

THE DOCTRINE OF THE TENDAI SECT*

INTRODUCTORY

The Five Periods.

SEVERAL methods of classifying the teaching of Buddha are given by different sects. The Sanron sect (三論宗) has two divisions, one for Hearers (*Srāvaka*) and the other for *Pratyeka-Buddhas*. The Hosso sect (法相宗) has three divisions. The Kegon sect (華嚴宗) had five kinds of teaching and ten sects. In order to make Buddha's teaching clear, the Tendai sect (天台宗) divides his life into five periods, corresponding more or less clearly to the five grades of teaching in the Kegon sect. These are called the five periods (五時), and sometimes the five tastes (五味).** These five periods are all distinct, and are intended to lead the ignorant step by step into Buddhahood. They are not merely a description of his various hearers; but they are supposed to reveal the actual course of his life and of his methods of work. That they are true to fact may well be open to doubt; but for the present

* The writer has spent regular time for years with competent Japanese teachers pouring over Japanese religious books. These efforts have been supplemented by reliable translations. The books of Dr. Sensho Murakami and Dr. Eun Maeda first made Buddhism interesting. These scholars impressed him as being liberal, open-minded, and honest. The writer is greatly indebted to these men. In the study of Tendai *An Outline of The Tendai Sect* (天台宗綱要) by Dr. Maeda was very helpful. This was supplemented by other outlines.

** Tendai Daishi, after thinking over the five teachings of the Kegon sutra (華嚴經), and the five tastes of the Nehan sutra (涅槃經), probably divided Buddha's life into these five periods, basing his conclusions on some more or less obscure remarks of the Hokke sutra (法華經), which represents that several disciples, having passed through four previous periods, finally rejoined in the perfect teaching of the Hokke sutra. From what Dr. Maeda says, it seems clear that these five periods were not worked out until some centuries after the death of Buddha.

we will waive this question, in order to understand exactly what is meant by these periods and how they came to be mentioned.

The twenty-one days* after Sakyamuni's enlightenment under the Bodhi tree, was the first period, during which time he thought upon and expounded the Kegon sutra which was so deep that only the wise could understand. It is explained that he wished to test the ability of the people to grasp his doctrine. But only the Bodhisattva understood him, the common people seeing him thought he was merely engrossed in meditation.** Seeing that they did not understand him, he devised the Hinayana doctrine in order to lead them up to Buddhahood. Thus, Kegon has various teachings both shallow and deep, and as a consequence its doctrines are classified as separate doctrine. However this is only a means to an end, and the real teaching of Kegon is regarded as perfect teaching, since it describes "The heart, Buddha, and all living things as having the same nature."***

* As to the length of the periods there has been considerable useless discussion. One class of scholars hold that the Kegon (華嚴) period lasted for twenty-one days, the Agon (阿含) period for twelve years, the Hodo (方等) period for sixteen years, the Hannya (般若) period for fourteen years, and the Hokke (法華) period for eight years. Others maintain the same total number of years for the third and fourth periods; but they divide them differently giving only eight years to the Hodo period and twenty-two to the Hannya. Still another class of scholars are opposed to fixing any definite length to any of the periods. This latter class regards the periods as being rather a classification of the people in different stages of development. The Tendai sect, however, especially emphasises the five periods in Buddha's fifty years of teaching.

** Buddhist scholars have disputed over the nature of Sakyamuni's body during this trance. He is described as possessing as many forms as "the dust from the ten heavens." Others claim that a Buddha in this world could not possess more than thirty-two forms, and one heretic claims that it depended on the people's ability to see and that the Bodhisattva could see more than ordinary men.

*** In the Kegon (Avatamsaka) period Sakyamuni spoke of enlightenment to people of high ideas, not to ordinary people who could not grasp these most profound things of Buddhism. While Tendai speaks of the same things, it directs its attention to the unenlightened with the purpose of lifting them upward. So although both Kegon and Tendai are perfect teachings they differ very greatly.

During the Agon* or second period Sakyamuni taught a simple doctrine at Mrigadāva (Deer Park), and making this a centre travelled through sixteen great provinces evangelising the people. During this period he taught the Hinayana doctrine as found in the three kinds of sacred writing known as Sūtras, Śāstras, and Vinaya (discipline).

During the Hodo or third period, Sakyamuni endeavoured to lead the enlightened of Hinayana Buddhism into a greater form of knowledge. He compared the Hinayana and Mahayana doctrines, and endeavoured by various methods to remove the self-satisfaction of weak believers of the former doctrine. Yuima (維摩 Vimalakīrti), a Mahayana believer, once pretended to be sick; Sakyamuni asked his Hinayana disciples to visit him, but they refused to do so, because they had been defeated in debate by the Mahayana scholar.

