

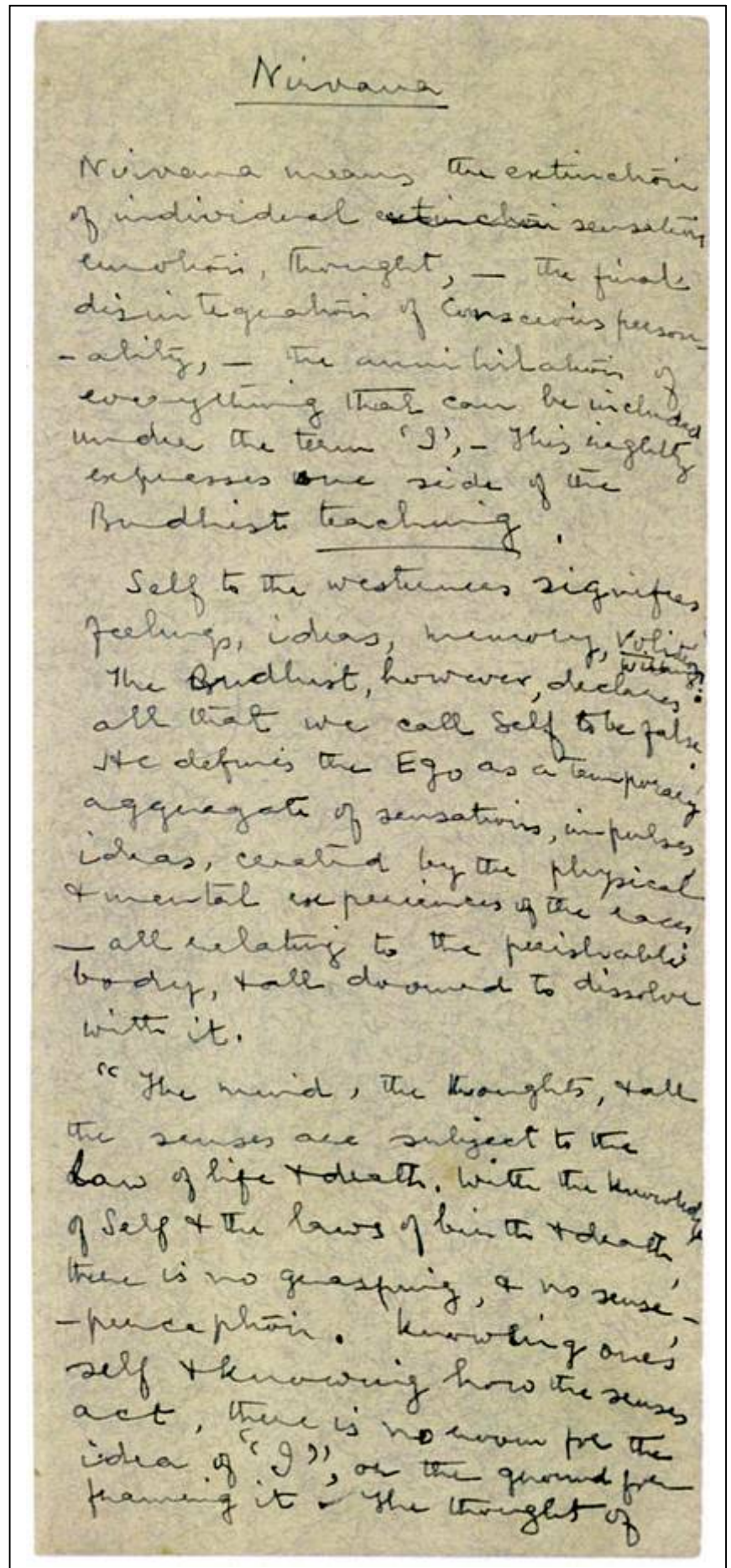
CORRECTION: These materials were gathered from a collection of hundreds of pages of unidentified writings and were previously and mistakenly described as *an unpublished work in progress* (which perhaps they were). Instead these pages are hand written excerpts from "Chapter Nine: Nirvana - A Study in Synthetic Buddhism" of the book "Gleanings in Buddha-Fields" by Lafcadio Hearn. The book is available in its entirety at various sites on the internet. Sincere apologies for not properly attributing these materials and the confusion it may have caused.

