

## BUDDHIST GHOST STORIES

BY HENRY S. GEHMAN.

IN THE experience of most men, it appears that the impressions formed during childhood are ineffaceable and cannot be eradicated. Through a change in a person's environment, these incidents may be manifestly forgotten, while in reality they are only dormant. Under favorable circumstances and with the proper stimulus these notions are awakened and correlated with other phenomena and new experiences. In making these statements we are not theorizing but speaking from personal contact with a rural generation that has now almost passed out of existence in that region of eastern Pennsylvania where we made our observations. When people live close to the soil, they are brought in touch with the unseen forces of nature; for them the change of seasons and the consequent variation in the farmer's activities, the real or fancied influence of the moon on crops and weather, and the mysterious meaning of the signs of the zodiac give room for dreams and occasion for speculation as well as for reflexion and generalization. In our idle moments we may envy the unlettered swain who is unspoiled by the world's materialism, the unsympathetic grind of industrialism, and the peril of a civilization that has no spiritual culture as its foundation. For the untutored husbandman, there is a breath in nature, a soul in the activities of the universe, a hidden power in the natural phenomena, which he contemplates with amazement, but accepts merely as a matter of course. For him the presence of malignant spirits is not a matter of superstition, but a grim fact borne out by his own unpleasant experiences as well as those of his forefathers and contemporaries.

If the people of that stage of culture did not find their amusements in a mad rush after pleasure, they took more time to dream about the invisible and consequently had a receptive state of mind to behold occasional appearances of departed spirits. Such was an ideal condition for seeing apparitions, and only under such an en-

vironment could ghost stories be composed as we find them in the Peta-Vatthu. In a poetic mood, we who have been born in the present generation, when we can no longer have a first-hand acquaintance with goblins, might wish to be transported to the long ago when men contemplated the mysterious with awe and devotion. The faculty of seeing kobolds in fence-corners and lime-kilns and at the same time remaining a respected member of society belongs to a past generation.

As a boy, I was on intimate relations with many old men who told me their personal reminiscences and ghost stories until my hair almost stood on end and the chills went down my back; in fact, many a time I was almost afraid to go home in the dark. One story will stand repetition on account of its similarity to some of the tales in the Peta-Vatthu. Farmers always asserted that it is a heinous sin for a man to remove a boundary stone, and many anecdotes are narrated to show how the malefactor could not escape the retribution for such an offense. A man once maliciously pulled out a corner stone and after death had to walk on the boundary with the stone upon his back. To every one he saw, he said, "Where shall I put it, where shall I put it?" Everybody fled from him in terror, but one evening he put the same question to a straggler who was badly intoxicated. The inebriate rather impudently replied, "Put it where you got it, you ox." "That is what I have longed to hear for many years," remarked the ghost, who was freed from his anguish and never seen again. Many a time as a boy, I was told not to leave a distressed spirit in similar circumstances to his fate; it was considered a meritorious deed to release the unfortunate one by pronouncing a few simple words, "Put it where you got it."

But the men who entertained me with these stories have passed away. I came under the influence of a different environment, and the stories of the gnomes were hidden away in the recesses of my mind until the study of Pāli, and the subsequent acquaintance with the Peta-Vatthu brought them back once more very vividly. In fact, the resemblance of the stories of the Peta-Vatthu to those told in Eastern Pennsylvania, especially in the motif of retribution, struck me as interesting and induced me to translate the entire Peta-Vatthu into English.<sup>1</sup>

The Peta-Vatthu, the work which forms the basis of this paper, is one of the Buddhistic works written in Pāli, a language closely

<sup>1</sup> Thus far, there has appeared in print Book I, *Reformed Church Review*, Vol. XXIV, 117-126; *Ceylon Antiquary and Literary Register*, Vol. VI, 206-213; Book II, *Ceylon Antiquary and Lit. Reg.*, Vol. VII, 155-163; 193-204; Book III, 1-2, *ibid.*, Vol. VIII, 145-153.

akin to Sanskrit. The Buddhist Scriptures known as the Tipiṭaka consist of three parts, the Vinayapiṭaka, the Suttapiṭaka, and the Abhidhammapiṭaka. The second group, the Suttapiṭaka, consists of five books, one of which is called the Khuddakanikāya, which in turn is subdivided into fifteen sections. The Peta-Vatthu constitutes one of these last divisions.

The name Peta-Vatthu (Sanskrit *preta-vastu*) means the story of the departed or the spirits of the dead. The Pāli *peta* is equivalent to the Sanskrit *preta*, which is derived from the root *i* "to go" with the suffix *pra*; the word signifies, therefore, "having gone forward," or in other words, "having passed from this world to the next"; hence, "the departed" or "the spirits of the dead." Both in Sanskrit and in Pāli the word is specialized to refer only to the spirits in torment or in purgatory.

The *petas* live in the *paraloka* or the spirit world. We must not, however, identify the punishment of the *petas* with the torment in hell, which was considered a far greater affliction than existence in the *peta* world. It is a well-known fact that there are five *gatis* or states of existence into which a being may be reborn at death; they are hell, animals, the *peta* world, men, and the *devas* or gods.