In the Hannya** or fourth period, he showed the unity underlying Hinayana and Mahayana doctrines. Although men differed, their teaching cannot be separated into the lesser teaching of Hinayana, as opposed to the greater Mahayana doctrine. The disciples were led to overcome the mistake of Hinayana, by being taught the emptiness of all things, including the five combinations (五蘊, *skandha*) which constitute the self, the six senses, and their six organs. They also received the Mahayana doctrine, although they did not yet understand it, except as a means of helping men.

In the Hokke-Nehan,* or fifth period, the perfect teaching of the Tendai sect was given.

* In this Agon (Agama) period ancient Buddhist scholars placed a smaller division of teaching called the teaching about heaven and men, which aimed not so much at leading men into Buddhahood as into a moral life. The Tendai scholars consider this a separate period because Sakyamuni's mission was distinctly religious.

** This Hannya period receives its name from the Hannya sutra.

* The name of the period is received from the two sutras upon which the teaching is based; The Hokke (*Saddharma-Pundarīka*) and the Nehan (*Mahā-parinirvāna*) sutras.

The Buddhist Prodigal Son Story.

These five periods are variously illustrated but one illustration resembles the story of the prodigal son. A certain youth fled into a far country, where he was forced by poverty to go here and there seeking a livelihood. Finally he returned to his own country to seek the shelter of his father's house. During his absence his father had become very wealthy, and had moved into a rich palace, where many retainers and servants waited upon him.*

As the boy approached the palace of his father the latter was thinking of his long-lost son and was lamenting that in his old age he had none to share his fortune. "How pleasant it would be to give my wealth to my son," he thought. While he was thus musing, the boy was looking through the gate and saw his father sitting in a magnificent chair with his feet on an elegant foot stool, and surrounded by other brahmins, retainers and servants. "This is probably a great prince or some other man of high rank," thought the boy. "This is no place for me; I must not linger here lest I be forced to do some kind of labour." So he started on again.

But his father recognized him at first sight, and rejoiced greatly that the boy had returned and would be able to share his great wealth. He immediately sent messengers to bring him in. When the boy saw them hurrying after him, he was so frightened and astonished that he thought they were going to take his life. He cried out, "I have done nothing worthy of arrest," and fell fainting on the ground. His father was now alarmed. Ordering the messengers to leave, he himself sprinkled his son with cold water to revive him, but seeing how the boy had fallen and how unfit he was to enter into his father's exalted position, the father did not reveal his identity.

This part of the story illustrates the Kegon period. The

* See *The SadJhama-pundarika Sutra*, (妙法蓮華經) the "Sacred Books of the East," Vol. XXI, pages 99-117.

father's attitude illustrates Buddha's feeling toward the masses, and the boy's attitude reveals the condition of the poor ignorant ones who do not understand Buddha's heart of mercy. When Buddha explained the Mahayana doctrine, men did not really understand it, and as a result were in as helpless a condition as this poor prodigal. The father did not reveal his identity, but told the servant to tell the poor man that he was free to go wherever he wished. Astonished and delighted the poor man wandered off to the poor quarter of the city, seeking food and shelter.

Then the father began to think. "What shall I do to save my own son?" He sent two thin miserable-looking men to tell him there was a great opportunity for him to earn money, and to lead him to the palace. The boy came, and worked for wages in his father's house. The father pitied his boy, dressed in rags, and went to him and promised to increase his wages, and give him his heart's desire. He also urged him to feel at ease, and to look upon him as a father. He thanked him for his valuable services, commending him for his honesty and purity.

The son's state represents a man's condition in the second period, in which he is taught the Hinayana doctrine. After this he called him son, and the boy began to feel more at home, going about the house freely, though he continued to live in the straw hut in the village. He has lost his fear and has acquired more or less faith in himself, and goes freely through the house. But he continued to live in a separate house and at a distance, and still regards himself as unfit to live in his father's home. This represents the third period in which a man has some faith in Mahayana doctrine which he adores as beautiful, though he does not yet feel it possible for him to attain it. In this way just as the boy does not feel himself worthy to become a member of his father's house, so men feel unworthy to enter the state of spiritual life which Buddha in his mercy has prepared for them.

Then the rich man became very ill, and seemed likely to die, so he called his son, and entrusted all his vast estate to him, saying, "I am sick and wish to bestow my riches on some one who will take charge of it; please accept it, for I know you will look after it just as I have done." While the poor man took complete charge, he did not feel it was his own, and did not use any of it for himself, but continued to live in his straw hut, as poor as ever he had been. This represents the fourth period, in which one may know the way of the Bodhisattva and be almost a Buddha, but not yet perfectly enlightened.

Shortly after this the father knowing he was about to die and perceiving a great change in the boy's heart, determined to present him to a gathering of relatives as his own long-lost son. To them and to the high government officials he said, "Gentlemen, this is my own son, who disappeared fifty years ago. I therefore leave all my estate, public and private, to him." The straw hut was abandoned and the son came to live in his own luxurious home. This represents the fifth period of Buddha's teaching in which believers fully grasp the deep meaning of Buddhahood and are able to understand the Tathagata who says to them, "You are my sons."

