



Advice to Rāhula Four Discourses of the Buddha

Translated from the Pali
With an introduction

Edited by

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Contents

Introduction	3
Acknowledgements	5
Introduction to the Ambalaṭṭhikā-Rāhulovada Suttanta.....	6
Ambalaṭṭhikā-Rāhulovada Suttanta (The Ambalaṭṭhikā Exhortation to Rāhula).....	6
Introduction to the Mahā-Rāhulovada Suttanta.....	9
Mahā Rāhulovada Suttanta (The Great Exhortation to Rāhula).....	10
Cūḷa-Rāhulovada Suttanta (The Shorter Exhortation to Rāhula).....	14
The Rāhula Sutta (Sutta-Nipāta, Verses 335-342)	16
Notes	18

Introduction

“A son has been born to thee, O prince!” this was the message that reached Prince Siddhattha when returning from a drive through the city of Kapilavatthu and a day spent at a park near-by.

“A fetter (Rāhula) has been born, a bondage has been born!” said the prince upon hearing the news. And Rāhula was the name given later to the babe by Siddhattha’s father, the Rāja Suddhodana.

These were indeed unusual words with which to welcome a first-born; but we shall understand them better when we set them against the background of another experience encountered by Siddhattha on that memorable day. We are told that it was on this very day that Siddhattha met on his way, the serene figure of an ascetic—or, as some would have it, saw a vision of it. This encounter showed him a way of life that could help him to find, for himself and mankind, the deliverance from the inflictions of old age, sickness and death which had made such a strong impact on him when he had grasped their full significance not long before during earlier outings.

Now, the sight of a monk was to him as if a door had opened in the golden cage, for a bird that longed for freedom. But the birth of his child threatened to close that door for him again, and Siddhattha knew that he had to come to a decision this very day. At the end of those fateful hours which Siddhattha spent in the palace after his return, his mind was firmly set on his quest for the Deathless. The time of the Great Renunciation had come, it was towards midnight that he went to the chambers of his wife, the Princess Yasodharā, to have a last silent glance at her and his son. But the mother’s arm and hand enclosed protectively Rāhula’s little head, and without having seen his child’s face, Siddhattha went into the night and started on a road that, after six years, led him to his goal, to full enlightenment—Buddhahood.

It was not yet a full year after his enlightenment that the Buddha visited his paternal home, Kapilavatthu. During his stay there, while one day he was seated in the palace, Princess Yasodharā spoke to Rāhula: “This is thy father, Rāhula! Go and ask him for thy heritage!” Little Rāhula went and stood before the Enlightened One who was still seated, and exclaimed: “How pleasant is thy shadow, O ascetic!” The Master rose from his seat and when he had left the palace, Rāhula followed and, as told by his mother, spoke to him: “Give me my heritage, O ascetic!” Thereupon the Master turned to his disciple Sāriputta and said: “Ordain him, Sāriputta.” Thus little Rāhula became a novice monk (*sāmaṇera*) at the age of seven. But henceforth, at the request of Rāja Suddhodana, no further *sāmaṇera* ordinations were given without the parents’ consent.

The Master took constant interest in Rāhula’s development and wisely guided him throughout the years, until Rāhula, in his twenty first year, had attained to Sainthood (*arahatta*) and needed guidance no longer. The exhortations collected in these pages, are the greater and the most important part of those handed-down to us in the Sutta Piṭaka of the Pali Canon. About those not included here, some information will be given in the following:

The *first* of the texts translated here, the Exhortation to Rāhula given at Ambalaṭṭhikā (Ambalaṭṭhikā-Rāhulovāda Sutta), was spoken by the Buddha when Rāhula was seven years old. The discourse has two main subjects, truthfulness and mindfulness, which are indeed the corner stones for building a character and for developing the faculties of mind. An education based on the fostering of these two qualities, will indeed have secure foundations.

It is a counsel, however, which, in general, adults are as much in need of, as a young child. For impressing these teachings deeply on Rāhula's mind, the Buddha made ample use of similes in that discourse.

According to the commentators, in the same early period of Rāhula's novitiate the Master taught and explained to him the ten "Boy's Questions" (*kumāra-pañhā*) which begin with "What is One? All beings, subsist by nutriment." They are also called the "Novice's Questions" (*sāmaṇera-pañhā*) and were originally devised for the seven-year-old Arahant, Sopaka sāmaṇera. The text of these Questions can be found in the Khuddakapāṭha ("Minor Readings") of the Sutta-Piṭaka.

Our *second* text, the Great Discourse of Exhortation to Rāhula (*Mahā-Rāhulovāda-Sutta*), spoken to him when he was eighteen years, chiefly contains instructions on meditation. Those given by the Buddha himself pertain foremost to Insight-meditation (*vipassanā-bhāvanā*), namely to the not-self nature (*anattatā*) of the five categories of clinging (*pañcupadānakkhandhā*), and of the four material elements. Later the Buddha elaborated on the Venerable Sāriputta's suggestion to Rāhula, to practise Mindfulness of Breathing. The master also stressed here the importance of equanimity by giving five similes of which the first four refer again to the four material elements, thus linking up with the earlier instruction. In this same discourse, the Master also hands to Rāhula a little armoury of meditational weapons against various unwholesome states of mind.

In his 21st year, before he had completed a full year after his Higher Ordination, the Venerable Rāhula attained to the highest goal of a recluse's life, to Sainthood (*arahatta*). This occurred after the enunciation of the *third* text in our collection, the Shorter Discourse of exhortation (*Cūḷa-Rāhulovāda-Sutta*) This discourse applies the three characteristics of all conditioned existence (impermanency, suffering, and not-self) to the entire realm of six-fold sense perception and all mental processes relating to it.

It was at this moment of Sainthood attained, that the Enlightened One, the incomparable teacher of men, the master of the skilful means of guiding them, gave to his son the full paternal heritage for which Rāhula had asked. The most precious legacy, indeed, that a father can bestow! When the Buddha preached the Discourse on the Heirs of the Dhamma (*Dhammadāyāda Sutta*, MN 3), in which he distinguished between the heirs to worldliness and the heirs to truth, this may well have evoked in him the memories of little Rāhula's request for his heritage.

Our fourth text, the verses from the Sutta-Nipāta, called "Rāhula-Sutta," circumscribes in brief the life of a monk, and the thoughts and the ideals that should be foremost in a monk's mind. These verses are, as it were, the monk's version of the Mahā-Maṅgala-Sutta ("Blessings"). The concluding sentence expressly states that these were frequently repeated by the Master for Rāhula's benefit. Since they contain terse references to meditation they may have originated in the period when our second text, the Mahā-Rāhulovāda-Sutta, was spoken, that is at Rāhula's eighteenth year or after.