Nirvana

Nirvana means the extinction of individual sensation, emotion, thought, - the final disintegration of conscious personality, - the annihilation of everything that can be included under the term 'I' - This rightly expresses one side of the Buddhist teaching.

Self to the westerners signifies feelings, ideas, memory, volition, will. The Buddhist, however, declares all that we call Self to be false. He defines the Ego as a temporary aggregate of sensations, impulses, ideas, created by the physical + mental experiences of the races - all relating to the perishable body, + all doomed to dissolve with it.

"The mind, the thoughts + all the senses are subject to the law of life + death. With the knowledge of Self + the laws of birth + death there is no grasping, + no sense-perception. Knowing one's self + knowing how the senses act, there is no room for the idea of "I", or the ground for framing it. The thought of



Nirvana

„Self” gives rise to all sorrows
binding the world as with fetters
but having found there is no
‘I’, that can be bound, then all
these bonds are severed.”

From ‘Fo-Sho-Hing-Tsan King

The above text suggests very
plainly that consciousness is
not the Real Self, + that the mind
dies with the body.

We find therein a doctrine of
rebirth; but the existence of a
soul is denied. We are told
that the misfortunes of this life
are punishments of faults
committed in a previous life.
Yet personal transmigration
does not take place. We
find the statement that beings
are re-individualized; yet
both individuality + personality
are called illusions. How
can we reconcile the following
quotation from the first volume
of “The questions of King Milinda”

“The King said ‘Nagasena, is there
any one who after is not re-
individualised?’ Nagasena
answered ‘A sinful being is
re-individualised; a sinless one
is not.’ p - 50 -

‘Is there such a thing as the soul?’

‘There is no such thing as soul’ (p - 86-89)

(p. III- In the highest sense, O King
there is no such thing.

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Nirvana (contd) (2)

'Is there any being, Nagasena, who transmigrates from this body to another' - 'No, there is not.' p 112.

'Where there is no transmigration, Nagasena, can there be rebirth?'

"Yes, there can."

Does he, Nagasena, who is about to be reborn, know that he will be reborn?" Yes, he knows it, O King (p -113).

The Sutra of the Great Decease furnishes an account of the Eight Stages of Deliverance leading to Nirvana, - the process of absolute annihilation.

In 1st stage - one retains the idea of form - subjective + objective

" 2nd stage - he loses the subjective idea of form, + views forms as external phenomena only.

" 3rd stage the sense of the approaching perception of larger truth comes to him -

" 4th stage he passes beyond all ideas of form, ideas of existence + ideas of distinction, + thus remains where only the idea of infinite space,

" 5th stage - the idea of infinite space vanishes, + the thought comes, It is all infinite reason.

" 6th stage - the thought comes 'Nothing at all exists'.

" 7th stage - the idea of nothingness itself vanishes.

" 8th stage - all sensations + ideas cease

Nirvana (contd) (2)

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Nirvana 2, 2

to exist, And after this comes
Nirvana.

Illusion produces action of karma;
karma, self-consciousness; self-
-consciousness, individuality;
Individuality, the senses; the senses,
contact; contact, feeling; feeling,
desire; desire, union; union,
conception; Conception, birth;
birth, sorrow + decrepitude +
Death;

By the Cessation of contact
feeling is destroyed; by that of
feeling, individuality; + by that
of individuality, self-consciousness.

In Buddhist philosophy there
is no personal transmigration
+ no individual permanent soul.

