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# THE ZEN TRUST 

Dear Venerable Dhammarathana,

## Re: Permission to reproduce poems and pictures from Gentling the Bull

Thank you for your letter of the $17^{\text {th }}$ of April. I am very happy to hear that you found "Gentling the Bull" useful.
-ur teacher, the Venerable Myokyo-ni, who wrote the book and translated the poems, passed away at the age of 86 last month. She was a firm believer in the oneness of all Buddhist schools. She would have been delighted to know that the poems will be of benefit of your meditation students.

The Zen Trust is happy to give permission for you to include the poems and pictures in your booklet, as specified in your letter, provided that the material is not modified, and is accompanied by a suitable citation.

Please accept the enclosed copy of Gentling the Bull. We would be grateful if you could send us a copy of your booklet when it is published.

 Gentling the Bull (by Myokyo-Ni)


These pictures and the poems were extracted from the book - "Gentling the Bull by Myokyo-Ni".


## I - SEARCHING FOR THE BULL

The search for what? The bull has never been missing. But without knowing it the herdsman estranged himself from himself and so the bull became lost in the dust. The home mountains recede ever further, and suddenly the herdsman finds himself on entangled paths. Lust for gain and fear of loss flare up like a conflagration, and views of right and wrong oppose each other like spears on a battlefield.

## POEMS

## 1

> Alone in a vast wilderness, the herdsman searches for his bull in the tall grass.

Wide flows the river, far range the mountains, and ever deeper into the wilderness goes the path.
Wherever he seeks, he can find no trace, no clue. Exhausted and in despair,

As the evening darkens he hears only the crickets in the maples.

Looking only into the distance, the searching herdsman rushes along.

Does he know his feet are already deep in the swampy morass?

How often, in the fragrant grasses under the setting sun,
Has he hummed Hsin-feng [Shinpo], the Song of the Herdsman, in vain?

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There are no traces in the origin. Where then to search?
Gone astray, he stumbles about in dense fog and tangled growth.
Though unwitting, grasping the nose of the bull, he already returns as a guest,

Yet under the trees by the edge of the water, how sad is his song.


## II - FINDING THE TRACES

Reading the Sutras and listening to the teachings, the herdsman had an inkling of their message and meaning. He has discovered the traces. Now he knows that however varied and manifold, yet all things are of the one gold, and that his own nature does not differ from that of any other. But he cannot yet distinguish between what is genuine and what fake, still less between the true and the false. He can thus not enter the gate, and only provisionally can it be said that he has found the traces.

## POEMS

1
Under the trees by the water, the bull's traces run here and there.
Has the herdsman found the way through the high, scented grass?

However far the bull now may run, even up the far mountains, With a nose reaching up to the sky, he cannot hide himself any longer.

Many wrong paths cross where the dead tree stands by the rock. Restlessly running round and round, in his little nest of grass, Does he know his own error? In his search, just when his feet follow the traces,
He has passed the bull by and has let him escape.
3
Many have searched for the bull but few ever saw him.
Up north in the mountains or down in the south, did he find his bull?

The One Way of light and dark along which all come and go; Should the herdsman find himself on that Way he need not look further.


## III - FINDING THE BULL

The herdsman recoils startled at hearing the voice and that instant sees into the origin. The six senses are quieted in peaceful harmony with the origin. Revealed, the bull in his entirety now pervades all activities of the herdsman, present as inseparably as is salt in sea water, or glue in paint. When the herdsman opens his eyes wide and looks, he sees nothing but himself.

## POEMS

1
Suddenly a bush warbler trills high in the tree top.
The sun shines warm, and in the light breeze the willows on the water's edge show their new green.

There is no longer a place where the bull can hide himself;
No painter can capture that magnificent head with its soaring horns!

On seeing the bull and hearing his bellow,
Tai-sung, the painter, surpassed his craft.
Accurately he pictured the heart-bull from head to tail, And yet, on carefully looking, he is not quite complete.

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Having pushed his face right against the bull's nose, He no longer needs to follow the bellowing, This bull is neither white nor blue.

Quietly nodding, the herdsman smiles to himself. Such landscape cannot be caught in a picture!


## IV - CATCHING THE BULL

For the first time today he encountered the bull that for so long had been hiding in the wilderness. But his pleasantly familiar wilderness still attracts the bull strongly. He yearns for the sweet-smelling grass and is difficult to hold. Stubborn self will rages in him and wild animal-nature rules him. If the herdsman wants to make the bull really gentle, he must discipline him with the whip.

## POEMS

## 1

With great effort the herdsman succeeded in catching the bull. But stubborn, wilful and strong; this bull is not easily gentled! At times he breaks out and climbs up to the high plains, Or rushes down into foggy marshlands to hide himself there.

## 2

Hold the rein tight and do not let go.
Many of the subtlest faults are not yet up-rooted.
No matter how gently the herdsman pulls at the nose-rope, The bull may still rear and try to bolt back to the wild.

## 3

Though caugh where the sweet-scented grass reaches sky-high, The herdsman must not let go of the rein tied to the bull's nose. Though the way home beckons clearly already, The herdsman must often halt with the bull, by the blue stream or on the green mountain.


## V - GENTLING THE BULL

If but one thought arises, then another and another follows in an endless round. Through awakening, everything becomes truth; through delusion, it becomes error. Things do not come into being depending on circumstances but arise from the herdsman's own heart. Hold the rein tight and do not allow any wavering.

## POEMS

Not for a moment may the herdsman drop whip and rein, Or the bull would break free and stampede into the dust. But once patiently trained and made truly gentle, He follows the herdsman without halter or chain.

Now the bull may saunter through the hill forests, Or else walk the much travelled roads, covered in dust. Never will he touch fodder from another man's meadow. Coming or going requires no effort - the bull quietly carries the man.