There is another illustration of the meaning of the five periods. Just as the sun rises over the world, first glorifying the highest mountain peaks, then the highest hills, then the foot hills, and finally flooding the plain with light, so the limitless wisdom of the Tathagata sends forth the light of unlimited, unobstructed wisdom upon the Bodhisattvas, the Pratyeka-Buddhas, the Hearers, upon all those who carry with them the merit of a previously good character, and finally upon all classes and conditions of men good and bad alike.

The fifth period received its name from the Hokke and Nehan sutras. At Ryōjusen or the Vulture's Peak (靈鷲山), Sakyamuni taught the first ten volumes of the Hokke sutra, then at Kokuye (虛空會) he gave eleven more volumes, and again

at Ryōjusen (Vulture's Peak) he completed it. This was the complete teaching by which any one in the ten worlds might become a Buddha. Shortly before his death he repeated this teaching in little different form, for the benefit of those who did not know his doctrine. In the Nehan sutra he taught that the nature of Buddha is in everyone. The Hokke sutra is called the teaching of one way, the Nehan sutra is called the teaching of Buddha's nature. The teaching in these two sutras are really the same, and because of this they give their names to the Hokke-Nehan period.

In the Hokke sutra we are told that Buddha taught for nearly forty years before he began to teach the one way (*ekayāna*) into which he wished to lead his disciples. His object was to destroy the teaching about the fleeting nature of things and to reveal the permanence of truth.

The truth is unchangeable and eternal. His teaching was divided into three vehicles, merely as a temporary expedient to help men who could not understand the one all-embracing Buddha-vehicle. The Hokke sutra illustrates this by a parable of a burning house, in which there were many little boys playing. A man seeing the flames was able to escape, but the little boys continued to play and amuse themselves. Even when scorched by the flames they did not know enough to escape. They heeded no warning or command, so the man said to them, "Outside there is a bullock cart, a goat cart and a deer cart which are very pretty. Come and get them." Thereupon they dropped everything and ran out. They received only the first representing the One-Buddha vehicle well made and decorated tastefully. Did that man tell a falsehood, because he have them the greatest vehicle only? No, the end justified the means; for that one was far better than the inferior carts which had been promised. In this way the Tathagata who is the father of all beings bestows the bliss of Buddha-knowledge. But in order to teach the one way of Buddha, he employed many ways. The lower classes of people thought there were

three ways; to their unenlightened hearts each way seemed distinct. But Buddha taught only one way and that way was open to all.

In the early part of the Hokke sutra, men are taught directly about reality; but in the later parts illustrations are used for the ignorant; examples are given of men becoming enlightened through the biographies of the various Buddhas. These three methods are called the three circles of teaching.

The teaching of the Tendai sect, in so far as it varies in different ages, is relative, but in so far as it is the truth, it is absolute. In the last period alone, absolute truth in all its purity is taught. It differs in many respects from popular conceptions which are as ripples on the ocean of Buddha's wisdom.

The Eight Teachings.

Tendai presents the various doctrines of Buddhism to men of different ability in what are called "The Eight Teachings" (八教), four of which represent four methods of presenting the truth, and four of which represent four evolving doctrines which are related to the four methods as drugs to a medicinal tablet.

The four methods are designated by four significant titles: sudden (頓), gradual (漸), openly unfixed (顯不定) teaching, and secretly unfixed (秘密不定) teaching. The first method was used with men of ability who could immediately grasp the truth. The second method was adopted in order to lead men of mediocre ability gradually up from Hinayana to the richer enlightenment of Mahayana. In the third and fourth methods the language used had a different significance for each individual hearer. When Buddha revealed this fact to the people he used the third method and his teaching was openly-unfixed in its meaning. When he did not reveal this fact he employed the fourth method and his teaching was secretly-unfixed in its meaning.

The four evolving doctrines resemble the classifications in the first four teachings of the Kegon sect. The first is called the teaching of the three stores (三藏教), discipline (*vinaya*), śāstras and sūtras. This is the teaching of the Kusha (俱舍) and other Hinayana sects. In Tendai this doctrine is a device intended to lead ignorant and illiterate believers to a position where they can grasp the next higher teaching. In other words this doctrine is a preparation for Mahayana teaching.

