's meal. By silence the Blessed One consented, seeing which Chunda rose, bowed down, and keeping the Blessed One on his right hand as he passed him departed thence.

Verses 17—23. At the end of the night, Chunda, having made ready sweet rice, cakes, and a quantity of boar's flesh, announced the hour and that the meal was ready. The Blessed One robed himself early and went with the brethren to Chunda's house, and when he was seated he said, "As to the dried boar's flesh you have made ready, serve me with it; and as to the other food, sweet rice and cakes, serve the brethren with it." This Chunda did. Then the Blessed One said, "Whatever dried boar's flesh is left over, that bury in a hole. I see no one, Chunda, in earth, nor in Mara's heaven, nor Brahma's, no Samana or Brahmana among gods or men, by whom when he has eaten it that food can be assimilated, save by the Tathagata." And Chunda did as he was told. Then the Blessed One instructed him with religious discourse, after which he departed. Then a dire sickness, dysentery, fell upon the Blessed One, even unto death; but mindful and self-possessed he bore it uncomplainingly. After that he went to Kusinara.

Verses 24—32. The Blessed One went aside from the path to the foot of a tree, and when he was seated asked Ananda to fetch water, as he was thirsty. But Ananda told him that five hundred carts had just gone through the streamlet, making it muddy, and advised going to the river Kakuttha not far off. Three times he did this, and three times the Blessed One asked for drink. Then

Ananda went and found that the streamlet where the carts had just passed and fouled was running bright and free. "How wonderful, how marvellous," thought Ananda, "is the great might and power of the Tathagata!" And taking water in the bowl he returned, relating the matter to his Lord.

Verses 33—46. At that time Pukkusa, a young Mallian, a disciple of Alara Kalama, passed along the road, and seeing the Blessed One went up to him, saluted, and sat down. Then, after saying how wonderful it was to be so calm, related a story of Alara Kalama's not being disturbed in the least by, not even seeing, though awake, five hundred carts that passed him. The Blessed One asked him which was the more difficult, to do as Alara Kalama or to do it when the rain was falling and beating and thunder crashing as lightnings flashed; to which Pukkusa replied, the latter was more difficult. Whereupon the Blessed One related how once he was at a threshing-floor in such a storm when two men and four oxen were killed, so that a great multitude of people came who disturbed him, and that he had not known of the storm nor the deaths of the men and was wholly undisturbed. At this Pukkusa said that he gave up his faith in Alara, and asked the Blessed One to accept him as a believer. He then presented a pair of robes of burnished cloth of gold to the Blessed One, who accepted them for himself and Ananda, after which he instructed Pukkusa with religious discourse.

Verse 47—56. Not long after, Ananda placed the burnished robe on the body of the Blessed One, and when it was so placed it appeared to have lost its splendor, his skin was so bright, at which Ananda marvelled. Then the Blessed One explained that on two occasions the body of a Tathagata becomes exceedingly bright. The first is when he attains to supreme, perfect enlightenment, and the other on the night when he passes finally away in that utter passing away which leaves nothing whatever to remain. Then he said that that day, at the third watch of the night, in the Upavattana of Kusinara, between the twin Sala trees in the Sala grove of the Mallians, his utter passing away would take place. Then they went to the river with a great company of brethren, where he bathed and drank, and on the other side went up to the Mango Grove. Having come there he lay down to rest on his right side, one foot resting on the other, and calm and self-possessed he meditated on the idea of rising again.

Verses 57—58. Then the Blessed One addressed Ananda and said that it might happen some one would stir up remorse in Chunda the smith by saying that when the Tathagata had eaten

his last meal with Chunda he had died, but that such remorse should be checked by saying it was good and gain to the smith for the reason : " These two offerings of food are of equal fruit and profit, and more than others. First, that food offered to a Tathagata after which he gains supreme enlightenment ; and second, the offering of food after which he passes away with that utter passing away that leaves nothing whatever behind." Thus Chunda had laid up good karma for length of life, good birth, good fortune, and heaven.

CHAPTER V.

Verses 1—15. They then went to the Sala Grove of the Malians on the other side of the river Hiranyavati, with a great company of the brethren, where he lay down to rest. At that time the Sala trees were in full bloom out of season with flowers which dropped over the body of the Tathagata as the successor of all the Buddhas, and heavenly music sounded, with celestial songs, out of reverence to him : heavenly sandal powder fell also from the skies. And the Blessed One said it was for him, to give him reverence as successor to all the Buddhas. But he said that the right way for the brethren to honor him was not thus, but by following his teachings, walking according to the precepts, fulfilling all the greater and lesser duties of life. And while he was thus saying the venerable Upavana was standing in front of him fanning him, when the Blessed One asked him to stand aside. Ananda asked why he so told him, as Upavana was a good man, long in the service. The Blessed One explained that " For twelve leagues around the grove there is no spot in size even as the pricking of the point of a hair which is not pervaded by powerful spirits,¹ and those complain and say that Tathagatas are few and far between, and now one is to die, and here is this eminent brother Upavana who stands in front of the Tathagata concealing him, so that in his last hour we cannot see him." He said those spirits were weeping, as they were worldly minded at the approaching death of the Tathagata, and they were both of the sky and the earth ; but other spirits calm and self-possessed wept not, as they were mindful of the saying that all component things could not last. Ananda then expressed sorrow that when the Blessed One was gone they could no more receive good and great men and the brethren to audience.