## 3

In patient training the bull got used to the herdsman and is truly gentle.

Should he now walk right into dust, he no longer gets dirty.
Long and patient gentling! In one sudden plunge the herdsman has won his whole fortune.

Under the trees, others encounter his mighty laugh.


## VI - RETURNING HOME ON THE BACK OF THE BULL

Now the struggle is over! Gain and loss, too, have fallen away. The herdsman sings an old folk song or plays a nursery tune on his flute. Looking up into the blue sky, he rides along on the back of the bull. If someone calls after him, he does not look back; nor will he stop if tugged on the sleeve.

## POEMS

1
Without haste or hurry, the herdsman rides home on the back of the bull.

Far through the evening mist carries the sound of his flute,
Note for note, tune for tune, all carry this boundless mood;
Hearing it, no need to ask how the herdsman feels.

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Pointing ahead towards the dyke where his home is, He appears out of mist and fog, playing his flute.

Then suddenly the tune changes to the song of return.
Not even Bai-ya's masterpieces can compare with this song.

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In bamboo hat and straw coat he rides home through the evening mist,

Sitting back to front on the bull, with joy in his heart.
Step by step along in the cool, gentle breeze,
The bull no longer looks at the once irresistible grass.


## VII - BULL FORGOTTEN - MAN REMAINS

There are not two Dharmas. Provisionally only has the bull been set up, somewhat in the nature of a sign-post. He might also be likened to a snare for catching rabbits, or to a fishing net. Now the herdsman feels as when the shining gold has been separated out from the ore, or as when the moon appears from behind a cloud bank. The one cool light has been shining brilliantly since the time before the beginning.

## POEMS

 1The herdsman has come home on the back of the bull. Now the bull is forgotten and the man is at ease.

He may still sleep though the hot sun stand high in mid-heaven

Whip and rein are now useless and thrown away under the eaves.

Though the herdsman has brought the bull down from the mountain, the stable is empty.
Straw coat and bamboo hat, too, have become useless.
Not bound by anything, and at leisure, singing and dancing.
Between heaven and earth he has become his own master.

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Now the herdsman has return, home is everywhere,
When both things and self are wholly forgotten, peace reigns all day long.
Believe in the peak 'Entrance to the Deep Secret' -
No man can settle on this peak's summit.

## VIII - BOTH BULL AND MAN FORGOTTEN

When all worldly wanting dropped away, holiness, too, lost its meaning. Do not stay at a place where Buddha is, and pass quickly by where he is not. If one remains unattached to either, not even a thousand eyes can spy him out. Holiness to which birds consecrate flowers is shameful.

## POEMS

1
Whip and rein, bull and man, are all gone and vanished.
No words can encompass the blue vault of the sky.
How could snow pile up on a red-hot hearth ?
Only when arrived at this place can a man match the old masters.
2
Shame! Up till now I wanted to save the whole world;
Now, surprise! There is no world to be saved!
Strange! Without ancestors or successors,
Who can inherit, who passed on this truth?
3
Space shattered at one blow and holy and worldly both vanished.
In the Untreadable the path has come to an end.
The bright moon over the temple and the sound of wind in the tree,
All rivers, returning their waters, flow back again to the sea.


## IX - RETURN TO THE ORIGIN, BACK TO THE SOURCE

In the origin all is pure and there is no dust. Collected in the peace of non-volitional doing (Wu-Wei) he beholds the coming and going of all things. No longer deluded by shifting phantom pictures, he has nothing further to learn. Blue runs the river, green range the mountains, he sits by himself and beholds the change of all things.

## POEMS

## 1

Returned to the origin, back at the source, all is completed.
Nothing is better than suddenly being as blind and deaf. Inside his hermitage, he does not look out.
Boundless, the river runs as it runs. Red bloom the flowers just as they bloom.

The great activity does not pander to being or not being. And so, to see and to hear he need not be as one deaf and blind.

Last night the golden bird flew down into the sea, Yet today as of old, the red ring of dawn flares up in the sky. 3

Done is what had to be done, and all ways are completed. Clearest awakening does not differ from being blind and deaf. The way he once came has ended under his straw sandals. No bird sings. Red flowers bloom in glorious splendour.


## X - ENTERING THE MARKET-PLACE WITH BLISS-BESTOWING HANDS

The brush-wood gate is firmly shut and neither sage nor Buddha can see him. He has deeply buried his light and permits himself to differ from the well-established ways of the old masters. Carrying a gourd, he enters the market; twirling his staff, he returns home. He frequents wine-shops and fish-stalls to make the drunkards open their eyes and awaken to themselves.

## POEMS

Bare-chested and bare-footed he enters the market, Face streaked with dust and head covered with ashes, But a mighty laugh spreads from cheek to cheek.
Without troubling himself to work miracles, suddenly dead trees break into bloom.

In friendly fashion this fellow comes from a foreign race, With features like those of a horse, or again like a donkey. But on shaking his iron staff, all of a sudden All gates and doors spring wide open for him.

## 3

From out of his sleeve the iron rod flies right into the face. With a great laugh spreads all over his face, He talks Mongolian, or speaks in Chinese.
Wide open the palace gates to the one who on meeting himself yet remains unknown.



English translation of the Sinhalese Section

# Ignorance and <br> Emancipation 

## The English translation of the Sinhalese section

I tried my best to translate the Sinhalese section of this book, in such a way that it expresses, as far as posible, the exact ideas of the Sinhalese sentences; and as such some figurative and / or verbositive expressions had to be included.