The second grade of teaching is called literally "Passing-through teaching (通教)", because it forms the connection between Hinayana doctrine which precedes it, and the higher forms of Buddhism which follow it. The former grades led men to believe in the existence of things, but through this second teaching the lower grades of Bodhisattva, disciples who correspond to the Hearers and Pratyeka-Buddhas of Hinayana Buddhism, are enabled to understand the doctrine of the vanity of things. In other words, they come to realise that things are mere phenomena. According to this doctrine, the material universe is empty appearance resembling a large mirage. When we clap our hands we cannot discover the noise by searching for it, it is empty noise, but we hear it, and it is real as a dream is real; so the universe exists only as in a dream. In this way the doctrine aims at showing the vanity and emptiness of the world, in order to lead the believer into a higher conception of truth. It is called the theoretical teaching of the three worlds, and is intended to separate man from the illusion of the three worlds, and from the bondage of transmigration. It does this great work of deliverance by the use of precepts, by meditation and the attainment of wisdom.

The third teaching is called separate doctrine (別教). It was not taught to Hearers and Pratyeka-Buddhas, and in this way it is "separate" from what precedes it. It is also separate from the perfect teaching in that it makes a complete separation between reality and phenomena. In the perfect teaching (圓教) the ideal is the real.

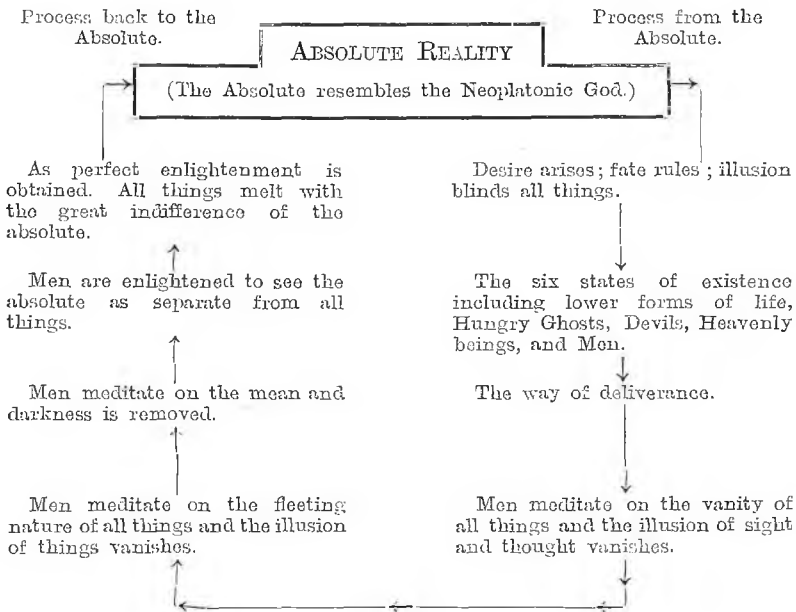
The separate doctrine teaches about practice above the three worlds. The first doctrine is practice within the three worlds, and the second doctrine is theoretical teaching within the three worlds. The third doctrine rises not merely out of the illusion of the three worlds with their birth and death, but above the illusion which is above the three worlds. It rises above all origin, change, birth, decay, and darkness into the higher enlightenment which is called great Nirvana. But since it regards Absolute Reality as separated from all things, it is not yet the true teaching and is called temporary doctrine.

In the meditation of this grade the believer thinks first of the vanity of things, secondly, of the fleeting nature of things, and finally of "The Middle Path" (中道). In this way the three kinds of illusion are separately and successively wiped out. These are the illusion of sight and thought, the illusion of things as numberless as sand, and the illusion of darkness which prevents men from seeing The Middle Path. This grade teaches the middle way, yet it regards the teaching of the fleeting nature of things, and that of the vanity of things as separate from men. Each possesses a distinct kind of illusion. There must be three methods of destroying these illusions, and so they adopt three kinds of meditation; by meditating on the world as if it were empty, they wipe out the illusion of sight and thought and enter the enlightenment of Hearers and Pratyeka-Buddha; by meditating on the mere appearance of all things, they wipe out the illusion of things and enter the enlightenment of the Bodhisattva; by meditating on their ignorance of the fact that all things come from one essence, they gradually wipe out the illusion of darkness and enter the enlightenment of Buddha.*

* There are fifty-two grades in the process of enlightenment. During the first seventeen stages, believers practice meditation on vanity, and are freed from the illusion of sight and thought; from the twentieth to the thirtieth stage, they practise the second form of meditation; and from the thirtieth stage, the third form of meditation. Having been freed from the first two kinds of illusion, they come by degrees, to see that all things are in the absolute; and from the forty-first stage on, they become like those in the perfect stage, called the perfect enlightenment in the separate teaching grade.

After this, advance toward Buddhahood is the same as in the highest grade. The last twelve stages are said to be "teaching without men" which shows the arbitrary nature of these divisions. Finally the believers, strengthened by the merits of many good deeds and seated under the Bodhi tree enter enlightenment which is as vast and beautiful as a lotus-flower. Here they represent the glorious second body of Buddha, possessing great freedom and power like the gods, with ability to visit all worlds and preach to and teach the people. The world and the absolute are no longer separate. At this time the three bodies of Buddha are revealed together and the absolute is seen to be in all things. The dividing lines are lost and all existence melts into one absolute reality.