In order to understand the punishment of the *petas* let us cast a cursory glance at what is meant by transmigration. Life is evil, say the Hindus, but death does not bring release from it. Death is not the cessation of existence; it is only passing from one existence into another. Men are punished, not because they have incurred the wrath of any angry personal deity, but because they have transgressed, or come into conflict with, the cosmic power or force of abstract right or justice, which rules the world and is, in fact, a natural law. It operates of itself just as much as the law of gravitation does; it is therefore wholly dispassionate, neither vindictive nor merciful. One cannot escape the law of reward or retribution; the state of each individual is absolutely conditioned by that person's morality in the previous existence. A man is what he has made himself. For abstract contemplation, is this not a wonderful scheme of cosmic justice? The final state is not that of being a *deva* or god; the *devas* also die and are reborn. One has reached the goal only when he has freed himself from the last links of the chain binding him to existence and attained Nirvāna, which is non-existence, or generally speaking, the cessation of conscious individual existence. Theoretically, there is no definite limit to the number of years one has to spend in the *samsāra* or cycle of rebirths; still it may be interesting to note the calculation of one *peta* (P. V., IV, 3, 32-33):

“After having passed through the cycle of transmigration for eighty-four hundred thousand great *kalpas*, both the foolish and the wise make an end of their misery. He who is victorious understands all.” Now each *mahākappa* (*mahākalpa*) is subdivided into four *āsankheyyakappas* called *samvatta*, *samvattathāyī*, *vivatta*, and *vivattatthāyī*; each *āsankheyyakappa* contains twenty *antarakappas*, an *antarakappa* being the interval that elapses while the age of man increases from ten years to *āsankheyya* and then decreases again to ten years. Finally an *āsankheyya* is equal to 10,000,000 raised to the twentieth power or 1 followed by 140 ciphers. From these data we can compute the *peta*'s estimate of the number of years that one has to spend in the *samsāra*. Of course, it must be borne in mind that various conditions determine the length of time that one has to spend in the cycle, and so the period of transmigration may take a much longer time or conversely a less number of years.

The operation of the law of reward and retribution is succinctly expressed in P.-V., III, 1, 20:

sukham akatapuññānam idha natthi parattha ca  
sukhañ ca katapuññānam idha c'eva parattha ca :

“For those who have not done good deeds, there is joy neither in this world nor in the next; but for those who have performed meritorious works, there is happiness both in this world and in the next.”

The nature of the stories told in the Peta-Vatthu does not assist us in definitely dating this work. Buddhism was a popular religion, and in order to make its tenets clear to the people, the teachers used tales and legends that had originally no religious significance. Many of these stories are as old as the human race, but the Buddhist preachers in giving them a religious veneer, could thus address the common folk in a language that they understood. We generally have a conversation between an elder or one of the Buddha's eminent disciples as Nārada or Moggallāna and a ghost. The monk asks the *peta* why he appears in such a condition. The latter narrates his story which is carried by the disciple to the Buddha, who in turn makes the incident his theme in preaching to the multitude. For this reason the commentator Dhammapāla, in his introduction, asserts that the whole Peta-Vatthu owes its origin to the fact that all of it was spoken by the Teacher. We must, however, not take him too seriously at this point, because in the frame-story to IV, 3, he mentions King Pingalaka of Surat, who in the words of Dhammapāla lived two hundred years after the Buddha. In other words the Peta-

Vatthu in its final form was composed at a date posterior to 280 B.C.

In this connection we may raise the question of its canonicity. Everybody is agreed that only the verses can be regarded canonical; the prose or frame-story is the commentary. It is apparent that the language of the latter is later than that of the verses. This, however, does not necessarily imply that the contents of the frame-story are recent; the man who recited the verses might expound them with language improvised at the moment as he narrated an accepted tradition. The third oecumenical council was held in the time of King Asoka; the monk Tissa Moggaliputta (236 years after the Buddha) called an assembly of one thousand monks at Pataliputra to form a canon. A pupil of Tissa named Mahinda, a younger brother of Asoka, took Buddhism and the Buddhist texts to Ceylon where they were orally transmitted until recorded by the Singhalese king, Vattagāmani, in the first century, B. C. According to the Buddhists of Ceylon, the canon which was established at the third council is the same as that brought by Mahinda to Ceylon and our present Pāli canon, the Tipitaka. Now it is evident that in the time of Asoka there was a canon, at least as far as the Suttapiṭaka is concerned, which was not unlike ours. It is, however, believed by scholars, and no doubt correctly so, that much material crept in from the third to the first century, B. C.

In the fifth book of the Avadānasataka, we have in Sanskrit a short collection of *preta* stories. Since that work was translated into Chinese as early as the third century, A. D., we must take into account the time that necessarily elapsed between the composition of the Avadānasataka and its gaining so great authority that the need of a Chinese translation was felt. Speyer, therefore, reasonably assumes the date of the Avadānasataka as *circa* 100, A. D. Both the Peta-Vatthu and the Avadānasataka are Hinayāna works, but we cannot prove that either was influenced by the other. They have some material in common, but then it is possible that both drew from stories that were floating around in India and known to many people in various parts of the country. There is, however, a difference in telling the story in the two works under consideration. In the Avadānasataka, when the elder asks a ghost why he has to suffer such a dreadful torment, the spirit replies: "When the sun is risen, one does not need a light. Ask the Blessed One, he will tell you why." On the other hand, in the Peta-Vatthu the ghost in simple fashion tells his case to the monk, who then informs the Buddha, but this difference of presentation does not prove anything definite as to the date of composition. It may be that in this simple style

the Peta-Vatthu is merely imitating an older tradition. Perhaps we may assume that the Peta-Vatthu is at least as old as the Avadānasataka; at any rate it obtained such popularity that a commentary on the book was written by Dhammapāla, who lived not much later than Buddhaghosa in a monastery in southern India.

It is true beyond a doubt that it is late in composition and perhaps only through popular use found a dubious entrance into the Pāli canon. The Buddhists of Ceylon, however, regard it canonical, but it is noteworthy that it is not included in the King of Siam's edition of the Tipiṭaka, Bangkok, 1894. Its subject matter reveals its late origin, but the date is not all that must be considered in connection with its canonicity. The contents of the book are decidedly against its being placed in the same category with the more important books of Buddhism. Most of the stories of the Peta-Vatthu are not attractive, and as regards the religious message of the book, one or two tales could have taught all that the Peta-Vatthu has for spiritual enlightenment. We are very apparently dealing with a low type of Buddhism. The transfer of merit whereby a sympathetic man or woman could release a ghost from the torments of the *peta* existence certainly makes it easy to escape the retribution that is one's due according to the law of *Karma*. The constant stress on liberality makes us feel that a mercenary spirit or attitude pervades the Peta-Vatthu. The subject matter reveals its late origin, and this with the base type of religion found in the book evidently directed the Siamese theologians in their decision.