The same may hold good for the texts in the Rāhula-Saṃyutta of the Saṃyutta-Nikāya. Those twenty two short discourses are all instructions for Insight-meditation, and are more or less variants of our third text. They are, as the commentary says, meant to promote those "qualities that bring deliverance to maturity" (*vimutti-pācanīyadhammā*) spoken of at the beginning of the Cūḷa-Rāhulovāda-Sutta (MN 147). To the same category belongs the Rāhula-Sutta of the Aṅguttara-Nikāya (AN 4:117) which deals with the four material elements in a similar way as our second text (MN 62).

In the Theragātha, the Verses of the Elders, there are stanzas spoken by the Venerable Rāhula himself (vv. 295-298); and in the “Questions of Milinda,” there are ascribed to him some more verses which are not found elsewhere. These verses are the only utterances recorded of the Venerable Rāhula. There is also no other account in Pali literature indicating that he was active as a teacher or preacher or in any other way. It is possible that this reticence on the part of the venerable Rāhula was intentional because, being the Master’s son, he did not wish to come into any prominence.

The venerable Rāhula passed away before the Master and also before the venerable Sāriputta; but we have no information as to the time and circumstances of his death.

Though the venerable Rāhula himself always kept modestly in the background, the Master placed him among those disciples who had gained excellence in specific ways of conduct or knowledge (*etadagga-sāvaka*; Aṅguttara-Nikāya I), praising him as one who was “foremost among those who are keen to learn, eager in following the Training” (*sikkha-kāma*). The venerable Rāhula was always amenable to advice, and to this virtue of his, practised also in former lives, refer two Jātakas (Birth Stories): No. 16: Tipa-attha-miga-Jātaka, and No. 319: Tittira-Jātaka.

As one of the early Chinese pilgrims to India, Hiuen Tsiang, relates (Beal, *Records*, p. 180), King Asoka erected Stupas in memory of many of the great Disciples, and one of these Stupas was dedicated to the venerable Rāhula, as the particular object of pilgrimage and veneration for novices, so that they may remember and emulate his devotion to the Training.

Since our age lacks an Asoka, may the texts presented here serve as a Stupa, an object of recollection, homage and inspiration, for all those who are “keen to learn and eager in following the Training”—because “it is they who shall reach the topmost height”—as the Master gave assurance in the last period of his life.

“Tamatagge me te Ānanda bhikkhu bhavissanti ye keci sikkha-kāmā’ti.

—Mahā-Parinibbāna-Sutta

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The third text, the Shorter Exhortation (MN 147); has been translated by Nyanaponika Thera.

The fourth text, the verses from the Sutta-Nipāta, is reproduced from *Woven Cadences of the Early Buddhists* (Sutta-Nipāta), translated by E. M. Hare *Sacred Books of the Buddhists*, Vol. XV), London 1925, Pali Text Society. The explanatory notes have been supplied by the editor.

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Introduction to the Ambalaṭṭhikā-Rāhulovada Suttanta

It is the supreme characteristic of the great World Teachers—and, indeed, of all profound thinkers—that they invariably express themselves in the most natural, simple, and direct way; similarly, the hair-splitting, and quibbling over words, is the mark of puny minds.

The greater the genius of the teacher, the more we become conscious of his desire to be understood by humanity, and of his effort to make his teaching comprehensible even to the dullest intellect. Thus it is that we perceive the genius of the Buddha strikingly revealed in the lucidity of his language, and in the homely incidents and every-day occurrences with which he illustrates and emphasizes his teaching.

At all times, he adapts his exposition to the capacity of his audience. To children, his words and illustrations are such as to appeal to and impress a child's mind; to an audience more mature, we find a mode of expression again calculated to appeal to its comprehension. To the wise, he elaborates his teaching in such a way that they become conscious of its profound and sublime nature, and dimly perceive, as it deeper grows, that finally it leads to those unfathomed depths to be attained only by personal realization—never by mere reasoning.

In the following Suttanta the Buddha is exhorting his son Rāhula, a sāmaṇera aged seven. The Blessed One delivers a short, but nevertheless profound, homily on the necessity of that elementary principle of moral conduct—truthfulness.

Continuing, he establishes the moral criterion, by which to determine a good (*kusala*, lit. skilful) action, and a bad (*akusala*, unskilful) one. It is from the beneficial or harmful effects of an action upon both the doer and others, that we are to distinguish between good and bad. In other words, Buddhism judges by results; therefore its moral words may be said to be utilitarian. Throughout the Suttanta, the supreme importance of reflection is the constant theme of the Buddha. The three stages he emphasizes being—prior to action, during action and subsequent to action.

Students of philosophy should find this Suttanta of particular interest, as it deals with one of the basic questions of Ethics: the criterion of good and evil.

Ambalaṭṭhikā-Rāhulovada Suttanta (The Ambalaṭṭhikā Exhortation to Rāhula)¹

Thus have I heard:

On one occasion the Blessed One was staying at the Bamboo Grove, in the Squirrels' Sanctuary, near Rājagaha. Now at that time the venerable Rāhula was residing at Ambalaṭṭhikā² and in the evening the Blessed One, having risen from meditation, proceeded thither to the venerable Rāhula who—seeing him coming from afar—got ready a seat, and water for washing the feet. And the Blessed One sat on the seat prepared and, being seated, washed his feet. Then the venerable Rāhula, having saluted the Blessed One respectfully sat at one side.

Thereupon the Blessed One, having left a small quantity of water in the vessel, addressed³ the venerable Rāhula:

“Do you see, Rāhula, this small quantity of water left in the vessel?”

“Yes, Lord.”

“Similarly, Rāhula, insignificant indeed is the Samaṇaship⁴ of those who are not ashamed of uttering deliberate lies.”

Whereupon the Blessed One threw away that small quantity of water, and addressed the venerable Rāhula: “Do you observe, Rāhula, that small quantity of water, thrown away?”

“Yes, Lord.”

“Similarly, Rāhula, discarded⁵ indeed is the Samaṇaship of those who fare not ashamed of deliberate lying.”

Then the Blessed One turned the water-vessel upside down, and addressed the venerable Rāhula:

“Do you notice, Rāhula, this water-vessel turned upside down?”

“Yes, Lord.”

“Similarly, Rāhula, overturned⁶ indeed is the Samaṇaship of those who are not ashamed of uttering deliberate lies.”

Finally, the Blessed One set the water-vessel upright and addressed the venerable Rāhula:

“Do you see, Rāhula, this water-vessel, empty and void”?

“Yes, Lord.”

“Similarly, Rāhula, empty and void indeed is the Samaṇaship of those who are not ashamed of deliberate lies.”