¹ This is just what the religious disputers in the middle ages of Europe discussed, " How many angels could stand on a space as large as the prick of a needle point."

Verses 16—22. The Blessed One said then that there were four sorts of places a believing man might visit with feelings of reverence : Where the Tathagata was born ; where he attained to supreme and perfect enlightenment ; where he set on foot the kingdom of righteousness ; where he passed finally away with that utter passing away which leaves nothing whatever to remain behind. He said that to such spots would come believers, brethren and sisters of the order, relating what took place there ; and those who died while journeying to them would be reborn in the happy realms of heaven.

Verse 23. "How are we to conduct ourselves, Lord, with regard to womankind?"

"Don't see them, Ananda."

"But if we should see them, what are we to do?"

"Abstain from speech, Ananda."

"But if they should speak to us, Lord, what are we to do?"

"Keep wide awake, Ananda."

Verses 24—31. Ananda asked what was to be done with the remains of the Tathagata, and he replied not to hinder themselves but be zealous in their own behalf, to their own good, intent on it, as there were wise men, nobles, householders who would do honor to the remains. As to the treatment of the remains, he said it should be as with those of a king of kings, and then described that. They should be wrapped in a new cloth, then in cotton wool, then in new cloth, until there were five hundred successive layers of both kinds. Then place the body in an oil vessel of iron, that to be covered with another the same. A funeral pile should then be made of all kinds of perfumes, and then all burned. At the four cross roads a dagoba should be erected to the Tathagata for people to place perfumes and garlands for their own good. Then he enumerated the four men worthy of a dagoba : A Tathagata, a Paccheka Buddha, a true hearer of the word, and a king of kings. Because at the thought had by persons that at such a place is a dagoba of a Tathagata, they would be calm and happy, leading to a good state in heaven. And the same reasons were given for the other cases.

Verses 32—44. Then the venerable Ananda went into the temple and wept at the thought that he was still a learner and that the Master so kind to him was about to pass away. His absence was noticed by the Buddha, who being told of his weeping called him, and Ananda came, and then the Blessed One comforted him and told him how all component things had to pass away, reminding him how so often that had been taught. He

also said how often Ananda had been near and done acts of love for him never varying and beyond measure, the same in word and thought also, and that if he was earnest he would soon be free from all evils and ignorance. Then he told the brethren that in the long past whenever there was a Buddha there were servitors like Ananda, and so it would be in the future. He extolled Ananda's wisdom, how he knew the right time to visit himself and let others visit the Buddha, and that he had four wonderful qualities, bringing joy by his presence and by his words, and people not being at ease if he were silent. Ananda then reminded the Buddha that it was not well to die in a little wattle town, a mere village like Kusinara, as there were many cities where great, good, and noble men would do honor to his remains. But the Blessed One said that formerly that town was a great city ruled by Maha-Sudasanna under the name of Kusavati; that it was prosperous, full of people, and happy.

Verses 45—69. The Blessed One then sent Ananda to the Mallas of Kusinara to tell them that in the last watch of the night he would finally pass away, and for them to give no occasion to reproach themselves afterwards if they did not visit him. At that time the Mallas were holding a council, and Ananda told them as he was bid. When the people heard it they wept and bewailed the passing away of the Light of the World. They then went in a body to visit the Tathagata, and Ananda arranged it so that they went in groups, presenting the headmen to the Buddha, for fear otherwise all the time would be used. And at the same time a mendicant named Subhadda living there heard the news and thought that as Tathagatas seldom came it would be well to visit him, as he had a doubt whether his teachers were right. So he went to the Sala grove and asked permission of Ananda to see the Buddha, but Ananda refused, as the Blessed One was weary. Buddha heard the request refused three times, and then asked Ananda to admit the man, which he did, as the Buddha said Subhadda would ask from a desire to know and not to annoy, and would understand the answers.