First, let us consider the time and place that men saw *petas*. We note that the spirits made their appearance both day and night in various places. Generally speaking, in folklore ghosts haunt the places where they lived or had their activities. This primitive element is found in I, 5, the *Peta* Story of "Outside the Wall":

"They stand outside the walls and at the street corners and at the crossroads; they are standing at the doorposts, having arrived at their own house."

The terrors of a haunted place are depicted in IV, 6. While the Teacher was living at Jetavana, he told this story about two *petas*. It is said that the king of Kosala at Sāvatti had two amiable sons who were in the prime of youth. In the excitement of youthful passion, they committed adultery, and after death were reborn as *petas* who were being crushed in a trench. During the night they used to lament with a dreadful noise; when the people heard it, they were terrified. Since this was the case, they gave a great donation to the Chapter of priests presided over by the Buddha, saying,

"This ill omen shall cease." They told that tidings to the Blessed one who said, "Disciples, you will not have any end of hearing that noise." He told them the cause of it and in the following stanzas preached them a sermon:

1. "There is a city called Sāvatti at the flank of the Himalayas; in that place were two princes, the sons of a king; so I heard.

2. "They indulged in sensuality and found delight in the enjoyment of love. They were greedy for the present pleasures, but they did not consider the future.

3. "They left their human state and passed from this world to the next. Although one does not see them, they proclaim the wickedness which they committed in their former existence,

4. "Saying: 'Many people forsooth are served with presents. We cannot provide for ourselves a blessing which brings protection and happiness.

5. "'What wicked deed then might it have been on account of which we were expelled from our royal family and reborn in the realm of the *petas*, afflicted with hunger and thirst?'

6. "They who are lords here will not be lords over there; they wander about tortured with hunger and thirst; the lofty are humbled.

7. "After knowing that this bad consequence has its origin in the presumption of a ruler, a man should renounce the arrogance of lordship and thus go to heaven. After the dissolution of the body the wise man is reborn in heaven."

The *petas* have retained their human form and features and frequently are nude and are tormented by hunger and thirst. In the Avadānasataka we meet a general description that is more or less standard; the *preta* has a face like the summit of a mountain, a belly like a mountain or the ocean, a mouth like the eye of a needle; he is nude, but covered entirely with his hair and completely aglow with flames so that he forms, as it were, a single flame. In this condition he utters cries of distress and awakens the sympathy of his fellow-men.

The *petas* come to earth and seek alleviation from their sufferings, but they do not profit by direct gifts. In their request for aid, they suggest that the donor give in their name a present to some needy individual, in most cases a monk. It was very important that the giver transfer to the *preta* the credit of the gift. We have alluded to the justice of working out one's salvation through the Buddhist rebirths, but we note here that a spirit could be released from the *preta* existence or purgatory by the donations of friends and the concomitant transfer of merit. Here is where the justice of the sys-

tem seems to break down. A *peta* may through supererogation be born in the highest heaven. The only defense we can make for this doctrine of the Peta-Vatthu (or should we not rather call it an apology?) is that existence in heaven is not permanent and by no means does it imply the end of the rebirths. We must admit that it is a serious blemish in the working out of the law of cause and effect, and we grant that the Siamese theologians had a valid reason for excluding the Peta-Vatthu from the canon.

In most instances the punishment bears a similarity to the offense committed in thought, word, or deed. Wicked acts are punished, and a person who performs partially good deeds, receives both joy and grief, *i. e.*, a partial reward and punishment in his *peta* existence.

The following selections will give a general idea of the appearance of the *petas*, the nature of their misery, and the cause of their sufferings. In I, 2, we have this dialogue. Nārada meets a ghost and says: "Your body, golden all over, illuminates all the regions; but your mouth is simply that of a boar. What deed have you done in your previous existence?" The *peta* replies: "My body I subdued; my speech I did not restrain. Therefore, I have such an appearance as you see, Nārada." In I, 3, we have another conversation between Nārada and a ghost. The disciple says: "You have a beautiful, celestial complexion; in the air you are standing, yea in heaven. Yet worms are devouring your mouth which has a putrid odour; what act did you commit in your previous existence?" The *peta* answers: "A monk I was, wicked and of harsh speech; though in the form of a mendicant, I was unrestrained with my mouth; I obtained, to be sure, with austerity my complexion, but also a putrid mouth on account of my slander."

A lie with a false oath brings dire consequences upon a person in the next world. In I, 6, this is brought out by a conversation between a monk and a *peti* (a female ghost). The holy man begins:

1. "You are naked and ugly in form; an ill-smelling and putrid odour your breathe forth; you are all covered with flies, as it were. Now who are you that exist in this condition?"

The *peti* replies:

2. "I, venerable sir, am a *peti*, a wretched denizen of Yama's world. Since I had done a wicked deed, I went from here to the world of the *petas*.

3. "At daybreak I give birth to five sons, in the evening again to five others, all of whom I devour; even these are not enough for me.

4. "My head is scorched and smokes with hunger; I do not receive any water to drink. Behold the misfortune which has come upon me."

Then says the monk:

5. "Now what sin has been committed by your body, speech, and mind? In retribution of what deed do you devour the flesh of children?"

The *peti* replies:

6. "The other wife of my husband was pregnant, and I devised evil against her; I myself with a corrupt spirit caused the fall of her foetus.

7. "Her foetus, two months old, was simply blood and trickled from her. Then her mother in anger brought her relatives to me. And she both administered an oath to me and had me reviled.