“Suppose, Rāhula, the king's elephant—with tusks like plough-poles, mature, well-bred, whose place is the battle-field – having gone into the strife, performs doughty deeds⁷ with his fore-legs, with his hind-legs, with the fore-part of his body, with the hind-part of his body, and also with his head, ears, tusks and tail, protecting only his trunk; and the mahout thinks that—despite this elephant's prowess and the various feats he has performed—as he has protected his trunk, the life of the royal elephant has not really been risked. But, Rāhula, from such time as the king's elephant, having gone into battle and performed feats with various parts of his body, also performs feats with his trunk: then the mahout thinks that the life of the king's elephant has really been risked. For now there is nothing that the royal elephant has not risked.⁸

“Similarly, Rāhula, I say, of anyone who is not ashamed of uttering deliberate lies, that there is no evil that could not be done by him. Accordingly, Rāhula, thus, indeed, should you train yourself: “Not even in play will I tell a lie.’

“What do you think, Rāhula; for what purpose is a mirror?”

“For the purpose of reflecting,⁹ Lord”:

“Similarly, Rāhula, having reflected should bodily action be done; having reflected,¹⁰ should verbal action be done; having reflected, should mental action be done.

“Whatever action you desire to do with the body, Rāhula, of that particular bodily action you should reflect: ‘Now, this action that I desire to do with the body—would this, my bodily action, be conducive to my own harm, or to the harm of others, or to that of both (myself and others)?—Then, unskilful is this bodily action, entailing suffering and productive of pain.

“If, Rāhula, when reflecting you should realize: ‘Now, this bodily action of mine, that I am desirous of doing, would be conducive to my own harm, or to the harm of others, or to that of both (myself and others),—hence, unskilful is this bodily action,—entailing suffering and productive of pain’—such an action with the body, Rāhula, you must on no account perform.

“If, on the other hand, Rāhula, when reflecting you realize: ‘Now, this bodily action that I am desirous of doing, would conduce neither to the harm of myself, nor to that of others, nor to that of both (myself and others),—hence, skilful is this bodily action, entailing pleasure and productive of happiness’—such bodily action, Rāhula, you should perform.

“Whilst you are doing an action with the body, Rāhula, of that particular bodily action should you reflect: ‘Now, is this action that I am doing with my body, conducive to my own harm, or to the harm of others,—or to that of both?—Then, unskilful is this bodily action, entailing suffering and productive of pain.’

“If, Rāhula, when reflecting you realise: ‘Now, this action that I am doing with my body is conducive to my own harm, to the harm of others, and to that of both, hence, unskilful is this bodily action, entailing suffering and productive of pain,’—from such a bodily action, Rāhula you must desist.

“If, on the other hand, Rāhula, when reflecting should you realize: ‘Now, this action of mine that I am doing with the body is neither conducive to my own harm, nor to the harm of others, nor to that of both—hence, skilful is this bodily action, entailing pleasure and productive of happiness’—such a bodily action, Rāhula, you should do again and again.

“Having done an action with your body, Rāhula, of that particular bodily action you should reflect: ‘Now, is this action that I have done with my body conducive to my own harm, or to the harm of others, or to that of both?—Then, unskilful is this bodily action, entailing suffering and productive of pain.’

“If, Rāhula, when reflecting you should realize: ‘Now, this action that I have done with my body is conducive to my own harm, to the harm of others, and that of both—hence, unskilful is this bodily action: entailing suffering and productive of pain’—such a bodily action of yours, Rāhula, should be confessed, revealed, and made manifest to

the Teacher, or to the learned, or to your brethren of the Holy Life. Having confessed, revealed, and made it manifest, you should acquire restraint in the future.

“If, on the other hand, Rāhula, when through reflection you realize: ‘Now, this action that I have done with my body is neither conducive to my own harm, nor to the harm of others, nor to that of both,—hence, skilful is this bodily action, entailing pleasure and productive of happiness’—for that very reason, Rāhula, should you abide in joy and happiness, training yourself, day and night, in meritorious states.

“Whatever action you desire to do by word, Rāhula, of that particular verbal action you should reflect: ‘Now, this action that I desire to do by word—would this, my verbal action, be conducive to my own harm or to the harm of others, or to that of both?—Then, unskilful is this verbal action: entailing suffering and productive of pain.’

And he should reflect similarly before, during and after, verbal action.¹¹

“If, on the other hand, Rāhula, when reflecting you realize: ‘Now, this action that I have done by words is neither conducive to my own harm, nor to the harm of others, nor to, that of both,—hence, skilful is this verbal action, entailing pleasure and productive of happiness’—for that very reason, Rāhula, should you abide in joy and happiness, training yourself, day and night, in meritorious states.

“Whatever action you desire to do by mind, Rāhula, of that particular mental action you should reflect: ‘Now, this action that I desire to do by mind – would this, my mental action, be conducive to my own harm or to the harm of others, or to that of both?—Then, unskilful is this mental action, entailing suffering and productive of pain.’

And he should reflect, similarly before, during, and after, mental action.”¹²

“If, Rāhula, when reflecting you realize; ‘Now this action that I have done by mind is conducive to my own harm, to the harm of others, and to that of both, hence unskilful is this mental action entailing suffering and productive of pain,’—such mental actions of yours, Rāhula, should be loathed, abhorred and despised.¹³ Thus loathing, abhorring and despising, you should acquire restraint in the future.

“If, on the other hand, Rāhula, when reflecting you should realize: ‘Now, this action that I have done by mind is neither conducive to my own harm, nor to the harm of others, nor to that of both,—hence skilful is this mental action, entailing pleasure and productive of happiness’—for this very reason, Rāhula, should you abide in joy and happiness, training¹⁴ yourself, day and night, in the meritorious states.

“For whosoever, Rāhula, in the distant past Samaṇas or Brāhmaṇas—purified their bodily, verbal and mental actions,—they all did so in exactly the same way—by constantly reflecting. Further, whosoever, Rāhula; in the distant future—Samaṇas or Brāhmaṇas—shall purify their bodily, verbal and mental actions,—they too will all do so in exactly the same way—by constantly reflecting. And further, whosoever, Rāhula, at the present time—Samaṇas or Brāhmaṇas—purify their bodily, verbal and mental actions’-they all do so in exactly the same way—by constantly reflecting:

“Accordingly, Rāhula, thus must you train yourselves: ‘By constantly reflecting shall we purify our bodily actions; by constantly reflecting shall we purify our verbal actions; by constantly reflecting shall we purify our mental actions.’”

Thus spoke the Blessed One. Delighted, the venerable Rāhula rejoiced at his words.

Introduction to the Mahā-Rāhulovada Suttanta

In the following Suttanta the Buddha deals with a profound subject—meditation, or culture of the mind. Not by servile supplication to any Heavenly Father is the craving and hatred by which the world is rent and torn to be assuaged; but only by the cultivation of that sublime equanimity which, having comprehended the true nature of life, amidst delight or misery: “... like to a rock, unmoved stands, and shakes not.”