## Bhikkhu D. Dhammaratana

## From the Publisher

I, an accountant by profession, am a pious and devoted Buddhist, and from my childhood, engaged in various religious activities such as worshipping the Lord Buddha and Scared "Bo" trees, undertaking the observance of precepts, listening to Dhamma-sermons etc. Though they helped me to become a virtuous person, none of such meritorious activities led me to realize the noble truth of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering or the path leading to the cessation of suffering.

Then, on hearing that Ven. Dhammaratana was explaining the most profound Dhamma in a simple manner, and conducting meditation classes showing the practical way to Nibbâna, I went to the "Dikhena Meditation Centre" to see him.

When I reached there, he had already commenced his Dhamma Sermon. Showing a clock on the table, he questioned, "Is this a clock or is it a simple preception ? Is the perception of clock in the clock itself or is it in your mind ?" You know, in reality there is no clock; it is only a perception of the mind.

Similarly, (showing his hand), "Is this a hand; where is the perception of hand ? Is it in the hand itself or is it in your mind? "Hand" is only a conventional truth. In reality, there is no hand. In fact it's only a perception. No hand is visible if there is no mind-contact; therefore, "hand" is only a mental manifestation - a mental formation.

For the first time in my life, I heard such a Dhamma sermon. It aroused our enthusiasm to observe the truth in his sayings, not only whilst being listening, but also thereafter, in comparing it with our lives and also with the external world. With a heart filled with great faith in Dhamma, more than ever before, and with a high respect and honour towards him, I left the place.

Many were able to realize Nibbâna, when the Dhamma leading towards the cessation of formations was explained by the Buddha and his then disciples. If we get an opportunity to listen to such Dhamma sermons displaying the practical approach of experiencing emptiness or Nibbâna, even today, it may be possible for one to realize Nibbanic-bliss in this very life itself.

The "Âni Sutta" of Sanyutta Nikâya says, that "there will be monks (persons) in the future who would not lend ear when discourses that are the words of the Buddha, deep, deep in their meaning, connected with emptiness or Nibbâna are being recited. Then such Dhamma discourses will be disappeared."

When one listens to the practical Dhamma sermons of Ven. Dhammaratana, one would realize that such Dhamma discourses had not been disappeared yet.

It became evident to me when he explained "the Kassaka Sutta" of Samyutta Nikâya. The deity "Vasavatti Mâra" approached Buddha and said, "The eye is mine; visible objects are mine; the eye-contact and its base of consciousness are mine. Where can you go to escape from me?

The ear is mine, sounds are mine... The nose is mine, odours are mine..... The tongue is mine, tastes are mine..... The body is mine, tacticle objects are mine.... The mind is mine, mental phenomena are mine, mindcontact and its base of consciousness are mine. Where can you go and escape from me?"

## The Lord Buddha replied, "Yes Mâra, all those are yours; not mine. Where there is nothing of them, there is no place for you ..."

When Ven. Dhammaratana gave a practical explanation of this Dhamma, showing the non-self nature of them, and asking us to relinquish them one by one, I, whilst being listening, could let go all of them, and it appears over the top of my head a vision just like the petals of a lotus flower bloom one by one. Then everything disappeared and I experienced an emptiness leaving alone only the mindelement, a simple awareness.

Just right at that time, he said, "Now, only the mindelement remains, it is also a mental formation and it, too, is impermanent and not-self. When I realized that, I experienced a supreme bliss, calming and cooling down all formations.

Thereafter, I used to visit him regularly, at least once a month. In keeping company with him and by following his instructions, I could develop my faith - virtue - genorosity - Dhamma knowledge and wisdom, more than ever before.

Then I happened to read a pamplet written by him - "Gona
saha Vimuttiya". Because of the luscious flavour of the Sinhalese meanings of the poems given in it, and the profound Dhamma-explanation demonstrating the way, based on his own experience leading to eradicate ignorance to realize the Noble Arahantship, I suggested and thereafter decided to publish it.

May he be happy endowed with good health to guide people towards Nibbâna, and thereby free them from suffering.

By virtue of the merit of this meritorious deed, may my late parents; Mrs. Rajawatta who helped me to meet him; My sister Vajira who assists and encourages in various ways for me to follow this Noble Path; and all others who follow the path, be able to realize Nibbanic-bliss soon!

May all beings be happy !

Anuradha Premaratna
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## Preface

As a result of my instense and persistent effort in meditation, both concentration and insight, I came to a certain stage which, I found, was rather impossible for me to surpass it. Whenever I tried to concentrate on physical phenomena, the whole universe, including my body, dissolved away completely, leaving only an emptiness; and at that time there existednothing in the mind; it was completely void. Neither the body nor the mind factor was visible to concentrate on.

Then searching for some advice to gain some further advancement, I began to read "Theravada-Tripitaka" books Sutta, Abhidhamma and Vinaya. But only in one Sutta, the "Mahâvacchagotta Sutta" of Middle length sayings, I could find some instructions. (i.e. Develop further, concentration and insight meditation). However this advice too did not produce the desired results.

Then I went to see same eminent meditation masters in Sri Lanka but none of them could understand exactly what my experience was. I wrote to some medidation masters in Thailand, and to some Zen masters in Japan, but I received no reply.

When I met a monk in Colombo and explained my experience to him, he brought a file and began to read it. Having realized that my experience had exactly been elucidated in it, I said, "I have read all suttas, but I never came across a sutta resembling this. Which section (Nikâya) is it from?" Then he smiled and said, "This is a hidden sutta in Mahayana." That was how I first gained some confidence in Mahayana-scripts.

Then I practised "Quan" meditation using some meditation words suchas, "who is a nurse", 'Cow-dung",’'Who am I", "Buddha",etc.
and through all of them I was able to experience a universal emptiness. Then, my confidence in Mahayana meditation systems is further developed.