"O Bhagvat, the idea of a self is
no idea; and the idea of a being
or a living person, or a person,
is no idea. And why? Because
the blessed Budhas are freed from
all ideas -" The Diamond Cutter

The acts + thoughts are forces
integrating themselves into material
+ mental phenomena, - into what
we call objective + subjective appear-
-ances -

"The aggregate actions of all
sentient beings give birth to the

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Nirvana (contd)

(3)

varieties of mountains, rivers, countries, etc. Their eyes, nostrils, ears, tongues, bodies – as well as their gardens, woods, farms, residences, servants, + maids, - men imagine to be their own possessions, but they are, in truth, only results produced by innumerable actions."

'Kuroda, outlines of
the Mahayana'

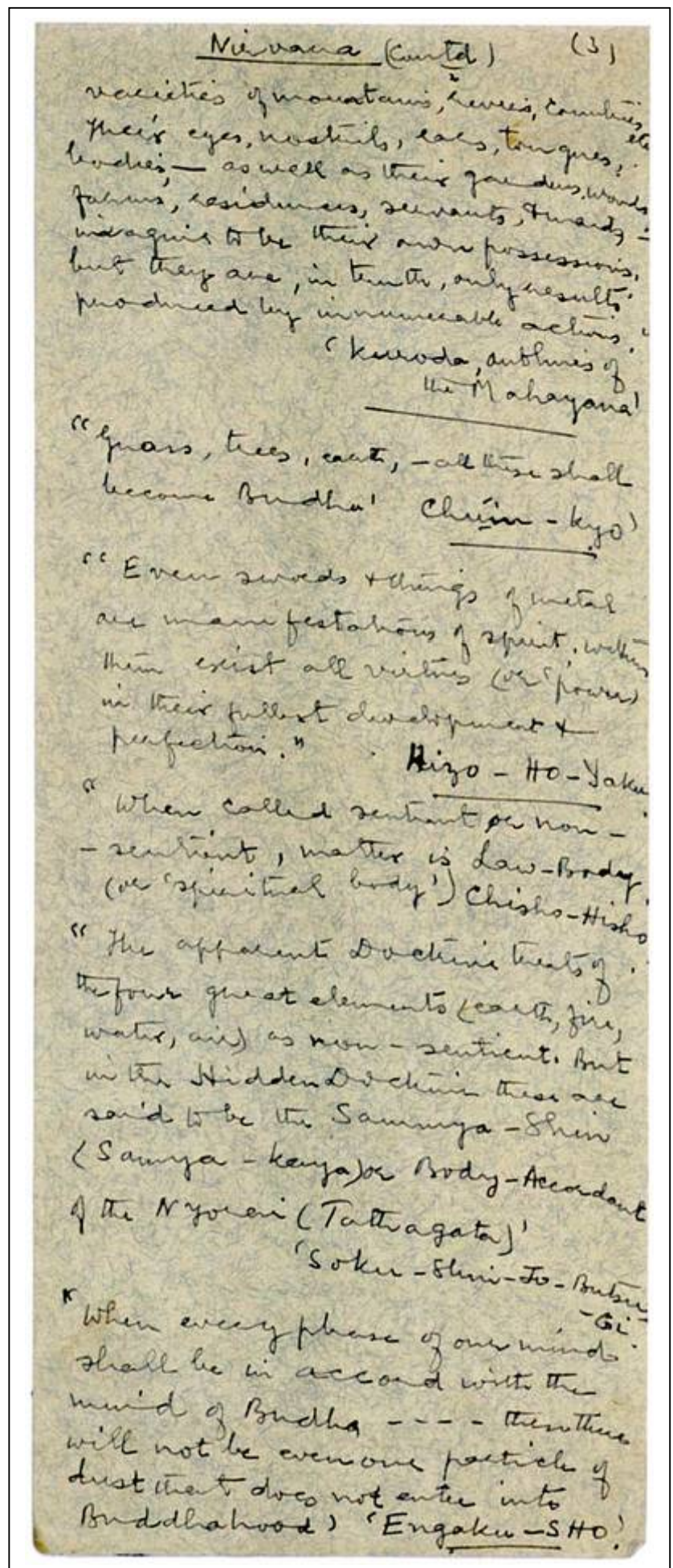
"Grass, trees, earth, - all these shall
become Budha" 'Chuin-kyo'

"Even swords + things of metal
are manifestations of spirit; within
them exist all virtues (or power)
in their fullest development +
perfection." Hizo-Ho-Yaku.