The world degenerates into illusion and darkness and its redemption from the same may be described by the following schedule as understood by the separate teaching grade.



MAIN TEACHING

Tendai Cosmology: Absolute Idealism

The theoretical side of Tendai is the perfected doctrine of The Great Middle Path, which has been introduced in the Sanron sect, and which has been used to describe the essential truth of all things in an absolute sense. It differs from The Middle Path of "*The Separate Teaching*" which is separate from the world of things. The Middle Path or Absolute, of Tendai includes all things in the ten worlds; all nature, power, cause and effect; Absolute Reality is the source of all form and activity and is engaged in nourishing all things. It is compared to a great rain-cloud which covers the wide universe and supplies refreshing rain to all living beings, thus promoting the well-being of everything. It is as the rays of the sun descending upon all men without distinction, and impartially leading all men. This universal eight of reality actively creates all form, and yet in a mysterious way contains the many in itself.

In this one reality all things melt into one without obstruction. It is a pantheistic form of idealism not unlike the absolute of Hegel. According to Tendai doctrine, things and reason are two sides of One Reality. In so far as a thing is governed by the law of causation and passes into its true form, it is called thing; but in so far as it is not separated from Reality, it is called "Reason." The former grade taught that things had a separate existence; but this perfect teaching says that reality is without distinction. In rather paradoxical language they say that human passion is enlightenment and birth and death are Nirvana. In this way all distinction or separation is destroyed; all things are identical in nature. When the universe is looked at from the standpoint of the absolute, it is called phenomena perfected by reality, but when looked at from the standpoint of the relative, it is called phenomena produced by things. For example, here is a pine tree. When we think

of it as coming from the absolute, we think of it as a pine tree perfected by reality. But the tree as it stands is a fact; it is therefore called a pine produced by things. "The ancients said, Reality (literally, 理, Reason) is nothing but things (事), and things are nothing but Reality.* Or again, if there is distinction, then "there is distinction in both things and reality, and if there is no distinction there is none in either reality or things. The Tendai heretics opposed this, saying that distinction has to do with things but not with reality."

The relation of the cosmic system to idealism is explained by the three substances, which, though three, are regarded as one. These three realities are Buddha, the universal mind, and all things. In Kegon the mind is regarded as resembling a great cosmic artist who makes various things and combinations in the world. In the same way Buddha resembles the mind, and all phenomena are not separate and different.

In Tendai the confused mind is regarded as the source from which all things come; it is the causal mind; it dwells within phenomena, i.e., the three thousand worlds; in it all things are contained. The Tendai heretics opposed this causal mind. They described the mind as the mind of Absolute Reality (*bhūtata-thāta*, 眞如) which makes all things and Buddha. Buddha is not separate from the mind; all phenomena are included in him. The mind makes all things, possesses all things, including Buddha. This is called "mutually making and mutually including, or being made and mutually included. To be more explicit, Buddha is making and including and the mind and all things are being made and included. All things are making and including, and Buddha and the mind are being made and included. When reality is active, knowing and distinguishing things, it is the mind; when revealed as form, it is called matter; when it reveals itself in illusion, it is called things or causation, and finally when it is revealed in the work of enlightenment, it is called Buddha or effect. These are all

* Dr. Maeda, *Outline of Tendai* (天台綱要).

contained in the one absolute reality, which is equivalent to the three thousand worlds.

The effect of this conception of reality upon man's conception of good and evil may be best understood by understanding what Tendai scholars say about nature and conduct, which are two sides of reality, resembling principle and thing. The former is a power of reality, the latter is the work of reality possessed by man. A man breaks into another's house, or he gives help to a neighbour. The former conduct is evil, the latter is good. In one case he works evil and in the other good. An insect cannot do this. These are called nature's evil and nature's good. To do good or evil is not something apart from nature's good or evil. In other words conduct is nature, and evil and good are both alike reality.

Evil is not different from good. Both are included in the world. When it works in harmony with itself, it is evil. For example, to burn many houses is the work of fire. The fire which sometimes brings destruction and sometimes gain, is the same. Those who know that evil is reality (眞如, *shinnyo*) are enlightened; those who do not know this are still in illusion. Both evil and good conduct are in reality. In Buddha there is evil, while in the most depraved there is good. Dr. Maeda quotes *Kwannon Genji* (觀音玄義). "The evil of human nature is not entirely eradicated from all the Buddhas; or is the good nature eradicated from the most depraved men. The Buddhas do not do evil and they perform only good works. For example, a servant lights a fire, and cooks food; a child who lights a fire, starts a conflagration. The fire in the latter case can also cook food." Dr. Maeda concludes this discussion of evil by saying that there have been many objections raised to this doctrine of evil, but that it is the real doctrine of Buddhism.