Subhadda being admitted referred to many teachers and asked if they had rightly comprehended. To this the Buddha replied that it might be waived as to whether they had or had not understood, and he would tell the truth. He then said that in whatever doctrine the noble eightfold path was not found there was no true saintliness, but where it was found there was true saintliness. All other systems were void of true saints. Subhadda was convinced and asked to be taken into the order. The Buddha told

him there was a four months' probation, but that in his case he recognized a difference in persons. Subhadda offered to go on probation for four months, but the Buddha called Ananda and directed him to receive the mendicant into the order then. So into the higher grade of the order Subhadda was taken, and immediately he remained by himself, very soon attaining to the supreme goal. And he was the last disciple the Blessed One himself converted.

CHAPTER VI.

Verse 1—4. The Blessed One said to Ananda that in some the thought might arise that the word of the Master was ended and they had no teacher, but they should not think so, as the truths and rules of the order were the teacher. Younger brothers might be addressed as friend, but the elders should be called "Lord" or "Venerable Sir." He said too that the lesser and minor precepts might be abolished if the order so wished. And as to a brother named Channa he directed that the higher penalty should be imposed. Ananda then asked what that was,¹ and he said "Let Channa say whatever he may like, the brethren should neither speak to him, nor exhort him, nor admonish him."

Verses 5—10. Referring to possible doubts, the Buddha asked the brethren to freely inquire so as not to have self-reproach afterwards. This he asked them three times, and each time they were silent, and then he asked them to speak to each other, but they were silent, at which Ananda said no one had any doubts. The Buddha told him he had spoken out of faith, but he himself knew none had doubts and that the most backward had been converted and was sure of final bliss.² Then the Blessed One addressed the brethren and said: "Behold now, brethren, I exhort you, saying, 'Decay is inherent in all component things. Work out your salvation with diligence.'" This was the last word of the Tathagata.

Verses 11—21. Then the Blessed One entered into the first stage of deep meditation, from which he passed into the second, and from that to the third, to the fourth, from that to where infinity of space only was present, then to where but infinity of thought was present, then to where nothing at all was present, and from that into a state between consciousness and unconsciousness; and from that to where consciousness of sensations and ideas had

¹ From this it seems the higher penalty had not been laid down before.

² It is said that this was said to encourage Ananda who was the most backward.

wholly passed away. Then Ananda said to Anuruddha that the Blessed One was dead, but Anuruddha replied he was not dead but was in the state where sensations and ideas had ceased to be. Then the Blessed One passed out of that state back to between consciousness and unconsciousness, from that to having nothing specially present, from that to infinity of thought alone ; passing from that to where the infinity of space was present alone, he entered the fourth state of meditation, from that to the third, to the second, to the first ; back again to the second, to the third, to the fourth, and then he immediately expired. And then there arose a mighty awe-inspiring earthquake with thunder from heaven. Brahma-Sahampati uttered verses, and Sakka the king of the gods repeated stanzas on dissolution. So also did Anuruddha, as well as Ananda. Some of the brethren not yet free from passion wept and rolled to and fro in anguish, but those who were free said, "Impermanent are all component things. How is it possible that they should not be dissolved?" And Anuruddha exhorted them all to the same effect, saying that even the spirits would reproach them. On being asked of this he explained it in the same way as before explained by the Master.

Verse 22—41. The rest of the night was spent in religious discourse, and then the Mallas were informed of the Blessed One's death by Ananda at the council hall where they were assembled on the same matter. And when they heard it they also wept. Taking garlands and music and perfumes they went to where the body of the Blessed One lay, and passed the day in paying reverence to it and in music and dancing, making canopies and preparing decoration wreaths. This they continued until the sixth day. And on the seventh day they carried the body outside by the south for cremation. Eight chieftains bathed their heads and put on new garments, intending to bear the body, but they could not lift it. Of this they inquired of Anuruddha, who told them that the spirits desired to have the body carried by the north to enter by the north to the midst of the city and then to go out by the eastern gate to the shrine of the Mallas called Makuta-bandhana to the east of the city for cremation. To this the Mallas consented, and at once there was a rain of Manadarava flowers from the sky, and the body was carried out as directed. There they were told what to do with the remains as told by the Blessed One to Ananda, all of which they carried out. At that time venerable Maha-Kassapa was coming from Pava with five hundred brethren and rested by the road, when an ascetic came along the road with a Mandarava flower he had picked up at Kusinara. And Maha Kassapa

asked him if he knew the Master, to which he replied, "Yes, friend, I know him. This day the Samana Gotama has been dead a week".

Then those brethren wept except those free from passion. Subhadda, who had been received in the order in his old age, said not to weep, that they were well rid of the great Samana and would no longer be annoyed by being told what to do and not to do. Now they would not be so annoyed any more.