When I read a Mahayana book "Gentling the Bull"* by Myokyo-ni, which consists some beautiful poems, I perceived how profound the meanings of those poems were. I was so impressed that I thought to write in Sinhalese, for the benefit of the Sinhalese readers, the meaning and the explanation of it, based on my own experience and also keeping in line with the Theravâdic tradition. But it does not by no means constitute a direct translation nor does the explanation given have any relationship whatsoever with the book.

I had to get the permission from the Zen Centre in London to reproduce the pictures and the poems in the book "Gentling the Bull". With the intention of sending a copy to them, I translated the Sinhalese section into English giving, as far as possible, the exact ideas of the Sinhalese sentences.

The explanation of the poems might not be easily conceived by those who possess no pragmatic understanding, or who are not familiar with the Theravadic Buddhist terms, but they would understand that the realization of the true Dhamma demonstrates no discrimination amongst various segments of Buddhists Theravada, Mahayana, Vajirayana etc. Nibbana is the same for all. There is no justification in considering, with an attached propensity for a particular doctrine, that one school of thoughts is superior to others.

My sincere thanks are due to the Zen Centre in London for granting me their courteous permission to reproduce the poems

[^2]and the pictures of "Gentling the Bull", and also to the publisher Mr. Anuradha Premaratne of Maharagama for his generous contribution towards the printing costs.

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## Introduction

The Sinhalese meaning of the poems in the book "Gentling the Bull" is first given here. It should not, however, be considered as a translation.

The explanation given thereafter is my own definition. It is only a short description. To explain it in details, it would be necessary to write a large book giving all particulars of insight meditation from the beginning up to the "Arahantship". The explanation runs gradually in the same order of the sentences of the first section. Therefore, $i t$ is appropriate to read first, a sentencegiven in the first section, and the relevant parts in the explanation thereafter.

## (1) Searching for the Bull

The herdsman running on a long deserted way is looking for his bull, which had been constantly with him, but not to be seen now. The way runs up to the invisible horizon through far away mountains and throughtherivers with brimful of water. Wherever he looks for, there is not even a trace to be seen. Heoverwhelmed with fatigue and grief, hears only the sound of cicadas in the twilight in the afternoon.

He runs on ever forward looking at the way with no end in sight. But does he know his feet have already been sunk in a mire of mud? In the sun-setting afternoon, and in the sweet-scented breeze, how many timeshashis "heardsman-song" floated, in vain, further and further away?

When there is not even a trace of the beginning, how and where does he search for? Having been running astray, he fells down, with no life in his feet, amidst dense fog and amongst the shadows of the trees. Though unwittingly, he returns, as a guest, grasping thenose of the Bull. How sorrowful is his "herdsman-song" echoing amongst the shadows of the trees and sandy plains?

## (2) Finding the traces

In the shadows of the trees by the streams of water, the traces of the Bull are seen here and there. Has the herdsman found the way through the clumps of fragrant grass? However far the Bull may
run, even up to the plateaus of the far away mountain range, can it hide itself any longer?

Amongst the dead-trees and the passes of mountains, visible are many wrong paths. Does he know his deception of running restlessly round and round along the wrong paths? His feet running after the traces of the bull have passed beyond the bull! The bull has been let loose.

Many have travelled looking for the bull, but only a few have seen it. On the summits of the cloudy mountains in the north or beneath the mountains in the south, did he find his bull? All come and go along the "one and only way" having both light and dark. If the herdsman enters that path, he needs not run along the deceptive wrong pathslooking any further.

## (3) Finding the Bull

Suddenly, a song of a bird resounds on a top of a very high tree. The sun shines brightly. In the gentle breeze, the trees by the dampness of water sprout-up. It seems that there is no place for the bull to hide itself any longer. The bull's majestic head with sharp horns appears as an image going beyond the talents of a skilful artist.

He sees the bull, and hears its bellow. But, is the image of the "heart-bull" reflected from head to tail. When closely looking at, it appears that it is not quite complete.

Having aimed at right against the bull's nose, the herdsman no longer needs to follow its bellow. Neither white nor dark is the bull. The herdsman, nodding his head proudly, smiles to himself. How can such a scene be grasped by a painter?

## (4) Catching the Bull

With a great and persistent effort, the herdsman succeeded in catching the bull. But the bull is dreadful, obstinate, wild, strong and cannot be easily tamed. All at once, it breaks loose and runs far away with no end in sight, or hides itself sinking in a mire of mud.

The rein has to be held tightly, and should not be let it loose. Many subtle rifts have not been closed, nor are the roots uprooted. However much the herdsman tries to gentle the bull by holding the rope, the bull, rendering his effort fruitless, still attempts to break-through towards the wilderness.

Even if the pleasant smell of the sweet-scented grass blows, the nose-string should not be left out. He sees that the way running towards home beckons far away. But he should always be close to the bull. Even at the attractive and delightful blue streams, or greenmountainpeaks, he should not depart from the bull.

## (5) Gentling the Bull

Not even for a moment, the nose-string should be slackened. If not, the bullwould break free, and run far into the dust. But when it is tamed patiently, it would docitely follow the herdsman.

Now the bull can freely go through dense forests, mountains or thorny thickets. Or else, it can move through the congested roads clouded in dust. Never does it now run towards other's green-fields. To come and go requires no effort. The herdsman quitely rides on the back of the bull.

Having been patiently tamed, the bull is now admissive. (The dreadful darkness of the bull now appears only above the neck. Other parts have now been changed). Even if it runs right into dust, it does not get dirty. A long and patient gentling! The herdsman has achieved his supreme fortune. Others can hear well his heroic sound reverberating amids the trees.