8. "I for my part took the terrible oath falsely: 'May I eat the flesh of children, if it was done by me.'

9. "In consequence of both the deed and the perjury, I eat the flesh of children, since I am stained with the blood of my former existence."

Buddhism encourages the monastic life, which of course necessitates liberality on the part of the friar's friends and fellow-countrymen. In the *Peta-Vatthu* we see that many a man and woman had to pay the penalty for niggardliness or abuse of the monks. In fact, the book lays so much stress upon this phase of religious life that it becomes tiresome and we gain the impression that there was a mercenary motive in writing this collection of tales. From the numerous examples let us quote one story, I, 11, where we have a dialogue between the monk *Samkicca* and a *peta* family. The monk opens the conversation:

1. "Leading the way, forsooth, one goes on a white elephant, but in the middle, one is in a car drawn by she-mules; and at the very end a young woman who entirely illuminates the ten regions, is carried in a litter.

2. "But you people with mallets in your hands, having sad faces and split and broken bodies, you human beings, what evil have you done? On account of what do you drink each other's blood?"

The *petas* say:

3. "He who goes at the very head on the white elephant, the four-footed beast, was our son; he was the eldest child. Because he gave gifts, he now rejoices happily.

4. "He who is in the middle on the wagon drawn by the she-mules, in the swift car yoked to four, was our second child. As an unselfish and noble giver he shines.

5. "She who is carried in a litter, a lady, wise, having the sluggish eye of the doe, was our daughter; she was the youngest child. Happy with half her portion, she rejoices.

6. "And these with tranquil minds in their previous existence gave gifts to the ascetics and the brāhmins. But we were niggardly and abused the ascetics and the brāhmins. Since they gave gifts, they roam about, while we waste away like a reed cut down."

Then the monk interposes:

7. "What kind of food do you have? what kind of a bed? How do you maintain yourselves, you great sinners, who, while food is abundant and plenty, have lost happiness and today have obtained sorrow?"

Thereupon the ghosts reply:

8. "We strike each other and drink pus and blood. Although we have drunk much, we are not satiated, our thirst is not appeased.

9. "Just so lament unbestowing mortals, who after death are in the abode of Yama; having discerned and attained food, they neither enjoy it nor do good with it.

10. "Suffering hunger and thirst in another world, the departed spirits for a long time lament, since they are in torment. Because they have done deeds of grievous consequence, they receive sorrow as their bitter fruits.

11. "For momentary are wealth and property; fleeting is the life here on earth; gaining a knowledge of transitoriness from the transient, let the wise man prepare a resting place.

12. "All men who are acquainted with the moral law and have this knowledge, do not neglect gifts after they have heard the words of the saints."

In I, 9, a man gave gifts to the mendicants, but his wife reviled and censured him, saying: "Excrement, urine, blood, and pus, filth you shall eat for all time. Let that be your lot in the other world, and your clothes shall be like metal plates." When she died, she became a *peti*, whose clothes were metal plates, and she had to live upon the filth that she had wished upon her husband. In many instances we find that the ghosts had to eat loathsome refuse and dung.

The author of the Peta-Vatthu, however, does not limit his conception of punishment to hunger, thirst, and nauseating rations. Thus a crowd of *petas* narrate their affliction (IV, 10): "In fear we approach the river; it becomes empty. We go up to the shade on

the hot days; it is turned into sunlight. A flaming and burning wind blows over us. Reverend sir, we deserve this affliction and more besides. Famished and craving for food, we travel for *yojanas*. We return without having gotten anything at all; alas, we have been wicked. Hungry and faint, we are smitten to the earth. We are scattered and lie flat on our backs; we fall down, curled in heaps. We in this condition drop down to that very spot and are afflicted upon the earth. We beat our chests and heads. Alas, we have been wicked. Reverend sir, we deserve this affliction and more besides. We have not provided for ourselves a refuge by means of good gifts."

One motif that frequently occurs is that the punishment in the *peta* world was suggested by an act committed in thought, in word, or in deed. Whatever ill you do another person in this world, will return to you in the next; whatever misfortune you wish upon another, will surely be visited upon you in the future. Mattā and Tissā were both the wives of one man (II, 3). After the death of the former she appeared as a *petī* and narrated her misfortunes. Once Tissā had washed her head and dressed herself in clean clothes; Mattā became jealous and so strewed dirt on her co-wife. Consequently she was covered with sand in the next world. On another occasion she put the rough nuts of the *kapikacchu* in Tissā's bed; as a result of that she was devoured with the itch in her *peta* existence. She even threw her rival's perfume, garland, and new ointment into the cesspool; for that she paid by giving out an odor of excrement.

Here we have a story of a man who led a partially good life (III, 7). The venerable Nārada thus addresses a *peta*:

1. "You are a youth attended by men and women; at night with the pleasures of your senses you are brilliant; during the day you suffer from some cause. What did you do in your previous existence?"

The *peta* thus described his past life:

2. "I, in beautiful Rājagaha, in delightful Giribaja, formerly was a huntsman, a cruel destroyer of life.

3. "With my broad and strong hands acting a consistent part, I had a wicked disposition; I walked about, always exceedingly grim, delighting in slaying others, and unrestrained.

4. "Though of such a nature, I had a friendly companion, a pious layman of the faith; and he having compassion on me, restrained me again and again, saying:

5. "Do not perform an evil deed, lest, my dear sir, you come to distress. If you desire happiness after death, put an end to your taking of life, your lack of self-restraint."

6. "Although I heard the advice of this man who loved happiness and pitied his friend, I did not obey completely his admonition, since for a long time I had found delight in wickedness and was not wise.

7. "Again this very wise man tenderly introduced me to self-restraint with the words: 'If you slay animals during the day, then let them alone during the night.'