According to the commentaries, this exhortation was delivered when the venerable Rāhula was in his eighteenth year—an early age, surely, at which to appreciate the ultimate possibilities of mind-culture.

The four great essentials to which the Buddha first directs the attention of Rāhula are: *paṭhavī*, *āpo*, *tejo*, and *vāyo*, known as “*dhātus*” in Pali. “*Dhātu*” is defined as “that which bears its own intrinsic nature”; its most appropriate English equivalent being “element.” But it must not be hastily assumed from this that we are here dealing with the four “elements” of the ancient Greek philosophers, namely: earth, water, fire, and air; since, in the Abhidhamma sense, the four *dhātus* imply extension or solidity (*paṭhavi*), cohesion (*āpo*), heat (*tejo*), and motion or vibration (*vāyo*).

In the Sutta-Piṭaka, however, we find compounds designated by the generic name of the ‘*dhātu*’ which predominates in their composition. *Kesa* hair, for instance, although a compound consisting of the four essentials and the four derived material qualities, is classified under ‘*paṭhavī-dhātu*,’ owing to the predominance in its composition of the element of solidity.

Having explained to Rāhula the nature of the ‘*dhātus*’ (including, space), the Buddha further exhorts him to be constantly mindful of them, and to cultivate that perfect equanimity of mind which remains undisturbed by likes and dislikes—comparable to the absolute passivity of earth, water, fire, air, and space.

In conclusion, the Buddha—after briefly enumerating certain subjects of meditation with the specific qualities inhibited by each—gives a profound statement as to how the meditation on breathing is to be practised. And practising, according to these instructions, it is said that, in no long time, Rāhula becoming Arahant, achieved Emancipation.

Mahā Rāhulovada Suttanta (The Great Exhortation to Rāhula)

Thus have I heard: ‘Once the Blessed One was staying at the monastery of Anāthapiṇḍika, in the Jeta Grove, near Sāvattihī. Then the Blessed One, having robed himself in the forenoon, took bowl and robe, and entered Sāvattihī for alms; and the venerable Rāhula also, having robed in the forenoon, took bowl and robe, and followed close behind¹⁵ the Blessed One. Thereupon the Blessed One looked back and addressed the venerable Rāhula:

“Whatsoever form¹⁶ there be, O Rāhula, whether past, future or present, personal¹⁷ or external,¹⁸ coarse or fine, mean or noble, far or near,—all form, in accordance with fact and with perfect knowledge¹⁹ should be regarded thus: ‘This is not mine; this am I not; this is soulless.’” “Verily, form alone, Blessed One; form alone: Exalted One?”

“Form, Rāhula, and sensation, Rāhula, and perception, Rāhula, and the mental concomitants, Rāhula, and consciousness,²⁰ Rāhula.”

Then the venerable Rāhula (reflected): ‘What individual, having been edified today with an exhortation from the Blessed One himself, would enter the village for alms?’²¹ Thereupon he turned back and sat down at the foot of a certain tree, with legs crossed, the body held erect, intent on mindfulness.

Now the venerable Sāriputta²² saw him seated thus, and addressed him:

“Cultivate, Rāhula, the meditation of mindfulness on inhaling and exhaling!²³ Inhaling and exhaling with mindfulness, Rāhula, cultivated, and frequently practised, is productive of much fruit and manifold advantages.”

And, at eventide the venerable Rāhula rose from solitary meditation and proceeded to the presence of the Blessed One.” Saluting him respectfully, he sat on one side. Seated thus, the venerable Rāhula said to the Blessed One:

“How, Lord, is mindfulness on inhaling and exhaling cultivated; how frequently practised, to produce much fruit and manifold advantages?”²⁴

“Whatever,²⁵ Rāhula, pertains to oneself as an individual, is hard, of a solid nature, and a product of grasping—as for example; hair of the head, hair of the body, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, diaphragm, spleen, lungs, stomach, intestines, mesentery, excrement: or anything else whatsoever pertaining to oneself as an individual, that is hard, of a solid nature, and a product of grasping: this, Rāhula, is called the personal ‘element of earth.’²⁶ But even this personal earthy element, as well as the external earthy element, is merely the element of solidity. This, in accordance with fact and with perfect knowledge, should be regarded thus: ‘This is not mine; this am I not; this is soulless’; Having seen with perfect knowledge that such is the case, one becomes disgusted with the element of earth, and one’s mind is detached from the element of solidity.

“What now, Rāhula, is the element of water? The element of water may be internal, may be external. “And what, Rāhula, is the internal watery element? Whatever pertains to oneself as an individual, is liquid, of a fluid nature, and a product of grasping—as for example: bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, lymph, tears, serum, saliva, nasal mucus, synovial fluid, urine, or anything else whatsoever pertaining to oneself as an individual, that is liquid, of a fluid nature, and a product of grasping: this, Rāhula, is called ‘the internal element of water.’ But even this internal watery element, as well as the external watery element, is merely the element of fluidity. This, in accordance with fact and with perfect knowledge, should be regarded thus: ‘This is not mine; this am I not; this is soulless.’ Having seen with perfect knowledge that such is the case, one becomes disgusted with the element of water,—and one’s mind is detached from the element of fluidity.

“What now, Rāhula, is the element of fire? The element of fire may be internal, may be external.

“And what, Rāhula, is the internal fiery element? Whatever pertains to oneself as an individual, is hot, of a fiery nature, and a product of grasping—as for example: that whereby there is deterioration,²⁷ whereby there is intense burning,²⁸ whereby what is eaten, drunk, chewed and tasted, is well-digested, or anything else whatsoever pertaining to oneself as an individual, that is hot, of a fiery nature, and a product of grasping: this, Rāhula, is called ‘the internal element of fire.’ But even this internal fiery

element, as well as the external fiery element, is merely the element of heat:—This, in accordance with fact and with perfect knowledge, should be regarded thus: ‘This is not mine; this am I not; this is soulless.’ Having seen with perfect knowledge that such is the case, one becomes disgusted with the element of fire, and one’s mind is detached from the element of heat.

“What now, Rāhula, is the element of air? The element of air may be internal, may be external.

“And what, Rāhula, is the internal gaseous element? Whatever pertains to oneself as an individual, is gaseous, of an airy nature, and a product of grasping—as for example: ascending and descending flatus, the vapours in the abdomen and bowels, the air passing through the various parts of the body, such as inhalation and exhalation, or anything else whatsoever pertaining to oneself as an individual, that is gaseous, of an airy nature, and a product of grasping: this, Rāhula, is called ‘the internal element of air.’ But even this internal gaseous element, as well as the external gaseous element, is merely the element of air. This, in accordance with fact and with perfect knowledge, should be regarded thus: ‘This is not mine; this am I not; this is soulless.’ Having seen with perfect knowledge that such is the case one becomes disgusted with the gaseous element, and one’s mind is detached from the element of air.