Verse 42—50. At this time the four chieftains of the Mallas were about to set fire to the funeral pile but were not able to do so, and they asked Anuruddha the reason. He replied that the spirits had the purpose of not letting it be lighted until Maha Kassapa came with his brethren, as now on the road. So they waited. Maha Kassapa then came, and placing his robe on one shoulder he uncovered the feet of the Blessed One and worshipped them, and the five hundred brethren did the same. And when the homage of these brethren was ended the funeral pile caught fire of itself. As the body burned away neither soot nor ash was seen. Only the bones remained behind, and all the raiment was consumed. From the sky fell streams of water when it was consumed and extinguished the fire. And the Mallas brought scented water also to extinguish it. And the bones were placed in the Mallas' council hall surrounded with a lattice work of spears and a rampart of bows, homage and respect being paid to them for seven days.

Verse 51—61. Then the king of Maghada and others heard the news and sent asking for portions of the remains from many different quarters, each enumerating reasons, some that as Buddha was of the soldier caste they were entitled to them. When the Mallas had all these requests they said they would give none away, as he died with them. But Dona the Brahmin counselled them, as Buddha had preached moderation, that no strife ought to arise over him, advising that eight portions be made so that in every land *stupas* might arise that mankind might trust the enlightened one. To this they all agreed, and Dona made the division, asking for himself the vessel.

Verse 61. The Moriyas of Pippalivana having heard the news of the passing away and cremation asked: "The Blessed One belonged to the soldier caste, and we too are of that caste. We are worthy to receive a portion of the relics. Over the remains we will erect a cairn and we will celebrate a feast." And when they heard that no portion of the remains was left, they took away the embers.

Verse 62. At Rajagaha a mound was made over the remains; at Vesali another; one at Allakappa; another at Ramagama; one at Vethadipaka; in Pava another; at Kusinara one. Dona made one over the vessel in which the body was burnt, and the Moriyas of Piphativana made one over the embers and held a feast. Thus were eight mounds made over the remains, and one for the vessel and one for the embers.

NOTICE.

Unexpected events have made it impossible to carry out the plan outlined in the notice in No. 13 to deal with certain religions seriatim, and that is therefore withdrawn. In the next issue it is purposed, if nothing intervenes to prevent, to print an article on the Upanishads, and other plans under discussion may result soon in putting this department on a surer basis.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE,
General Secretary American Section.

ORIENTAL DEPARTMENT.

AMERICAN SECTION T. S.

GENERAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE, 144 MADISON AVE.

NEW YORK, *November 28th, 1893.*

To the Members of the T. S.:

I have at last been able to secure, with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee, the services of a competent Sanscrit scholar in Europe, who is at the same time a devoted member of the Society, for this Department, and desire to notify you of it as also to outline to you the plan for carrying on the Department. The name of this person will not be given out for the present by his own request until later when the work has proceeded to some extent. Of his qualifications there is no doubt, as he has had experience in this field, has also for some time been teaching Sanscrit, and brings to the work a sincere sympathy with Indian thought as well as devotion to the Society which will without question make the matter furnished of value as well as interest. The plan is this:

Readers are not familiar with the books of the East. They should have (*a*) a sound course of the twelve great *Upanishads* until they grow thoroughly familiar with them. Two versions are already out, but the *Upanishads* have never yet been translated in the light of Theosophy. The *Prasna Upanishad* will probably be translated first, so that the translation, while preserving the spirit of the text, will be thoroughly sound and readable English. After each instalment of the text a commentary will be given of sound literary form, combining the Indian tradition of Shankaracharya's commentary with Theosophy, thus letting the two illumine each other. (*b*) The Laws of Manu will be taken up, and also Shankaracharya's great books, whether already translated or not. The Oriental ideal is that the student should know the book by heart; the western is, "Oh I read that before". The readers should know the ideas by heart, not the words: this is the medium course. (*c*) Buddhism will be taken up. Many of the best Pali books are still untranslated; and the Sanscrit books of Nepal on Northern Buddhism, such as Tathagata Guhyakam or Buddha's Secret Teaching can be dealt with. With proper treatment these would be invaluable. Other Eastern religions would follow in due course. (*d*) To give life and actuality to the East some modern work would be used. (*e*) Possibly a fifth element in a series called, "Friends of the East", men not Theosophists who have given up their lives to Oriental research, with a portrait. This would give personal interest and not put the Eastern notion in the background.

All this of course takes time and much labor. I am authorized to spend something on the plan, but our funds at one dollar a year from each member will not permit adequate compensation for the work of the pundit. Indeed all that is done for members by this office is worth more than is paid by them and costs more. Hence if this plan finds favor and if the issues so far of the Department only in the light of a promise have been of service, it is for the members to show whether we will in the future be able to carry on this department in a systematic and proper manner. We cannot raise the rate of dues, as that would exclude many worthy persons. But no member is prevented from paying more per year if his or her means permit, and it is true that many belong to other bodies for various purposes wherein the yearly dues are much higher.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE,
General Secretary.