## (6) Returning home on the back of the Bull.

Peacefully and without any haste, the herdsman rides home on the back of the bull. The fascinating sound of his flute floats amidst the evening mist. Tune by tune, tone by tone, there pervades the sound of his triumphal and boundless songs. It seems that his melodious sound is announcing his enjoyment of his limitless
satisfaction to the whole world!

> Playing his flute, he reaches home through the sky entwined with mist and fog. All at once, the tone turns into a victorious "song of return". Not a single song is there that can be compared with it not even with a masterpiece of the great poet "Bai-ya".

In the cool and gentle breeze, and through the evening mist, he rides home with joy in his heart. And now, the bull does not tease him as before, running after relish grass.

## (7) Bull forgotten - Man remains

On the back of the bull, the herdsman has now reached home. The bull is now forgotton. His mind and body have been tranquillized. Even in the burning hot sun, he can now sleep comfortably. The nose-string has been thrown away under the eaves. What is the use of it now?

Though the herdsman has brought the bull down from the mountain defile, now the cattle-fold is completely empty. Tools are of no use; and they too are thrown away. Having no attachment towards anything or anyone, and leisurely singing and dancing, he has now become, between the earth and celestial world, his own master.

Since he has now returned, wherever he looks at, he sees home everywhere. Everything and self have now been dissolved away,
and peace overflows through out the whole day. He is now not sceptical of the higest step of the "Entrance to the deep secret". Would it be possible for any being to remain there in this highest peak?

## (8) Both Bull and Man forgotten

The nose-string, the bull, and the man, all these have now been destroyed. The endless blue sky now he sees, is beyond the expression of the power of words. How could snow be there on a red-hot iron ? One should achieve this state, if he wishes to be compared withnoble persons in the past.

What a great shame ! Up to now he wanted to safeguard a whole world. But now it is surprising ! No world is there to be preserved. Who else will be able to see this truth, other than those who had already experienced or those who will experience it?

Just in one stroke, tumbled down the visible space. And collapsed down theboth worlds-mundane and supra mundane. Reached is the terminus of the very difficult path.

Over the temple, the moon shines very brightly. Amongst the trees, the sound of the breeze floats further and further away. All rivers retuming their waters back again to the sea, flow towards the ocean.

## (9) Return to the origin back to the source.

Nature is returned to nature itself. All is completed. Nothing is better than suddenly becoming to a state of being as blind and deaf. He remains in his hermitage without looking out. It is limitless as well as solitary. Rivers flow just as they had been flowing before. And as usual, flowers bloom.

In this great activity there is no room for " to being or not-being". To see or to hear, now he needs not to be one as deaf and blind. Last night a beautiful bird flew towards the sea. Today ... the red aurora of dawn shines in the sky.

Done is what had to be done. Everything has been completed. The clearest awakening does not differ from being as blind and deaf. The way hascome to an end. Nobirdsings. The red flowers shine beautifully, and the fragrant aroma blows everywhere.

## 10. Entering the market-place with blissbestowing hands

[^3]In a friendly manner, this friend comes from a foreign country. His features may look like those of a horse or a donkey. But, when he shakes his iron-stick, at once, all doors will be opened for him.

Right against his face, his iron-rod stands straight. With a great laugh spread all over his face, he speaks in Chinese or Mongolian language, which may be a jargon for you. To the one who meets him, the doors of the palace will be opened. He is a stranger who has been constantly with you. But he remains unknown. That's all.

## The Explanation

## (1) Searching for the Bull

"Anamataggôyam bhikkhavê Samsârộ pubbâkôti na paññnâyati", Monks, from an inconstruable beginning comes this cycle of birth and death (samsâra), and inconceivable is the beginning of it. We have been, so far, transmigrating in this endless "samsâric-journey" with no beginning or end in sight, experiencing immense suffering, pain and distress. Long we have thus experienced stress, pain and suffering; but enveloped in delusion and fettered by desire, we could not even trace our ignorance that lies in our mind itself. Just as the endless unreachable horizon, so is the long long journey we traversed from one existence to another, being born as hungry ghosts and other woeful states, seldom as humans, and very rarely in divine abodes. Yet, not the slightest trace of the sufferings we encountered in our past lives remains in our mind. In this endless and burning journey, the little sensual pleasure we experienced through pleasantsense-objects such as pleasant sights, pleasant sounds etc., clouds our suffering and makes us still to think, due to the inability to overcomedelusion and desire, that the suffering in the samsâra is pleasant and desirable.

No end is even visible in this samsâric deserted way to be fared on in the future. The ordinary worldlings, not realizing the true Dhamma, run on ever forward on this painful and terrible way. Having been sunk in a swamp of delusion and a mire of defilements, and being incapable of getting themselves free from this dreadful destiny, they have been tied down by 10 fetters and imprisoned in this samsâra. Yet they are stil not even aware of it. But amidst the sense-objects that bring some slight pleasure for them, theirmind again and again, floats further and further away.

Incalculable is the journey of samsâra. Even if all the soil of the earth is turned into tiny balls to represent each for one's fathers of the past-lives, so we use up all, but there will still remain more fathers to account for. (Pathavi Sutta - Sanyutta Nikâya). Regarding such perpetual lives of the long past, what is there to be searched for? In this deluded samsâtic journey, we fall down, as if we are lame, into the precipice of birth, decay, sickness, death etc. Though unwittingly, living beings, not realızing the non-self nature of these five aggregates, plung again and again into this round of births and deaths. When wisely looking at, it appears that all attachments, aversions, wrigglings and wigglings, singing and dancing and other mundane activities of a worldling who is constantly bound by craving - ("Tanhâ dutiyô purisô dighamaddâna samsaram" - "with craving his companion, he wanders a long long time") are nothing but deceptive struggles. However-happily one sings, all those songs are, in this Noble Discipline - (Runnamidam bhikkhave Ariyassa Vinaye yadidam.gîtam") - nothing but cryings, weepings and lamentations made out of the inflammation of craving. And, in this Noble Discipline, dancing, too, - (Ummattakamidam bhikkhavç Ariyassa Vinaye Yaḍidam Naccam") 10 considered as an insanity of the mind.