8. "So I killed the animals by daytime and with self-control abstained at nights. Now I walk around by night, but during the day I am consumed in misery.

9. "In consequence of that meritorious act I enjoy a celestial night; during the daytime the dogs that had just been driven back run up on all sides to eat me up."

The following story (IV,5) we shall give together with its commentary. This is a *peta*-story that even children would enjoy.

Now comes the story of the sugar cane. What was its origin? While the Blessed One was living at Veluvana, a certain man put a bundle of sugar cane on his shoulder and was chewing a stalk as he walked along. Then some pious disciple who led a righteous life came along behind him with a small boy. When the child saw the sugar cane, he began to cry, saying, "Give me some." When the layman saw that his little one was in tears, he stopped the man and tried to start a conversation with him. But the man answered him never a word and out of pure meanness refused to give even a bit of sugar cane to the lad. Then the disciple showed him his child and said: "This boy cries bitterly; give him a piece of sugar cane." When the man heard this, he could not stand it any longer and with a contemptuous and disrespectful air, he threw one piece of sugar cane behind himself. Subsequently he died, and on account of the covetousness which he had long cherished, he was reborn among the *petas*. His reward, of course, was in accordance with his deeds. A large sugar cane forest, black as collyrium, sprang up in which the closely planted stalks had the size of clubs and sticks, and the thicket extended over an area of eight *karissas*. As he approached with a desire to eat and thought, "I will take some sugar cane," the stalks struck him. Exhausted by this affliction, he fell down. Then one day, while the venerable Mahāmoggallāna was going to Rājagaha for alms, he saw the *peta* on the road.

These stanzas set forth the conversation which took place between the two:

*Peta:*

1. "Here a great forest of sugar cane springs up before me; it is extensive and bears a good crop. But now it does not offer me anything to eat. Tell me, reverend sir, of what is this the result?"

2. "I am afflicted and am being eaten up; I struggle. I am trying to get something to eat. I am well nigh dead, and in my misery I lament. Of what deed is this the result?"

3. "I am overcome, and I am falling down to the earth. I roll around in the heat like a fish, and as I weep, the tears are dripping from me. Tell me, reverend sir, of what is this the result?"

4. "I am hungry, thirsty, and exhausted. I am terrified and get no pleasure nor happiness. Venerable sir, I am asking you the cause of this. How now might I get some sugar cane as food?"

*Mahāmoggallāna:*

5. "In your previous existence, i. e., when you were a human being in a former birth, you performed some (wicked) deed. Now I will tell you the reason for your state, and when you hear, take this matter to heart.

6. "You were eating sugar cane as you were walking along, and a man was coming up behind you. He told you that he longed for some, and you replied him never a word.

7. "Although you refused to speak, he begged you and said to you, 'My lord, give me sugar cane.' Then you gave him some from behind. In consequence of that deed you have this result.

8. "Look here! (I'll help you; listen to what I say): You may take some sugar cane from behind; take it and eat to your heart's content. Through this very act you will be pleased, delighted, joyful, and happy."

9. He went and took it from behind. When he had it in his hands, he ate to his heart's content. By that means alone he became pleased, delighted, joyful, and happy.

The commentary adds that the *peta* gathered a bundle of the sugar cane and gave it to the elder who brought it to the Buddha at Veluvana. The Blessed One together with the priests of the Chapter partook of it and gave thanks. From that time on the *peta* could eat sugar cane in comfort. In the course of time he passed out of the *peta*-existence and was reborn among the *Tāvātimsa devas*.

One story (IV, 3) reads almost like a fairy tale on account of the mysterious manner in which a highway disappears. We shall quote a portion of it:

1. A king named Pingalaka was lord of the people of Surat. He had gone on a service to the Moriyas and again was on his way back to Surat.

2. In the heat of the noonday the king came upon some mud; he beheld a delightful road, a beautiful path, that of the *petas*.

3. The king addressed his driver: "This is an exquisite highway; it is peaceful, safe, and auspicious. Follow this course, charioteer."

4. From this point the king of Surat with his army of four hosts proceeded upon it at the head of the men from Surat.

5. With a flurried look a man thus addressed the ruler of Surat: "We are going upon a terrible road; it is frightful and causes one's hair to stand up. In front a way is seen, but behind it is invisible.

6. "We are traveling on a dangerous path with Yama's men. A demonic odour is emitted; a dreadful noise is heard."

7. In agitation the king of Surat spoke thus to his charioteer: "We are going upon a terrible road; it is frightful and causes one's hair to stand on end. In front a way is seen, but behind us it is invisible.

8. "We are traveling on a dangerous path with Yama's men. A demonic odour is emitted; a dreadful noise is heard."

9. He mounted upon the back of an elephant, and looking toward the four directions, he saw a banyan with its abundant shade; the tree resembled a dark blue thunder-cloud in color, and its top had the hue of the mist.

10. The king asked his driver: "What is that big object which we see, resembling a dark blue thunder-cloud, and its top has the hue of the mist?" Then replied the charioteer:

11. "Great king, that is a banyan with abundant shade; it is a tree that looks like the dark blue thunder-cloud in color, and its top has the hue of mist."

12. The king of Surat set out in the direction in which was seen that large tree, which in color had the likeness of a dark blue thunder-cloud and whose top had the hue of mist.

13. Having descended from the back of the elephant, the king approached the tree, and with his ministers and attendants he sat down on a root of the banyan. He noticed various cakes and a water-jar filled with a beverage.

14. Then a man who had the appearance of a *deva* and was bedecked with all kinds of ornaments, came up and thus addressed the king of Surat:

15. "Welcome! great king; you had a rather easy course hither. Lord, drink the water, and eat the cakes, O conqueror."