“What now, Rāhula, is the element of space? The element of space may be internal, may be external. “And what, Rāhula, is the internal element of space? Whatever pertains to oneself as an individual, is void, of an empty nature, and a product of grasping as for example: the cavities of the ear and nose, the mouth aperture, that whereby one swallows what is eaten, drunk, chewed and tasted; where such nourishment accumulates, that whereby such nourishment passes from the lower part (of the body), or anything else whatsoever pertaining to oneself as an individual, that is void, of an empty nature, and a product of grasping: this, Rāhula, is called ‘the internal element of space.’ But even this internal void element, as well as the external void element, is merely the element of space. This, in accordance with fact and with perfect knowledge, should be regarded thus: ‘This is not mine; this am I not; this is soulless.’ Having seen with perfect knowledge that such is the case, one becomes disgusted with the void element, and one’s mind is detached from the element of space.

“Like unto earth,²⁹ Rāhula, practise meditation. For, O Rāhula, by practising meditation like the earth, the contacts that have arisen—agreeable and disagreeable—will not continue to obsess your mind. Just as pure and impure things, Rāhula,—excrement, urine, saliva, pus and blood—are cast upon the earth, and yet the earth neither abhors, nor loathes, nor dislikes such things; even so yourself, Rāhula, earth-wise, practise meditation. For, Rāhula, by practising meditation like the earth, the contacts that have arisen—agreeable and disagreeable—will not continue to obsess your mind.

“Like unto water, Rāhula, practise meditation. For, O Rāhula, by practising meditation water-wise, the contacts that have arisen—agreeable and disagreeable—will not continue to obsess your mind. Just as pure and impure things, Rāhula,—excrement, urine, saliva, pus and blood—are washed (away) in water, and yet water neither abhors, nor loathes, nor dislikes such things; even so yourself, Rāhula, like water, practise meditation, and the contacts that have arisen will not continue to obsess your mind.

“Like unto fire, Rāhula, practise meditation. For, O Rāhula, by practising meditation fire-wise, the contacts that have arisen—agreeable and disagreeable—will not continue

to obsess your mind. Just as fire, Rāhula, burns pure and impure things—excrement, urine, saliva, pus and blood—and yet fire neither abhors, nor loathes, nor dislikes such things; even so yourself, Rāhula, like fire, practise meditation, and the contacts that have arisen will not continue to obsess your mind.

“Like unto air, Rāhula, practise meditation. For, O Rāhula, by practising meditation air-wise, the contacts that have arisen—agreeable and disagreeable—will not continue to obsess your mind. Just as air, Rāhula, blows upon pure and impure things—excrement, urine, saliva, pus and blood—and yet air neither abhors, nor loathes, nor dislikes such things; even so yourself, Rāhula, like air, practise meditation, and the contacts that have arisen will not continue to obsess your mind.

“Like unto space, Rāhula, practise meditation. For, O Rāhula, by practising meditation space-wise, the contacts that have arisen—agreeable and disagreeable—will not continue to obsess your mind. Just as the vault of heaven, Rāhula, is not attached to any place; even so yourself, Rāhula, like the vault of heaven, practise meditation. For, Rāhula, by practising meditation like space, the contacts that have arisen—agreeable and disagreeable—will not continue to obsess your mind.

“Develop the meditation on loving-kindness (*mettā*),³⁰ Rāhula. For, Rāhula, by developing loving-kindness, ill-will is abandoned.

“Develop the meditation on compassion, Rāhula. For, Rāhula, by developing compassion, cruelty is abandoned.

“Develop the meditation on sympathetic joy, Rāhula. For, Rāhula, by developing sympathetic joy, aversion is abandoned.

“Develop the meditation on equanimity, Rāhula. For, Rāhula, by developing equanimity, hatred is abandoned.

“Develop the meditation on impurity,³¹ Rāhula. For, Rāhula, by meditating on impurity, lust is abandoned.

“Develop the meditation on the concept of transience, Rāhula. For, Rāhula, by meditating on the concept of transience, pride of self is abandoned.

“Cultivate the concentration of mindfulness on inhaling and exhaling, Rāhula. Inhaling and exhaling with mindfulness, Rāhula, cultivated and frequently practised, is productive of much fruit and manifold advantages. And how, Rāhula, is inhaling and exhaling with mindfulness cultivated; how frequently practised, to produce much fruit and manifold advantages?

“Here, Rāhula, a Bhikkhu having retired to the forest, or to the foot of a tree, or to a lonely place; sits with legs crossed, the body held erect, intent on mindfulness. Consciously he inhales; consciously he exhales. When taking a long inspiration, he knows ‘I am taking a long inspiration’; when making a long expiration, he knows ‘I am making a long expiration.’ When taking a short inspiration, he knows ‘I am taking a short inspiration’; when making a short expiration, he knows ‘I am making a short expiration.’

Conscious of the entire body (-process)³² I will inhale,’ thus he trains himself; ‘Conscious of the entire body (-process) will I exhale,’ thus he trains himself. ‘Calming the bodily process I will inhale,’ thus he trains himself; ‘Calming the bodily process will I exhale,’ thus he trains himself. ‘Experiencing pleasure I will inhale,’ thus he trains himself; ‘Experiencing pleasure will I exhale,’ thus he trains himself. ‘Experiencing

happiness I will inhale,' thus he trains himself; 'Experiencing happiness will I exhale,' thus he trains himself. 'Conscious of the mental process³³ I will inhale,' thus he trains himself; 'Conscious of the mental process will I exhale,' thus he trains himself: 'Calming the mental process I will inhale,' thus he trains himself; 'Calming the mental process will I exhale,' thus he trains himself. 'Perfectly conscious I will inhale,' thus he trains himself; 'Perfectly conscious will I exhale,' thus he trains himself. 'With enraptured mind I will inhale,' thus he trains himself; 'With enraptured mind will I exhale,' thus he trains himself. 'Thoroughly composing the mind I will inhale,' thus he trains himself; 'Thoroughly composing the mind will I exhale,' thus he trains himself. 'Emancipating the mind I will inhale,' thus he trains himself; 'Emancipating the mind will I exhale,' thus he trains himself. 'Reflecting on transience I will inhale,' thus he trains himself; 'Reflecting on transience will I exhale,' thus he trains himself. 'Reflecting on freedom from lust I will inhale,' thus he trains himself; 'Reflecting on freedom from lust will I exhale,' thus he trains himself. 'Reflecting on Cessation I will inhale,' thus he trains himself; 'Reflecting on Cessation will I exhale,' thus he trains himself. 'Reflecting on complete emancipation I will inhale,' thus he trains himself; 'Reflecting on complete emancipation will I exhale,' thus he trains himself.³⁴

"Mindfulness on inhaling and exhaling, Rāhula, thus cultivated and frequently practised, is productive of much fruit and manifold advantage. When, Rāhula, inhaling and exhaling with mindfulness is thus cultivated and frequently-practised, even the last inspiration and expiration ceases consciously, not unconsciously."