## (2) Seeing the traces

The one, well engaged in both concentration and insight meditation, is able to see the shadows of ignorance, just like a far off mirage. But indulgence in sensual pleasure never leads one to

Nibbâna. If one enters the middle path, no longer can ignorance hide itself. Even ifignorance misledus by immersingus in the bliss of the 4th formless Brahma-world (Nêvasaññânâsaññâyatana) continuously for 84000 aeons, or druged our mind by deceiving us in the pleasure of divine abodes, would it be possible, in the presence of right view, for it to delude us any longer?

Even though one follows the middle path, at the stage of gaining knowledge and vision of what is the path and what is not, an illumination or some other mental image of imperfections of insight may appear, and such mental manifestations seen as a beautiful picture drawn on a screen of ignorance would mislead him so that he, being incapable of deciding the right and the wrong path, might relish such images and consider them to be Nibbâna. So many are there such wrong paths, and other kinds of religious rites and rituals. Identification and abandoning of them is necessary to move-on along the correct path. The worldling who accumulates volitional formations of wholesome and unwholesome actions due to ignorance is conquered by ignorance itself. He behaves so freely due to the fact that the opponent sword of discernment has still not been aimed at the head of his own ignorance.

Many have traversed on this path, but only a few have realized Nibbâna. It is only through ignorance that living beings are generated in the higher realm of Brahma-world, as well as in the precipice of woeful states and other places. Buddhas, Pacceka Buddhas and thenoble disciples, all of them have traversed along "the one and only way" of the four foundations of mindfulness. (Ekâyanô Ayam bhikkhave maggô...." This is the one and only way to Nibbâna). However, some followers of this path, not being able to realize the true Dhamma, come back again to their usual way leading to birth and death. If the stage of gaining knowledge and vision of what is the path and what is not, is surpassed, and if
one really reaches the fruition of the 1st sainthood (sôtâpatti phala), he would never follow a wrong path again.

## (3) Finding the Bull

Having surpassed the purification of knowledge and vision of the right path, and having gained other insight knowledges thereafter, he hears the melodious sound of the knowledge of contemplation of reflexion whispering him that the only thing to be done to realize Nibbâna is to discern the three characteristic features of all formations. When he enters the knowledge of equanimity about formations and becomes indifferent and neutral to them, then there arises in him, tranquillizing and appeasing the rigidity of his body and the burning sensation of his mind, some happiness, subtle and peaceful. With the deluded distorted perceptions, ignorance cannot mislead a person for ever. It is not possible to convince to a person without an insight-eye, how the mighty actions of ignorance pierce the heart with the darts of defilements, and how it distorts perceptions showing all formations that are impermanent, suffering, and not-self, as being permanent, pleasant and self.

The conceptual knowledge gained through reading and listening but without any practical understanding is considered to be imperfect. The one contemplating and cutting off, with his supreme mindfulness and wisdom, all sense objects and the phenomena of mind and matter arising through them as impermanent, suffering, not selfetc, requires no such conceptial
knowledge. When the three characteristic features are practically and clearly reflected, there arises no attachment or aversion towards sense-objects, so there is peace and happiness in his mind.

# "Yatô yatô sammasati - Khandhânam Udayabbam Labatî Pîtí pâmojjam -Amatam tam Vijạnatam" 

(Dhammapada 374)
"Whenever the rise and fall of the five aggregates is reflected, a great joy and happiness will arise"
This cannot, however, be comprehended without any practical understanding.

## (4) Catching the Bull

In order to trace ignorance, he must maintain an untiring and persistent great effort. If not, ignorance-stubborn-very stronggiven to becoming-difficult to subdue, will take him into a dream of fairy-world of thoughts and attachments, or else, will make him forget everything by immersing him in a mesh of sloth and torpor.

Mindfulness and wisdom should be constantly well established in his mind. The clefts such as hindrances have not yet been closed up. Nor have the roots been uprooted. Ignorance still makes an effort to generate him in different modes of births, existence, species, stations of consciousness and abodes of beings.

Mindfulness and wisdom should be strictly maintained especially in the presence of the pleasant and enticing sense-objects. The house of becoming makes gestures and beckons him saying, "Come over here, come over here". To restrain all six senses, eye-ear-nose-tongue-body and mind, mindfulness and wisdom should constantly be developed.
"Sabbattha samvutô bhikkhu sabba dukkhâ pamuccati"
(Dhammapada 361)
"The monk restrained all over is freed from all suffring."

## (5) Gentling the Bull

In the absence of mindfulness and wisdom, the dust of mental confusion, flurry and other difilements will cloud his mind. This problems no longer exists when it becomespossible to train and concentrate the mind well. Then there arises a mastery of the mind.

When such a mastary of the mind is gained, he can, without any attachment or aversion towards anything or anyone, and also without any affliction, move on along the path safely. Thenevena busy place becomes a suitable dwelling for meditation. When he dwells in his own field - ("Carata bhikkhave sake pettike visayê......." Wander monks in your own paternal field. i.e. four foundations of mindfulness), his mind will be well settled in the four foundations of mindfulness, and it becomes stable and still. Then it enters a stage of serenity called "momentary
concentration", and then the mind begins to act effortlessly and involuntarily. With a calm and equanimous mind, he now moves on ever forward seeing the reality of the phenomena of oncoming mind and matter.