This description of evil should not be interpreted as implying that Tendai is neglectful of the moral any more than some Hegelians are. It lays stress on perfection, and it can

scarcely be expected that they would neglect the highest moral perfection. Buddhists are expected to receive the perfect qualities of Buddha, and moral precepts and aphorisms of Buddhism enjoin on the believer purity of body, speech and thought. He is expected to accumulate the merit of good deeds of various kinds, but especially merits arising from work of charity and mercy. But in spite of all the good which is evident, a philosophy of ethics which explains away the moral is a dangerous philosophy.

The Tendai theory of life, as seen in the discussion of animate and inanimate things, is interesting. In harmony with what has already been said, all things including shape, the mind, places, and living beings, are one. Even a colour and an odour are within one reality. Even inanimate things like stones and tiles possess the nature of Buddha. The Hosso doctrine teaches that all things had the nature of Buddha, but that the nature of a Buddha, just about to be enlightened is not in everything. In Kegon teaching Reality (*Shinnyo*) is in all things, but in inanimate things there is not the nature of a Buddha about to enter Buddhahood. The Tendai sect says that in all things there is a Buddha-nature containing three causes. The first is Buddhahood in potentiality; the second, is the wisdom-nature of Buddha, which brings enlightenment; the third, is the activity of becoming a Buddha. These three are in reality one, because if the nature of Buddha exists, wisdom and conduct will naturally follow; if wisdom and conduct exist, nature must exist. In this way the Tendai doctrine of reality, differs from that of others sects, because it includes the nature of Buddha in stones, trees and men. All things both animate and inanimate things possess the three Buddha-natures, or, to speak more exactly, all things are Buddha.

But why do stones and tiles never become Buddha, if they possess this nature? Their unity with Buddha and us is so clear that our desire to enter Buddhahood and to practise religious austerities is the desire and work of stones and tiles.

That we think those inanimate things separate from us is because we do not know our origin. From the standpoint of the principle that all things are one, we are the same as these inanimate things.

The Tendai Conception of Buddha

In Tendai there are three explanations of Buddha. First, the three bodies of Buddha are regarded as one; but they are considered in two ways. (a) A distinction is made between each of them and the one body. Since the first body is the whole of reality, even if Sakyamuni appears, he is still the eternal reality. The second body is the wisdom of enlightenment, and is also at one with the first body. If one is without limit, the other is also. The third body is the outer work of revelation or enlightenment. In it is enlightenment and therefore unity with the other two bodies. This third body is revealed in several places, and teaches enlightenment in order to save man; it is Sakyamuni Buddha. In this division we have the three Buddhas distinguished yet united. (b) According to the second way of regarding these three bodies, they are supposed to mutually blend into each other. That is to say, each one of them contains the other two. This conception of Buddha is based on the teaching just outlined in regard to the three truths. The absolute Buddha corresponds to the "Middle Path", the second body to the conception of "Empty Reality", and the third body to the "Fleeting Truth." This way of looking at Buddha arose from the conviction that Sakyamuni was the highest of beings. But if there is a complete separation into three, then he is merely a fleeting manlike Buddha, and above him are the other two Buddhas. If we think of them as essentially one then Sakyamuni is one in three. This is the origin of the "blending into one theory".

The second explanation* of Buddha's personality explains

* This explanation is not peculiar to Tendai. According to Mahayana doctrine, Sakyamuni was enlightened at least three times: (1) He was eternally

Sakyamuni as the incarnation of the eternal and absolute Buddha, but this does not carry with it the idea of separation. The third explanation held by some is called the four conceptions of Buddha according to four grades of teachings. That different people grasp different conceptions of Buddha is not strange, since the teacher and teaching are so closely related. If a man grasps a different kind of teaching, he will have a different ideal of the teacher. If Buddha's personality is approached from this point of view, there are four different conceptions of Buddha's personality, corresponding to the four teachings.

Buddhism defines reality negatively as vanity, and positively as "The Middle Path." There are two kinds of vanity, transcendent vanity, which is above existence and apart from it. This is called merely vanity. The other is immanent in all existences and phenomena. This is called vanity itself. There are also two kinds of Middle Way: The one, which is transcendent and apart, is called the Mean; the other, which is immanent, says that phenomena themselves are the Mean. In these four points of view we have the different conceptions of reality as taught in the four teachings already outlined. The first teaches mere annihilation, the second is still negative, but teaches that appearance is reality. The third teaches "The Middle Way" only, and finally, the fourth teaches that all things constitute the Middle Way. Corresponding to these four teachings are four different explanations of Buddha's personality. These are employed in Tendai, because different men have different ability. With the exception of the last, all the former ones are used as devices to lead men to the omnipresent Buddha.