"When called sentient or non-
-sentient, matter is Law-Body",
(or 'spiritual body') Chisho-Hisho

"The apparent Doctrine treats of
the four great elements (earth, fire,
water, air) as non-sentient. But
in the Hidden Doctrine these are
said to be the Sammya-Shin
(Samya-Kenja) or Body-Accordant
of the Nyorai (Tathagata)
(Soku-Shin-lo-Bubu-Gi)

"When every phase of our mind
shall be in accord with the
mind of Budha ---- then there
will not be even one particle of
dust that does not enter into
Buddhahood" 'Engaku-SHO'.

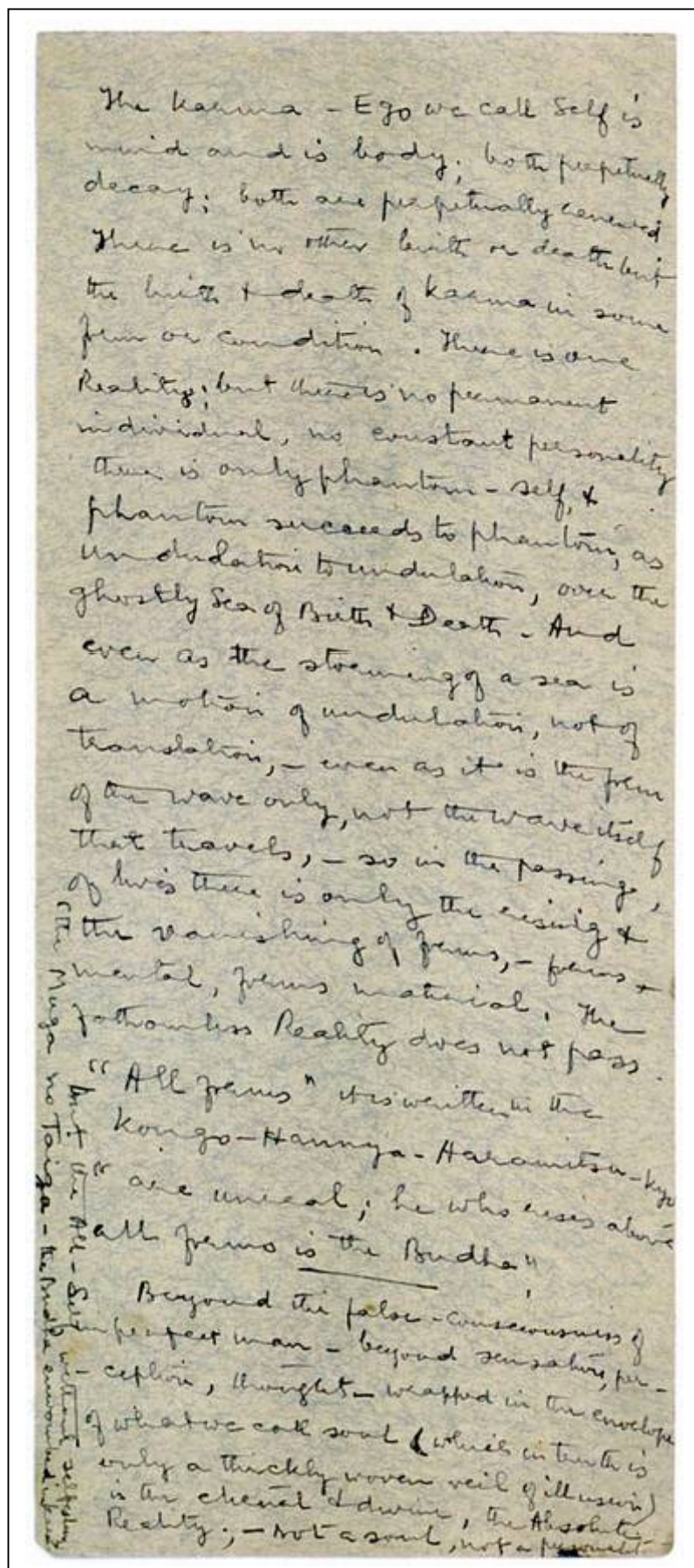


Nirvana 3, 2

The Karma – Ego we call Self is mind and is body; both perpetually decay; both are perpetually renewed. There is no other birth or death but the birth + death of karma in some form or condition. There is one Reality; but there is no permanent individual, no constant personality there is only phantom-self, + phantom succeeds to phantom, as undulation to undulation, over the ghostly Sea of Birth + Death. And even as the storming of a sea is a motion of undulation, not of translation, - even as it is the form of the wave only, not the wave itself that travels, - so in the passing of lives there is only the existing + the vanishing of forms, - forms mental, forms material, the fathomless Reality does not pass. "All forms" it is written in the Kongo-Hannya-Haramitsu-Kyo "are unreal; he who rises above all forms is the Budha."

Beyond the false consciousness of imperfect man – beyond sensation, perception, thought – wrapped in the envelope of what we call soul (which in truth is only a thickly woven veil of illusion) is the eternal + divine, the Absolute Reality; not a soul, not a personality

but the All-Self without selfishness
 'the Muga no Taiga –
 the Budha enwombed in karma