This was spoken by the Blessed One. The venerable Rāhula, delighted, rejoiced at his words.

Cūḷa-Rāhulovada Suttanta (The Shorter Exhortation to Rāhula)

Thus have I heard. On one occasion the Blessed One was staying in the monastery of Anāthapiṇḍika, in the Jeta Grove, near Sāvattihī. There the following thought arose in the mind of the Blessed One whilst meditating in solitude:

"Mature are in Rāhula those qualities that bring deliverance to maturity.³⁵ Should I not now give further guidance to Rāhula, for the extinction of the corruptions?"³⁶

Having robed himself in the forenoon, the Blessed One took bowl and robe, and entered Sāvattihī for alms. Having gone his round for alms in Sāvattihī, he returned; and after the meal he addressed the venerable Rāhula thus: "Take your mat, Rāhula. We shall go to the Andha Grove, and spend the day there."—"Yes, Lord," replied the venerable Rāhula, took his mat and followed close behind the Blessed One.

On that occasion, many thousands of deities followed the Blessed One, thinking: "Today the Blessed One will give further guidance to the venerable Rāhula, for the extinction of the corruptions."

And the Blessed One, having entered the Andha Grove, sat down at the foot of a certain tree on a seat prepared for him. Then also the venerable Rāhula, having saluted the Blessed One respectfully, sat at one side. Thereupon the Blessed One addressed him as follows:

"What do you think, Rāhula, is the eye permanent or impermanent?"

“Impermanent, Lord.”

“Is that which is impermanent, painful or pleasant?”

“It is painful Lord.”

“Is it justifiable, then, to think, of that which is impermanent, pain-laden and subject to change—‘This is mine;’ this I am;³⁷ this is my self ‘?’³⁸

“Certainly not, Lord.”

“What do you think, Rāhula, are forms (visual objects) permanent or impermanent?”

“Impermanent, Lord.”

“Is that which is impermanent, painful or pleasant?”

“It is painful, Lord.”

“Is it justifiable, then, to think, of that which is impermanent, pain-laden and subject to change—‘This is mine; this I am; this is my self ‘?’ “

“Certainly not, Lord.”

“What do you think, Rāhula; are eye-consciousness³⁹ ... visual contact” permanent or impermanent?” “Impermanent, Lord.”

“Is that which is impermanent, painful or pleasant?”

“It is painful Lord.”

“Is it justifiable, then, to think, of that which is impermanent, pain-laden and subject to change—‘This is mine; this I am; this is my self ‘?’ “

“Certainly not, Lord.”

“What do you think, Rāhula: that which arises conditioned by visual contact, namely all that belongs to feeling, perception, mental formations and consciousness,⁴⁰ is that permanent or impermanent?”

“Impermanent, Lord.”

“Is that which is impermanent, painful or pleasant?”

“It is painful, Lord.”

“Is it justifiable, then, to think, of that which is impermanent, pain-laden and subject to change—‘This is mine; this I am; this is my self?’ “

“Certainly not, Lord.”

“What do you think; Rāhula; ear and sounds, nose and smells, tongue and tastes, body and tangibles, mind and ideas: the (corresponding types of) consciousness and contact; and the feelings, perceptions, mental formations and consciousness which arise conditioned by that contact—are all these permanent or impermanent?”

“Impermanent, Lord.”

“Is that which is impermanent, painful or pleasant?”

“It is painful, Lord.”

“Is it justifiable, then, to think, of that which is impermanent, pain-laden and subject to change—‘This is mine; this I am; this is my self?’ “

“Certainly not, Lord.”

“The learned noble disciple, Rāhula, who sees thus, gets, a disgust for the eye, gets a disgust for forms, for visual consciousness,⁴¹ visual contact,⁴² and for that which arises conditioned by visual contact, namely all feelings, perceptions, mental formations and consciousness.

“He gets disgust for ear and sounds, nose and smells, tongue and tastes, body and tangibles, mind and ideas, gets a disgust for the (corresponding types of) consciousness and contact, and for that which arises conditioned by that contact, namely all that belongs to feeling, perception, mental formations and consciousness.⁴³”

“In him who gets disgusted;⁴⁴ passion fades out.⁴⁵ With the fading out of passion⁴⁶ he is liberated. Thus liberated, the knowledge arises in him: ‘Liberated am I, birth is exhausted, fulfilled is the Holy Life, done what should be done, and nothing further remains after this’: Thus he knows.”

Thus spoke the Blessed One. Glad at heart, the venerable Rāhula rejoiced in the words of the Blessed One.

Now during that utterance the mind of the venerable Rāhula was freed from the corruptions through clinging no more. And also in those many thousand deities, there arose the stainless, immaculate Eye of Truth⁴⁷: “Whatever is subject to origination is subject to cessation.”

The Rāhula Sutta

(Sutta-Nipāta, Verses 335-342)

The Prologue

The Master:

“From living constant, say,
‘Dost thou the wise man scorn?
The torch-bearer to men?
Is he revered by thee?”

Rāhula:

“From living constant, nay,
The wise man scorn I not;
The torch-bearer to men
Is aye revered by me.”

The Teaching

The Master:

Loosed from the pleasure-strands,
Dear forms that charm the mind,
In faith renounce thy home,
Ender of ill become!

Seek thou for lovely friends!
Seek bed and seat remote,
Lone and of little noise.
Frugal in fare become!

Robes, alms and requisites,
Thy bed and seat: for these
Beget no craving, nor
Turn to the world again!

Curbed by observance-rule,
Curbed in the senses five,
Mark thou thy body's ways⁴⁸
And be wearied of it!

Shun thou the things of sign,⁴⁹
Attractive and passion-fraught:
On foul things⁵⁰ quicken mind,
One-pointed and intent!

Quicken what has no sign,⁵¹
Be rid of warping pride.⁵²
Then mastering the pride,⁵³
You shall fare in calm.⁵⁴

In this wise the Master constantly instructs the venerable Rāhula.

Notes

¹ This Suttanta is referred to in the *Bhābrā Edict* of King Asoka.