16. The king with his ministers and attendants quaffed the beverage and ate the cakes. After the repast the ruler of Surat spoke as follows:

17. "Now pray, are you a *deva*, or a *gandharva*, or Sakka Purindada? Since we have no acquaintance with you, we ask. How could we know you?" The stranger spoke:

18. "I am not a *deva*, nor a *gandharva*, nor even Sakka Purindada. I am a *peta*, O great king, you who have come hither from Surat." Then the *peta* proceeds to narrate that he had been a wicked man in the past and advised the king to profit by his misfortune. The words of the ghost made such an impression on the king that he became a good Buddhist.

These selections give us some idea of a phase of popular Buddhism. The *peta* existence may well be called the Buddhist purgatory. Although the Siamese theologians did not regard the Peta-Vatthu canonical, it is nevertheless important, since it gives us an acquaintance with what the masses held about one stage in the transmigration of the soul. For the student of folklore and comparative religion the tales are interesting and useful.

# Substance and Function and Einstein's Theory of Relativity

By Ernst Cassirer

*Translated by*

WILLIAM CURTIS SWABEY, Ph.D., and MARIE COLLINS SWABEY, Ph.D.

Price, \$3.00

## PRESS NOTICES

"One of the profoundest books on relativity of knowledge in its bearings on mathematical and physical speculation, is here contributed by Professor Cassirer to issues raised anew by the Einstein theory.

"Described in more of detail, the book as a whole constitutes a constructive and systematic survey of the whole field of the principles of the exact sciences from the standpoint of a logical idealism which is historically derived from Kant, but which lacks 'the fatal rigidity' of the latter's system. As the author develops his idealistic view, it becomes a doctrine of creative intelligence, showing it to be neither idealism, pragmatism nor realism; as these terms are understood by us, it is rather 'a positivistic and non-static rationalism which seeks to preserve the spirit that unites Plato, Descartes, Leibnitz and Kant, and to show how this spirit reaches its fulfillment in the modern development of mathematical and physical theory.'"—*Boston Evening Transcript.*

"In the last hundred pages or so of the book, the author comes to the exposition of Einstein's theory proper, and here his manuscript has been revised by Einstein himself. This is a most noteworthy contribution and brings the abstract mathematical conceptions of relativity clearly into the philosophical and even psychological field better than anything which has yet appeared."—*The Pedagogical Seminary.*

---

THE OPEN COURT PUBLISHING COMPANY  
CHICAGO LONDON

# NATURE and HUMAN NATURE

*Essays Metaphysical and Historical*

By

HARTLEY BURR ALEXANDER

*University of Nebraska*

Cloth Pp. 530.

Price \$3.00

Essays idealistic in tone, reflecting a humanistic philosophy in search of "that truth which is knowledge of man's best self and of that wisdom which can make of this truth a spiritual helmsman."

## PRESS NOTICES

"A life-time of thinking has gone into all of them, the material utilized has been drawn from well-nigh every department of human knowledge, and the outcome is a volume which will take high rank for its stimulus to the reasoning faculty, its insight into the profoundest problems of man and the universe, and its inculcation of advanced moral and intellectual ideals."—*Boston Transcript*

"Well considered and beautifully written thoughts."—*New York Tribune.*

"The author shows that he is a consummate dialectician and an adept at the exposition and criticism of special theories, as in his essay on the definition of number. But it is as a study of the deepest values in human experience, that

the book will be read and welcomed.”—*Springfield Republican*.

“The author is a futurist because he believes that on the whole, despite the powers of evil and darkness, the world is slowly moving toward a higher goal.”—*Pedagogical Seminary*.

“Though we cannot accept his dicta, we can admire the beautiful clarity of his style, the delicate, practiced deftness with which subtle philosophical problems are stated; and we acknowledge gladly, too, that in his pages there is nothing to pain or offend; he remains throughout the highly cultured gentleman.”—*The Catholic World*.

“Human Personality,” . . . . . “it is an impressive, striking, and deeply suggestive discussion of a tremendously important subject.”—*The Hartford Courant*.

“A collection of essays by a scholar who teaches philosophy on the basis of a sympathetic knowledge of anthropology and folkways rather than as an extension of technical epistemology.”—*Journal of Religion*.

---

ORDER BLANK

Open Court Publishing Co.,  
122 So. Michigan Ave., Chicago.

Enclose check for \$.....

Name.....

Address.....

.....

# Evolutionary Naturalism

BY

ROY WOOD SELLARS, Ph. D.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

350 pp., Cloth, Price \$2.50

"The aim of the present investigation is to work out in a systematic fashion the possibility of an adequate naturalism. Evolutionary Naturalism does not sink man back into nature; it acknowledges all that is unique in him and vibrates as sensitively as idealism to his aspirations and passions. But the naturalist is skeptical of any central, brooding will which has planned it all. The Good is not the sun of things from which the world of things get their warmth and inspiration. The cosmos is and has its determinate nature. As man values himself and his works, he may rightly assign value to the universe which is made of stuff which has the potential power to raise itself to self-consciousness in him."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Let man place his hope in those powers which raise him above the level of the ordinary causal nexus. It is in himself that he must trust. If his foolishness and his passions exceed his sanity and intelligence, he will make shipwreck of his opportunity."

**THE OPEN COURT PUBLISHING COMPANY**

122 SOUTH MICHIGAN AVENUE

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

# A Christian's Appreciation of Other Faiths

By

REV. GILBERT REID, D. D.

Author of China at a Glance  
China Captive or Free, Etc.

Cloth, \$2.50

Pages 360

Dr. Reid is the Director of the International Institute of Shanghai, China, where he was established before and during the Great World War. His social and political relations with the Orient during the trying period of China's neutrality created in him a spirit of international understanding which broke down all sense of separateness in human life, particularly in spiritual matters. His book is inspiring to every sincere student of the science of religion and will do much to establish the new order of human fellowship.

Order through any book dealer.