It is as if four men were looking at Sakyamuni sitting

enlightened; (2) He became a Buddha in the mediæval times; (3) He was enlightened during his latest appearance. Hinayana Buddhism recognised the last only. Other Mahayana sects recognised the last two, but Tendai taught the whole three as mutually blending into one.

under the Bodhi tree. The man who is able to grasp only the Hinayana point of view sees him sitting on grass, as a man sixteen feet high, freed from human passion and illusion. This is a mere negative point of view, an emptied Buddha. The second man sees him dressed in an inferior heavenly robe, sitting on the ground. By concentration and not by religious austerities he has broken away from passion and illusion. His body is still sixteen feet high, but it is regarded as unlimited. This is the second Buddha, excellent but inferior. The third man sees Buddha sitting on a seven jewel lotus flower in the shape of the second Buddha, but many Bodhisattvas are listening to his doctrine. This is the exalted body. Finally, the fourth man sees him sitting in paradise with his body filling the universe by the reality of his original essence and the wisdom of the second body of Buddha. Even though it is the third body, such as that possessed by Sakyamuni, it envelops the other two in one, so that the visible Buddha is the Buddha who fills the whole universe. Enlightenment is not merely temporal, but eternal. This is the perfect Buddha of Tendai proper. This original Buddha is incarnated in and identical with Sakyamuni apart from whom there is no other Buddha.

During the period described in the first part of the Hokke sutra, people thought Sakyamuni was a new Buddha who had appeared, but finally he tells them that he had been a Buddha for numberless kalpas. He illustrates the period by the time required by a man to remove the matter of the visible universe atom by atom to a region far beyond its present situation. He had been a Buddha all this time. As the rising sun he had risen victorious over the god of sin and death. On another occasion, when the numberless Bodhisattvas appeared and testified that Sakyamuni was their father, his disciples were greatly surprised that a young man who had been born in the home of the Sakyas and afterward enlightened should have so many followers, but he disclosed the fact that he had been Buddha for as long as it would take that man to deposit the

atoms of dust in hundreds of thousands of worlds.

He explained that the reason the appearance of the Tathagata was precious, was that men will long to see him, and the merit of their longing for him will bring everlasting happiness. It is as if a skilful physician were to go abroad leaving his ten, twenty or one hundred children, who, in his absence, take sick from a poison. Just when they are suffering the greatest pain, their father returns, and is welcomed. They call to him for life and freedom from pain. He prepares a medicine which is eagerly swallowed by the right-minded. The others refuse, so the father who loves them resorts to a device and pretends to die. Then, thinking they are orphans, they are plunged into deep sorrow, which serves as a corrective. When they have come to their right judgment, they take the medicine, and are saved. In this manner he explains how he, who has been enlightened for kalpas, uses devices of various kinds to save man.

Gradually the truth dawned upon his disciples that Sakyamuni was none other than "the king of the law," having the patience, wisdom, and justice, which govern the world, and, at the same time, mercy and pity toward all creatures. In other words we have here essential truth and revealed truth teaching the same truth. The heretics of Tendai denied that the first body of Buddha was to Sakyamuni as substance is to things made from it. Japanese Tendai identifies the original being of Buddha with the three bodies of Buddha in the same sense as we can say that ripples on the ocean are the ocean.*

Religious Austerities in the Tendai Sect.

The realisation of these theoretical ideas in the heart and

* In addition to the four Buddhas of the four teachings, Tendai teaches, 1. Risoku (理即) Buddha, 2. Myojisoku (名字即) Buddha, 3. Kangyosoku (觀行即) Buddha, 4. Sōjisoku (相似即) Buddha, 5. Bunshinsoku (分眞即) Buddha, and 6. Kugyosoku (究竟即) Buddha, but these are merely different appearances of the one Buddha, although some are regarded as being more excellent than others and visible only to the prepared.

life is accomplished by meditation and by religious austerities. Religious austerities are not very effective, since even an evil man possesses the nature of Buddha. Just as the candle is seen by its own light, so the naturally virtuous man does not need any outward thing such as religious austerities to reveal virtue to him. In the Separate Teaching (別教), there was a separation between reality and phenomena, but in the perfect Tendai doctrine there is no distinction. Religious austerities gradually lead men into enlightenment, but that enlightenment differs from Buddha's nature in the heart. Therefore religious austerities have a beneficial result in the early stage. Just as a polished mirror reveals the light clearly, so religious austerities polish the heart, in which the light is hiding. The polishing by religious austerities only helps to reveal it. In Tendai teaching there are twenty-five different kinds of religious austerities which may be practised.

Meditation in the Tendai Sect.