² *Ambalalaṭṭhikā*, “The mango sapling.” The so-called ‘palace’ was a retreat for meditation, and for those desiring solitude, erected in the Bamboo Grove.—Comy. In the *Brahmajāla Suttanta*, it is said that the Blessed One took shelter for one night in the royal rest-house at *Ambalaṭṭhikā*, together with the company of Bhikkhus. Commenting on this Buddhaghosa says: “Here *Ambalaṭṭhikā* is the king’s park. At the entrance stood a young mango tree called *Ambalaṭṭhikā* by the people. Consequently, the park itself came to be known as *Ambalaṭṭhikā*. It was well watered, shady, surrounded by a rampart, securely fastened with gates, and protected like a casket. Within the park was a house ornamented with magnificent paintings, for the king’s relaxation. This was known as the royal rest-house.”

It would appear from the above that there were two buildings in this park; one, for the king’s own use; the other for the use of the religious orders.

³ The Commentator states that the Buddha delivered this discourse to Rāhula, whose age was only seven, knowing that boys of tender years, thoughtlessly, often speak falsely.

⁴ *Sāmaññaṇṇa*, the state of a *samaṇa*. Generally rendered “asceticism” or “monasticism,” but neither word is a suitable designation for the status of Bhikkhus.

⁵ In both places the same word is used—*chaddita* thrown away: abandoned, left, etc.

⁶ *Nikkujjita*, overturned, upset.

⁷ That is, he destroys everything that comes in his way. Comy.

⁸ That is, he has fearlessly exposed every part of his body to the risks of battle, not protecting even his trunk.

⁹ *Paccavekkhanattho*; Comy: for the purpose of looking at, for seeing any blemishes in the face. (Ed.)

¹⁰ *Paccavekkhitvā paccavekkhitvā*. This expresses in simple language what is implied in the doctrinal terms *sati*, ‘mindfulness’, and *yoniso manasikāra*, wise consideration or thorough attention. (Ed.)

¹¹ The detailed exposition of “verbal action” is identical with that of bodily action.

¹² The detailed exposition of “mental action” is likewise identical with that of bodily action, with the exception of the penultimate paragraph. The last two paragraphs are accordingly given in full.

¹³ Being a mental offence, Rāhula is not exhorted (as in the case of bodily, and verbal, action) to confess it to anyone.

¹⁴ This refers to self-examination. The Commentator says that one should reflect whether any evil has been done through word or deed. If so, it should be confessed; if not, one should abide rejoicing in that knowledge. If, whilst reflecting, one finds that an evil thought has been harboured, then it should be loathed and a firm resolution made not to entertain it again. If no such thought has arisen, one should abide rejoicing in the fact.

¹⁵ The Commentator states that the Venerable Rāhula, whilst following the Blessed One, noted with admiration, the physical perfection of the Buddha, and reflected with satisfaction that he himself was of similar appearance. Rāhula was very handsome. The books say that as the Buddha went along, followed by Rāhula, the pair was comparable to an auspicious royal elephant and his noble offspring, a royal swan with its beautiful cygnet, a regal lion with its stately cub, etc. Both were golden in complexion, almost equal in beauty, both were of the warrior caste, both had renounced a throne. So Rāhula, admiring the teacher, thought, “I too am

handsome, like my parent the Blessed One. Beautiful is the Buddha's form, and mine is similar." "What is the lad, Rāhula, considering," thought the Buddha, "as he follows me?" And the Master read Rāhula's train of thought. Thereupon the Buddha decided to reprove Rāhula at once. A small leak may sink a ship, if neglected by the captain. Rāhula's foolish, vain thoughts could lead the lad to states of ill, and such leaks brook no delay.

¹⁶ *Rūpaṃ*: According to Abhidhamma *rūpa* is that which changes owing to physical conditions, such as heat, moisture, etc. Twenty-eight of these material qualities, or rūpas, are enumerated in the *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha*. (See *Compendium of Philosophy*, p. 154). *Rūpa* in its generic sense, means 'matter,' and in its specific sense, 'quality.' But, in popular language, it means 'form.'" (Shwe Zan Aung) We believe that Abhidhamma scholars would unanimously agree that 'matter' is the best possible rendering for *rūpa*, 'Body' would likewise be a suitable equivalent for, *rūpa*, denoting, as in this Suttanta, the physical form of an individual. We have, however, retained the general term 'form,' despite one great objection to the use of the word 'form' for *rūpa*—namely, the contrast in Western philosophy between the impermanency of 'form' and the permanency of 'matter'.

¹⁷ *Ajjhattaṃ*: belonging to one's own life-flux; relating to the individual.

¹⁸ *Bahiddhā*: outside, without.

¹⁹ *Sammapaññā* is *vipassanā paññā*: intuitive knowledge.—Comy.

²⁰ These are the five component parts (*khandha*) that together constitute an individual. As matter or *rūpa* comprises twenty-eight material qualities, so mind or consciousness comprises fifty-two mental properties. (*Compendium*, pp. 94, ff). Of these, two—*vedanā*, sensation and *saññā*, perception—are usually treated as separate groups. The remaining fifty are collectively designated *saṅkhāras*, because, as concomitants, they perform their respective functions in combination as one whole, of act, speech, or thought." See note on *saṅkhāra*, *Compendium of Philosophy*, p. 273.

²¹ Rāhula is said to have felt like a thief who has been caught with the stolen goods. He was very wise and understood, in detail, anything concisely stated (a fact that handicaps one who reads this exhortation to him, without the elucidation of the Commentaries). The Master, having reproved Rāhula, proceeded on his begging-round, but the latter decided to forego food that day.

²² If the two chief disciples happen to be residing in the same monastery as the Buddha, not until he has departed on the alms round do they set forth.—Comy.

²³ The Venerable Sāriputta, noting the cross-legged posture of his youthful pupil,—which was the one always adopted for the Meditation on Breathing—advised this practice, not being aware that Rāhula was practising another, on the Buddha's own instruction.

²⁴ Rāhula's meditation bore no fruit. He was perplexed. The Buddha had instructed him to meditate on "Form," whereas the Venerable Sāriputta, his teacher, advised "Breathing." The Buddha had inculcated the importance of obedience to one's immediate teacher. So Rāhula decided to meditate on "Breathing," and to obtain the Buddha's instruction on the subject. But the Blessed One did not immediately satisfy this wish. Before the ship can be steered safely to the haven, its dangerous leaks must be stopped. The Master proceeded to do this by expanding on his first brief instruction of meditation on "Form," and its constituents. Thus does a wise physician dispense the needed medicine, ignoring the patient's desires. This done, the Buddha gave Rāhula instruction on "Breathing."

²⁵ Instead of giving a direct answer to the question, the Buddha explains to Rāhula the nature of the four essentials (*mahābhūtā*) to which all bodies may be reduced, in order to dissipate his illusion regarding self.

²⁶ According to Buddhism there are four essentials or primaries which are inter-related, viz: *paṭhavī*, solidity; *āpo*, cohesion; *tejo*, temperature; and *vāyo*, motion.