**OPEN COURT PUBLISHING COMPANY**

122 SOUTH MICHIGAN AVENUE

CHICAGO

# FIRST COURSE IN STATISTICS

BY

D. CARADOG JONES. M.A., F.S.S.  
FORMERLY LECTURER IN MATHEMATICS  
AT DURHAM UNIVERSITY

Price, Cloth \$3.75

The fundamental importance of the right use of Statistics is becoming increasingly evident on all sides of life, social and commercial, political and economic. A study of this book should enable the reader to discriminate between the masses of valuable and worthless figures published, and to use what is of value intelligently. It is meant to serve as an introduction to the more serious study of the theory provided by other works.

## PRESS NOTES

This is an excellent "first course" to place in the hands of a mathematical student who wishes to develop his work on the statistical side or is interested in probability and has an eye to research on the mathematics of the subject. As the book is one of Bell's Mathematical Series (Advanced Section), it is natural that the subject should be approached in this way, but its use will be wider than that indicated, because it will make a good second course for a person doing statistical work in practice if one of the elementary books on the subject has been read first, and it can be used for revision purposes by those teaching the subject who prefer to give one of the well-known existing textbooks to their pupils in the first instance.—*Mathematical Gazette*.

This is an admirable introduction to one of the most important of subjects. Statistics, it is safe to say, were never more used, nor less understood, than they are today.—Mr. Jones has done his work well. He explains the special terminology of the subject clearly, and deals squarely with all the difficulties. We trust his valuable book will have a very large circulation. It deserves it.—*Scottish Educational Journal*.

Persons interested in statistics—and the number of such is increasing daily—will find in this volume a very compact, clear and sufficiently complete account of the mathematical machinery employed in analyzing raw statistical material and in deducing general statements regarding the characteristics—these pages offer an excellent introduction to the works of Pearson, Yule, Bowley, Edgworth, and the other pioneers of this branch of science.—*Journal of Education*.

---

OPEN COURT PUBLISHING COMPANY

CHICAGO

LONDON

# Books by Dr. Paul Carus

- THE GOSPEL OF BUDDHA. According to Old Records. Edition De Luxe enlarged and revised. Illustrated in old Buddhist Style by O. Kopetsky. Boards \$3.00. German edition, \$5.00.
- T'AI SHANG KAN YING P'IEN. Treatise of the Exalted One on response and retribution. Boards 75c.
- YIN CHIH WEN. The tract of the Quiet Way. With extracts from the Chinese Commentary. Boards 25c.
- NIRVANA, a Story of Buddhist Psychology. Illustrated by Kwason Suzuki. Cloth 60c.
- AMITABHA, a Story of Buddhist Theology. Boards 50c.
- THE CROWN OF THORNS. A Story of the time of Christ. Illustrated. Cloth 75c.
- EROS AND PSYCHE. A Fairy-tale of Ancient Greece, retold after Apuleius. Illustrated. Cloth \$1.50.
- FRIEDRICH SCHILLER. A sketch of his life and an appreciation of his poetry. Profusely illustrated. Boards 75c.
- THE STORY OF SAMSON. And its place in the religious development of mankind. Illustrated. Boards \$1.00.
- CHINESE THOUGHT. An exposition of the main characteristic features of the Chinese world-conception. Illustrated. Boards \$1.00.
- THE BRIDE OF CHRIST. A study in Christian legend lore. Illustrated. Cloth 75c.
- ANGELUS SILESIUS. A selection from the rhymes of a German Mystic. Translated in the original meter. Cloth \$1.00.
- TRUTH AND OTHER POEMS. Truth; Time; Love; De Rerum Natura; Death. Cloth \$1.00.
- GOETHE. With special consideration of his philosophy. Profusely illustrated. Cloth \$3.00.
- THE VENUS OF MILO. An archeological study of the goddess of womanhood. Illustrated. Cloth \$1.00.
- VIRGIL'S PROPHECY ON THE SAVIOUR'S BIRTH. Boards 50c.

*Send for a complete list of our publications.*

**THE OPEN COURT PUBLISHING COMPANY**

122 South Michigan Avenue

Chicago, Illinois

JUST PUBLISHED

# A Theory of Natural Philosophy

---

*Put Forward and Explained by Roger Joseph Boscovich, S. J. Latin-English Edition translated by J. M. Child, University of Manchester, England, from the text of the first Venetian edition published under the personal supervision of the author in 1763.*

With a short life of Boscovitch by Dr. Branislav Petronievic, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Belgrade.

“The most important of the assumptions in this work is that of Continuity as enunciated by Leibniz. This doctrine may be stated briefly as ‘Everything happens by degrees,’ or as Boscovich says, ‘Nothing happens per saltum.’”

The second assumption is the doctrine of Impenetrability..... His material points have absolutely no magnitude; they are Euclidian points having no parts..... The acceptance of this axiom by Boscovich is purely theoretical: in fact, it constitutes practically the whole of the theory of Boscovich.

Boscovich claims that he has reduced all the principles of Newton to a single principle—namely that given by his “Law of Forces.”

This edition of the book was paid for mainly by the Government of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slavenes and the subsidiary expenses by private subscription of certain Jugo-Slavs interested in its publication. The Slav world has to its credit such names as Copernicus, Lobachevski, Mendeljev and Boscovich.

Large quarto                      465 pages  
Cloth, Price \$20.00

**THE OPEN COURT PUBLISHING COMPANY**

**CHICAGO**

**LONDON**

# The Philosophical Writings of Richard Burthogge

Edited with Introductions and Notes by

**MARGARET W. LANDES**

Wellesley College

*Pages, 245*

*Cloth, \$2.00*

**T**HE re-discovery of a seventeenth-century English philosopher proves the maxim that merit is not often recognized in a scholar's own day not only because his teaching is premature but also because it is so pervaded by the dominating thought of the time that its element of originality is lost.