Meditation is essential. In the Hokke Sutra its power is illustrated by a parable of a man born blind, who claimed that beautiful shapes did not exist, denied the existence of the planets, and refused to believe that other men could see them. A physician restored his sight, and he was at once convinced that he had been mistaken, but he began to think he could see better than any one else. He had to be told that one having just recovered his sight, was unable to discern who was kind to him, and who was not, and that he was scarcely able to distinguish darkness from light. He was therefore ordered to go away and meditate upon the law, forsaking evil passions. In this way the Tathagata is like a great father, who sees that men are bound up in ignorance and passion and infatuation, from which they are saved by the doctrine of vanity, Nirvana, and other ideals of salvation. After meditation on the law, men are enabled to see the world as if it were merely a mirage or an echo, and are led into the wisdom of the perfect doctrine,

which dispells all darkness and ignorance. It unites the heart with Buddha, and enables man to receive his help. If righteousness is interrupted either from within or from without, and it seems impossible to throw away evil, then the believer must repeat the name of Buddha. This resembles the idea of entering paradise by the help of Amida. In Tendai doctrines, Sakyamuni, Amida, the Buddha of Measureless Light, and Kwannon the Goddess of Mercy are one. Sakyamuni in the past, Amida in the Pure West Land, and Kwannon in the world are three in one. By meditation man comes into unity with these exalted Buddhas.

The aim of meditation is to suppress human nature, to realise in one thought the absolute unity of all things, and to grasp the unity of the three aspects of truth in one thought. The Kegon believers made the way the centre of their meditation. But Tendai believers centre it on the mind, endeavouring to realise the mutual blending and intermingling of the three truths or aspects of reality. Beginning with their own minds they advance through six different grades toward perfect enlightenment by ten different methods.

Enlightenment and Paradise in the Tendai Sect.

Enlightenment is that stage of mind in which wisdom is fully established, human lust cast out, and the man established in the truth. "Finally the last remains of darkness are destroyed, and one enters enlightenment. Then eternally separated from our parent darkness we attain to the topmost mountain peak of Nirvana, where there is no birth. Meditating upon Reality, we are enabled to realise the pure essence of Buddha and dwell in the shining land of peace." This is the meaning of Buddhahood in Tendai doctrine.

In Tendai, Buddha's land, or paradise, is divided into four :
 (1) The land where common folk and sages dwell. There are two parts, pure and impure. The latter resembles the present world, but the former is a paradise not unlike that in which

Amida dwells. (2) A temporary abode for those who are not yet perfectly enlightened. (3) The place where nothing obstructs the true reward. This is the true paradise in which is perfect freedom, separated from darkness, and enlightened in the Middle Path. (4) The place of eternal deliverance and light. This is the dwelling place of all perfected buddhas. People eternally enjoy the three virtues of this fourth paradise, but are deceived by illusion into thinking of the original essence as suffering, of deliverance as work, and of wisdom as illusion. But by deeper thought the body is conceived of as a reality, and word as the original essence corresponding to things. If man's mind is reality, then, when it distinguishes between things, it is the original essence making things clear. Then illusion, work, and suffering are wisdom and deliverance and the original essence. Thus, if a man sees life as suffering, it is not really so, it is reality. The Hinayana believer condemns work and suffering as evil and looks upon wisdom as illusion, while, from the point of view of the Tendai believer, they are alike the wisdom of the original essence. Illusion and enlightenment are merely opposite tendencies of the heart. They are the same from the standpoint of the essence of truth. Even illusion, work, and suffering, like wisdom, deliverance, and original essence, are all one in a profound sense.

Thus from the standpoint of Buddha there is no confusion, no enlightenment. In Buddha's heart there is neither temporary thing nor real thing, for all things are open before him. But before he became Buddha, he desired to save all living things, and so he had realised a way broad enough to suit the various capacities of living things and in so doing, he had distinguished between temporary and permanent. But according to Tendai all that is temporary, all change is merely the work of the absolute reality, so there is no reason for joy or sorrow. No matter what changes take place they are the works of the absolute; even the changing seasons, birth and death are all related to reality.

The modern Buddhist has some very interesting explana-

tions of paradise. "It is useless to seek birth and life and to fear of death, for all things depend on the law of retribution, which produces and destroys, thus accounting for the living, active world, which is a matter of joy. Flowers bloom and breezes blow in summer, but if the flower never withered, the leaves would never grow; if winter were not, summer would not come. If the buds did not come, if old age were unknown, if the youth never grew old, if the child were always to creep, there would be no reason for joy. This world would be dead. The law of cause and effect is the motive power of the world. From good parents beautiful children are born; from bad parents evil children are born. The reformation of evil customs is the power that makes the world better. If this world gradually improves all will rejoice. This is paradise. If we thus make progress in righteousness, death and life will not be feared. The absence of fear is Nirvana, but it is like a vision. To walk in the way is free to all. Buddha helps, and the heavenly gods protect all such. To sum up, if we separate from human passion, walking according to reason, strengthening our hearts by the help of Buddha, throwing aside all dependence on worldly power and leaning only upon Buddha, we can easily enter enlightenment. To do so is to possess the wisdom and mercy of Buddha by the grace of the original essence of the Tathagata."

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