The mind thus tamed with a consistant and patient restraint does not now appear frightful dark as before. The external dreadful and black formations have now been dissolved away, and the "inner" mind starts activating only internally. This "internal" mind is the only formation that remains now. With that experience, no defilements such as lust, angeretc. would arise in his mind, even if he makes an effort to generate them forcefully. Hence, fearlessly he can move on anywhere. The mind now becomes absolutely pure; and being taintless, it does not get dirty.

It, detached from the external world, isolates itself leaving aside everything. The mind thus purified, concentrated and filled with discernment, realizing all formations of the entire universe as impermanent, suffering and non - self, experiences a momentary cessation of all formations and thereby sees the complete dissolution of the perception of self. And then he experiences the fortune the greatest - a far exceeding supreme bliss. The sublime heroic melody that emerges from such a fortunate mind echoes within the mind itself. Those having super normal powers would see and hear them well.

## (6) Returning home on the back of the Bull.

All wholesome and unwholesome volitional formations depend on ignorance until it is totally eradicated by the fruiton of Arahantship. This may be compared to the riding on the bull's back. The mind has now been calmed down, appeased, cooled, and tranquillized by the greatest fortune thus gained. Then he discerns the various kind of sense-objects, and all mental formations derived through them as mental manifestations rising and falling instantaneously. This correct knowledge and vision arising through all sense-objects is emerged continually within his heart. It seems that the supreme bliss generated through the correct vision that had never even dreamt before, overwhelms his world of five aggregates continuously.

He, being adept at such sight of insight, realizing the reality of all formations of the whole three world's, reaches through the intoxicating conventional world, his "home of Nibbâna". And abiding in the fruition of the noble path, he experiences supreme and sublime bliss of Nibbâna. "Nibbânam pararam sukaham" - "Nibbâna is the highest bliss". Nothing surpasses this supra mundane peace. This cannot, of course, be comprehended with an intellectual knowledge.

Having appeased the burning sensation of defilements, and the inflammation of formations, he pacifies his heart with the cool gentle breeze of Nibbâna. And his mind now does not incline towards the five-fold sensual pleasures, seeing that such pleasures are not worth even a bit of dung.

## (7) Bull forgotten - Man remains

The "bull" is nothing but only a part of mental formations. When the mind becomes void, all formations will be completely dissolved away. It is as if we have forgotten theentireuniverse. The mind and the body both become entirely soft and light, subtle and peaceful, and cool and tranquillized. When such a situation exists, even in the world of formations that kindless the fire of defilements, he can now be "in a deep sleep whilst being awake".* The 37 enlightenment factors used for this restraint, after becoming a tranquillized state of his mind, remain and lie silently by a side.

The heart is completely empty and nothing can remain there in that emptiness. And having been shattered all bondages that had been so far spread throughout the entire universe, the mind, like the empty space between the earth and divine abodes, is now filled with complete nothingness. No regulator is there in that "universal emptiness".

Like a pebble sunk into water, the world of five aggregates submerges in the Nibbânic-bliss. There remains only the "house of Nibbâna". All formations have been dissolved away. Self or the perception of self has completely been ceased away. The Nibbânic-bliss bubbles and overflows like a fountain sounding "Oh what-bliss, oh what-bliss". He holds no doubts about the"Anupâdisêsa Nibbânadhâtu" (the Nibbâna-element with no residue is left) which becomes eternal after the final passing away of an Arahant.
The mind that had been continuously active accumulating mental formations due to ignorance has now, having experienced the cessation of ignorance, turned into a simple empty awareness.
(i.e. He behaves actively just like an ordinary man; his liberated "inner" mind remains calm, still and completely unaffected with the external world or with his five aggregates).

That simple awareness depends on the "kammic" formations of the previous life which generated the re-birth linking conssiousness. And with the cessation of that "kammic" power, that simple awareness, too, will be ceased away for ever. Thereafter, never again will a rebirth linking consuiousness arise. He has no doubts whatsoever about the cessation of consciousness or the cessation of becoming. In that emptiness there exists no perception of beings or any other formations.
How can any other mental formation remain there within that total cessation of all formations.?

## (8) Bull and Man both forgotten

He is now capable of shattering and destroying the path like the nose-string, the cause of suffering like the bull, and suffering like the man, as if a large bomb is dropped. Then it appears only an immaterial state of emptiness, devoid of all mental images of forms, and the all perceptions of matter and resistence. It is boundless and it akins to the empty universal space with no beginning or end. In that emptiness the whole universe is completely dissolved away and there exists only the space. Not a single image of forms appears within the mind. The authenticity of this could be realized only through experience.

So far, the whole three worlds were there for him to embrace with the idea of "me and mine"; hence he had to keep on safeguarding them continuously. When the idea of "I am" (Asmimâna) is completely destroyed, which world would
remain there to be protected ? When this situation is compared with his past, he would really feel ashamed of his deception that he had in his mind. When everything including Nibbâna is relinquished ("Patinissaggânupassi Viharati" - when contemplating relinquishment), then there can remain no formations either conditional or unconditional within the mind. Then all attachements and clingings towards everything are totally ceased away. This may not be comprehended by a person havingno pragmatic vision.

The universal emptiness now appearing, too, is simply a very subtle mentle formation that would mislead one to assume it to be "the end". But this is the deepest point of ignorance. This too is impermanent and not-self. When this is realized with his supreme wisdom, this universal emptiness at once collapses down. All dualities including self and non-self are destroyed once and for all. This is the end of this supra mundane path.
The mind now always shines like the cold luminous moon full of soft light. Visible are all enticing and charming sense-objects in the world as before. The streams of simple consciousnesses emerging through sense impingements simply flow, rising and falling. But no othermental formations are produced within the mind involuntarily.
"Ditthê ditthamattam bhavissati, sutê sutamattam bhavissati.........." In reference to seen, there will be only seen. In reference to heard, there will be only heard ....." and so on, with regard to the other senses.