Burthogge's theory of knowledge is his most important philosophical teaching. His doctrine of the superiority of mind over matter is about the same as that taught by More and by Cudworth. However far from holding that sense is a hindrance to knowledge, Burthogge teaches, like Kant, that it is one of the only two sources of knowledge.

This volume is the third contribution to the study of seventeenth and eighteenth-century English philosophical texts by graduate students of Wellesley College.

---

**THE OPEN COURT PUBLISHING COMPANY**

122 SOUTH MICHIGAN AVENUE

CHICAGO

ILLINOIS

## Saccheri's Euclides Vindicatus

Edited and translated by

**GEORGE BRUCE HALSTED**

Latin-English edition of the first non-Euclidean Geometry published in Milan, 1733.

*Pages, 280*

*Cloth, \$2.00*

A geometric endeavor in which are established the foundation principles of universal geometry, with special reference to Euclid's Parallel Postulate.

---

**THE OPEN COURT PUBLISHING COMPANY**

122 SOUTH MICHIGAN AVENUE

CHICAGO

ILLINOIS

## THE APOCRYPHAL NEW TESTAMENT

Being the APOCRYPHAL GOSPELS, ACTS, EPISTLES, and  
APOCALYPSES with other narratives and fragments  
newly translated

*By Montague Rhodes James*

The first book to supply the English reader with a comprehensive view of the apocryphal literature connected with the New Testament. It contains fresh translations of all the important texts, and makes available the results of recent researches into their origin, history, and value. "Upon Christian Literature and Art—in other words, upon the imagination of all Christendom—these books have had an immense influence. They have left a mark upon our beliefs, our poetry, our romance, our sculpture, and our painting, of which few realize the extent and depth."

Net, \$3.50

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

*American Branch*

35 West 32nd Street

NEW YORK CITY

## WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO READ FOR YOURSELF *in English, these till now inaccessible Sources?*

By KENNETH SYLVAN GUTHRIE

- PYTHAGORAS**—Sage and Philosopher. Complete Text of Himself and Disciples.....\$ 5.00
- PLOTINUS**—The Last Light of Greece. Focussing Plato into Theology. Complete Translation, Explanations. 4 Vols..\$12.00
- ZOROASTER**—His GATHAS, or Hymns. Transliterated Text, Translation, Vocabulary, Explanation. Discovery that they are a collation of Twin Biographies.....\$ 5.00
- NUMENIUS**—Source of Plotinus, Father of Comparative Religion. Text, Translation, Explanation.....\$ 2.00
- PHILO JUDAEUS**—Mystical Interpreter of Moses. Complete Digest .....\$ 2.00
- SPIRITUAL MESSAGE OF LITERATURE**—First Complete Manual of Comparative Literature, with Courses of Reading for Study or Clubs.....\$ 2.50

THE OPEN COURT PUBLISHING COMPANY  
122 S. Michigan Ave. CHICAGO

*Publishes:* WILLIAMS & NORGATE, London—WILLIAMS & WILKINS CO.,  
Baltimore—FELIX ALCAN, Paris—NICOLA ZANICHELLI, Bologna—  
RUIZ HERMANOS, Madrid—RENASCENCA PORTUGUESA, Porto  
—THE MARUZEN COMPANY, Tokyo.

# “SCIENTIA”

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW OF SCIENTIFIC SYNTHESIS

*Published every month (each number containing 100 to 120 pages)*

Editor: EUGENIO RIGNANO

**IS THE ONLY REVIEW** the contributors to which are really international.

**IS THE ONLY REVIEW** that has a really world-wide circulation.

**IS THE ONLY REVIEW** of scientific synthesis and unification that deals with the fundamental questions of all sciences: the history of the sciences, mathematics, astronomy, geology, physics, chemistry, biology, psychology and sociology.

**IS THE ONLY REVIEW** of general science that by its articles on statistics, demography, ethnography, economics, law, history of religions and sociology in general—all of a general, summary and synthetical character—makes itself a necessity to all thorough students of the social sciences.

**IS THE ONLY REVIEW** that among its contributors can boast of the most illustrious men of science in the whole world. A list of more than 350 of these is given in each number.

The articles are published in the language of their authors, and every number has a supplement containing the French translation of all the articles that are not French. The review is thus completely accessible to those who know only French. (Write for a gratis specimen number to the General Secretary of “Scientia,” Milan, sending 1 sh. in stamps of your country, merely to cover postal expenses).

**SUBSCRIPTION:** Sh. 40; \$10, post free **Office:** Via A. Bertani, 14 - Milan (26  
*General Secretary:* Dr. PAOLO BONETTI.

# SCIENCE PROGRESS

A QUARTERLY REVIEW OF SCIENTIFIC  
THOUGHT, WORK, AND AFFAIRS

Edited by Lieut.-Col. Sir RONALD ROSS

K.C.B., K.C.M.G., F.R.S., N.L., D.Sc., LL.D., M.D., F.R.C.S.

*Published at the beginning of JANUARY, APRIL, JULY, OCTOBER*

*Each number consists of about 192 pages, contributed by authorities in their respective subjects. Illustrated. 6s. net. Annual Subscription, including postage, 25s. 6d.*

SCIENCE PROGRESS owes its origin to an endeavor to found a scientific journal containing original papers and summaries of the present state of knowledge in all branches of science. The necessity for such a journal is to be found in the fact that, with the specialization which necessarily accompanies the modern development of scientific thought and work, it is increasingly difficult for even the professional man of science to keep in touch with the trend of thought and the progress achieved in subjects other than those in which his immediate interests lie. This difficulty is felt by teachers and students in colleges and schools, and by the general educated public interested in scientific questions. SCIENCE PROGRESS claims to have filled this want.

JOHN MURRAY

Albemarle Street

London, W. 1