²⁷ *Jīriyati*: to be old, worn out, decrepit. Also “oxidation.”

²⁸ *Paridayhati*: to be scorched. As, for instance, if a person were to say, ‘I am burning! I am burning!’ and were to long for something cool. Cf. *Sammohavinodanī*, p. 69.

²⁹ Why did he commence thus? In order to show the reasons for acquiring balance of mind (*tādi—bhāva*, imperturbability).—Comy.

³⁰ The Buddhist technical term *mettā* (Sanskrit: *maitriya*) is here rendered “Benevolence”—(*bene*: well and *volens*, wishing or willing) which is exactly what *mettā* signifies. The only drawback is that ‘benevolence’ is, as generally understood today, too flaccid a word to convey the rapture of Buddhist *mettā*. We ourselves were driven to the use of ‘Loving-kindness’ for *mettā*. ‘Love,’ alone, is corrupted with the idea of the sexual; ‘Kindness,’ alone, is too tame. In the combination ‘Loving-kindness,’ ‘loving’ intensifies ‘kindness,’ modifies the possible taint of ‘loving.’ The reader will now appreciate something of the import of the Pali word *mettā*, which we intend to retain in future, in view of its deep significance, and the difficulty of offering a graceful English equivalent.

³¹ *Asubha*. The ten ‘*asubhas*’ are the ten stages of increasing putrefaction of corpses, viz.: 1. Bloated. 2. Discoloured. 3. Festering. 4. Fissured. 6. Dismembered. 7. Cut and dismembered. 8. Bloody. 9. Wormy. 10. Bony. (See *Expositor*, Part I, p. 264).

³² *Sabba-kāya*. Literally—“the whole body.” According to the *Visuddhimagga* (Transl. by Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli; p. 294), *kāya* used in this connection, does not mean the physical body, but the whole mass of inhalation and exhalation.

³³ *Kāya-saṅkhāra*, literally “body-process.” This Prof. Rhys Davids renders as “bodily organism,” (*Dialogues*, Pt. II, p. 328). According to the *Visuddhimagga* it means “inhalation and exhalation.” We find this word used in a similar sense in the Cūḷa-Vedalla Suttanta (MN 44, p. 301). “*Assāsapassāsā kho āvuso Visākha kāyikā ete dhammā kāyapaṭibaddhā, tasmā assāsapassāsā kāya-saṅkhārā.*”—Inhalation and exhalation, friend Visākha, are indeed physical. These conditions are dependent on the body; therefore inhalation and exhalation are (called) *kāya-saṅkhārā*. (See *Visuddhimagga*, p. 229).

³⁴ This description of the meditation on Breathing is, we fear, too condensed for the general reader, to whom we are unable to offer a detailed exposition here. But it must be stated that each injunction of the Blessed One, in this connection, has a specific meaning and the practice proceeds, up and up, starting with merely noting the breaths, through the jhānas, and ending with Nibbāna attainment. The student is referred to the *Visuddhimagga*, pp. 285-317-292, for further particulars.

³⁵ *Vimutti-paripācānīyā dhammā*. The Commentary mentions two sets of fifteen ‘things conducive to the ripening of deliverance (i.e., of Arahatta or Saintship)’.

³⁶ I. Three purifying factors for each of the five Controlling Faculties (*indriya*), Faith, Energy, Mindfulness, Concentration and Wisdom. Briefly stated, these three purifying factors are: avoiding the company of those possessing qualities opposed to the respective Faculty; associating with those who possess these Faculties to a high degree; reflection on those parts of the Teaching that are helpful to a development of the respective Faculty.

II. The five Controlling Faculties; five contemplations: of impermanence, of the suffering in the impermanent, of not-self in suffering, of giving up, of dispassion; noble friendship, moral restraint, talk on the austere life, application of energy and penetrative wisdom.

³⁷ *Āsavaṇaṃ khayē*. *Āsava*, ‘corruption,’ elsewhere rendered by ‘taints’ or ‘cankers,’ means literally ‘flux’ or ‘outflow.’ There are three kinds of ‘corruptions’’: by sense-desire (*kāmāsavā*), by (desire for continued) existence (*bhavāsavā*) and by ignorance (*avijjāsavā*); often a fourth kind is added: the corruption by wrong views (*ditthāsavā*).—The Arahant, or Saint, is often called ‘one in whom the corruptions have become exhausted’ or ‘the extirpator of corruptions’ (*khīṇāsavo*): and Arahatta, Saintship, is the extinction, or exhaustion, of the Corruptions (*āsavaṅkhaya*).

³⁸ “This is mine”—as motivated by craving (*taṇhā*) or possessiveness.

³⁹ “This I am”—as motivated by pride (*māna*).

⁴⁰ “This my self (or soul)—as motivated by wrong views (*diṭṭhi*).

⁴¹ *Cakkhu-viññāṇa*.

⁴² *Cakkhu-samphasso*.

⁴³ *Vedanāgataṃ saññāgataṃ saṅkhāragataṃ viññāṇagataṃ*. This refers to the last four of the five Aggregates (*khandha*), comprising the mental part (*nāma*) of the individual.

⁴⁴ “Gets a disgust for”: *nibbindati* (“disgust”: *nibbidā*).—Here where a high stage of penetrative Insight (*vipassanā*) is reached, ‘disgust’ should not be understood to mean a strong emotional revulsion, or loathing (which generally is linked with feelings of resentment or antagonism); it is rather an estrangement, a spontaneous recoiling or turning away.

⁴⁵ *Virajjati*.

⁴⁶ *Virāga*, ‘through dispassion.’

⁴⁷ *Dhamma-cakkhu*, the Vision of Dhamma, refers here (according to Comy.) to the attainment of Arahatta, Saintship; while elsewhere it applies only to Stream-entry (*sotāpatti*).

⁴⁸ Literally: Have ‘mindfulness directed to the body. (*sati kāyagatā-ty-atthu*).

⁴⁹ “Sign” (*nimittaṃ*), that is, the sign or notion of greed. But *nimittaṃ* is here better to be linked with *subhaṃ* in the next line, and rendered by “attractive object” or “the idea of attractiveness.”

⁵⁰ “On foul things” (*asubhāya*), i.e., the unattractive or repulsive aspect of the inanimate body as considered in the Cemetery Meditations; and of the animate body, in the meditation of the 32 parts of the body.

⁵¹ “No sign” (*animittaṃ*), i.e., without a sign of greed, hatred or delusion, nor any notion of permanency. Comy.: Cultivate insight (*vipassanā*).”

⁵² Literally: “of any proclivity to pride” (*mānānusayaṃ*).

⁵³ *Māna*, pride’ has here also the wider meaning of self-conceit (*asmi-māna*) or ego-illusion.

⁵⁴ This refers to the highest tranquillity of Sainthood.

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