## (9) Return to the origin back to the source

Having relinquished all attachments and bondages the mind remains completely unaffected, and it isolates itself from the external and internal world of five aggregates. All have been completed; there is nothing more to be done. The one, born blind and deaf, experiences no mental formations arising through visible or audible objects. When one is detached from everything after destroying all bonds, his mind, as if he suddenly becomes blind and deaf, justremains at the stage of simple awareness of sense-objects, without producing mental formations to perceive them as good-bad-beautiful-ugly etc.

## "Ditthê ditthamattam...... Sutê Satamattam........"

This mind called - "Akuppa cêtô vimutti" the unshakable deliverance of the mind, does not come out of the heart and constantly resides within the heart itself. The heart is its own residential hut. Then the external world, and the other consciousnesses arising through the contacts of sense-objects, all become external to this mind. This liberated mind has no object-no limit-no arising and no falling. It just leisurely remains there detached from the whole universe for ever. Therefore, it is alone and unlimited. Whenever the impingements of senseobjectsare there, the streams of simple consciousnesses just arise and fall without producing no other mental formations involuntarily. Whatever the things there had been in the world, they all exist as before. The difference is that just a simple awareness remainsalone compltely unaffected and detached from all conventional realities. The five aggregates continue to rise and fall as usual. This liberated mind simply remains alone as a separate entity. Though they are inter-related, they remain and function separately.

Dualities such as "self-non self, good-bad, beautiful-ugly" etc. are
no more there in the mind. Therefore, he can now fearlessly look at any sense-objects. In the past-yesterday- there were some deceptive mental formations such as good - badetc. in the mind. Buttoday all such things have been slipped off and only the luminous simple awareness remains.
"Sabbatô pabham ." luminous all around......."

Through the four reviewing knowledges that arise spontaneously at the time of realizing the final path and fruition, or thereafter, a knowledge arises in him realizing that "Khînâ jâti, vusitam brahma cariyam, katam karạnîyam, nâparam. ittatthâyâti pajânâti" - birth is now destroyed, the holy life has been led, done what had to be done, there is nothing more to do". Within this unshakable deliverance of the mind, no mental formations glide through sense-objects as before, for it remains alone after destroying ignorance that clouded the sufferings so far experienced by perceiving sense-objects as "good-bad, me - mine" etc. and by getting entangled with such objects and thereby accumulating mental formations. Therefore, mental formations have now becomes absolutely silent. Only the pure delightful and simple awareness radiates brightly. When he peers into this "inner" mind withthe "surface or outer" mind of it, he seesthat not even a slight trace of lust, anger or delusion is left there.

Also he realizes that the liberated mind and the tranquillized virtue, tranquillized concentration, tranquillized wisdom and the tranquillized deliverance, all of themhave now become into one and the same phenomenon. Then there arises in him a supreme happiness calm, cool and peaceful.

## (10) Entering the market-place with bliss bestowing hands

Free of all taints and defilements such as dishonesty, deceitfulness, hypocrisy, treachery etc, he now becomes a "totally open-hearted" person having no difference between his "inner" and "outer" mind. Step by step he comes closer and closer towards "Anupâdisêsa Nibbâna"(Nibbanaelementwithoutany substratum), and his feet are "opened" as they are not covered or shackled by any bondage. He moves on along a supreme path in order to lead others towards Nibbâna. He now moves into society. He comes across worldlings whose minds are filled with perceptions that are really worthless, and he sees various intoxicating sense objects that would cover one's mind with the dust of defilements. Without any attachment or aversion towards them, he moves on hapilly. "Santusitattâ thitô" - owing to his release and happiness, he is steady. Such objects no longer trouble his mind. The objects once he perceived as ugly, disgustive and loathsome, and thereby becoming resentful are now look like trees with full of blosoms because they now effortlessly show him the reality in them. And he can now look at them as he wishes, either repulsively, or with equanimity.
"Sô sacê âkankhati patikkulê Appatikkûla sannî Vihareyyanti, appatikkûla sannî tattha viharati....." In the presence of what is loathsome, if he wants, he remains perciepient of unloathsomeness....."

He thus comes, not from a world of sensual pleasure (Kâma bhûmi), a world of forms (rûpa bhûmi), a world of immaterial (arûpa bhûmi) but from a supra mundane world (apariyâpanna bhûmi). He does not resist anybody or anything, but he is always equanimous and friendly to all. His features may not be so pleasant, but when he shakes his Dhamma-wand, the palace doors
of Nibbâna will be opened for him. He then enjoys the Nibbânicbliss.

That Dhamma-wand with a clear knowledge of realization is not curve, but very straight. The flow of Dhamma comes, with a clear knowledge of understanding, straight from his heart. They are not mere perceptions, but the true Dhamma apparent in his heart. What he says with a delightful heart may not be easily understood, for it may be so profound to be comprehended.

## "Paññnâvatô ayam dhammô, nayam dhammô duppaññassa"

- "This Dhamma is for one who endowed with discernment - not for one whose discernment is weak". The door of the palace of Nibbâna will be opened for anyone who meets him within his own mind. He is a stranger who has been always with you, but you may not aware of him, because of your own ignorance.

That's all.


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[^1]:    
    
    

[^2]:    * This book is available at the "Zen Centre, 58 Marlborough place - London - Nw 8 OPL

[^3]:    "Bear-chested" and "bear-footed" he reaches the market-place with his face clouded with dust and head covered with ashes. But a mighty laugh freely spreads throughout his face. He has no worries inhis mind. Without any miracle, the dead trees begin to bear flowers.