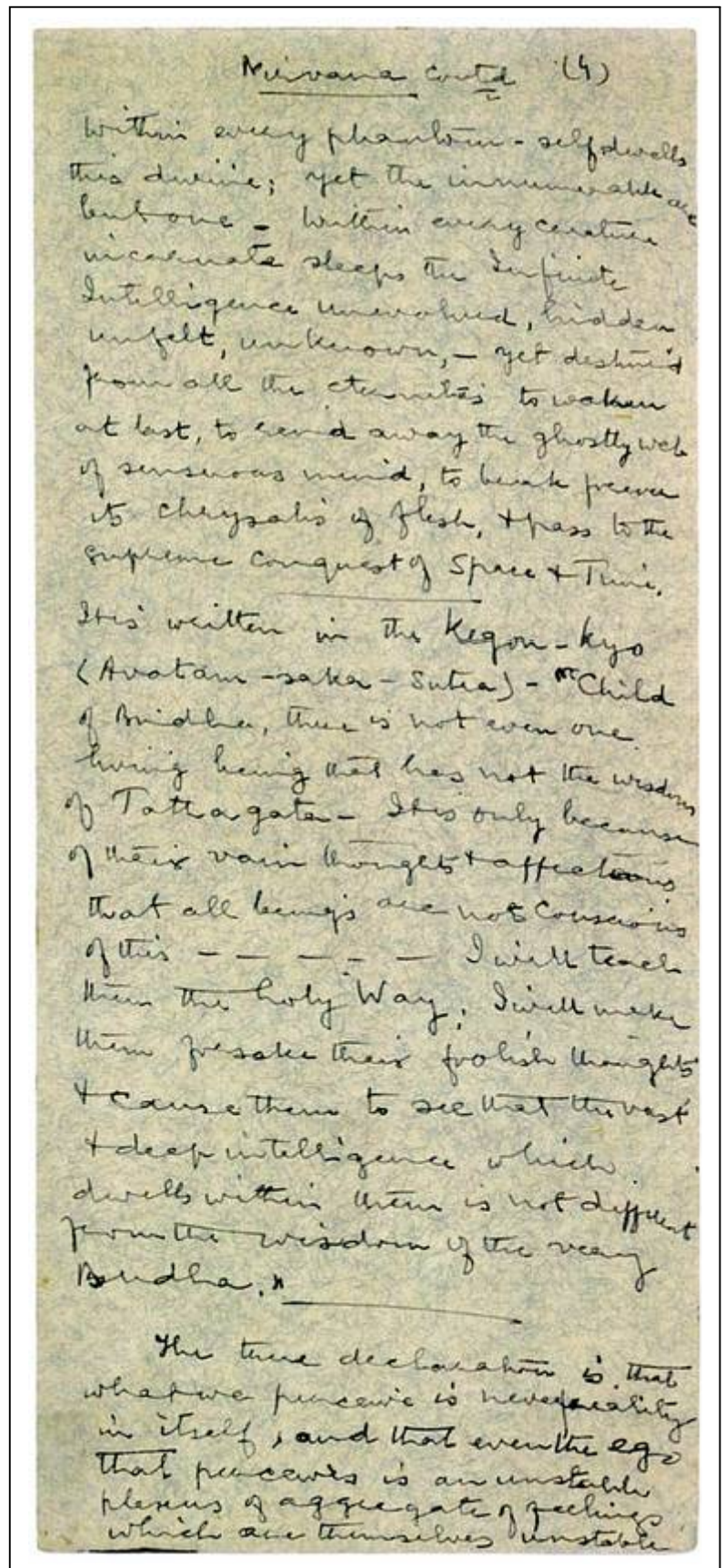


Nirvana contd (4)

Within every phantom-self dwells this divine; yet the innumerable are but one – within every creature incarnate sleeps the Infinite Intelligence unevolved, hidden unfelt, unknown, – yet destined from all the eternities to waken at last, to rend away the ghostly web of sensuous mind, to break forever its chrysalis of flesh, + pass to the supreme conquest of Space + Time.

It is written in the Kegon-kyo (Avatam-saka-Sutra) - „Child of Budha, there is not even one living being that has not the wisdom of Tathagata – It is only because of their vain thoughts + affections that all beings are not conscious of this - - - - - I will teach them the holy Way; I will make them forsake their foolish thoughts + cause them to see that the vast + deep intelligence which dwells within them is not different from the wisdom of the very Budha.“

The true declaration is that what we perceive is never reality in itself, and that even the ego that perceives is an unstable plexus of aggregate of feelings which are themselves unstable



Nirvana 4,2

and in the nature of illusions.
 This position is scientifically
 strong – perhaps impregnable.
 Of substance in itself we certainly
 know nothing; we are conscious
 of the universe as a vast play of
 forces only:

The test of reality is persistence
 + the Buddhist, finding in the
 visible universe only a perpetual
 flux of phenomena, declares the
 material aggregate unreal because
 non-persistent, - unreal, at least
 as a bubble, a cloud, or a mirage.

Again, relation is the universal
 form of thought; but since relation
 is impermanent, how can thought
 be persistent? Judged from
 these points of view, Buddhist
 doctrine is not Anti-Realism
 but a veritable Transfigured
 Realism, finding just expression
 in the exact words of Herbert
 Spencer – “Every feeling + thought
 being but transitory; - an entire
 life made up of such feelings
 + thoughts being also but transitory
 nay, the objects amid which
 life is passed, though less transitory
 being severally in the course of losing
 their individualities, whether
 quickly or slowly, - We learn
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Nirvana contd. (5)

Likewise, the teaching of Buddhism that what we call Self is an impermanent aggregate, - a sensuous illusion, - will prove, if patiently analysed - Mind, as known to the scientific psychologist, is composed of feelings + the relations between feelings; and feelings are composed of units of simple sensation which are physiologically coincident with minute nervous shocks. All the sense-organs are fundamentally alike being evolutionary modifications of the same morphological elements - and all the senses are modifications of touch. Or, to use the simplest possible language, the organs of sense - sight, smell, taste, even hearing - have been alike developed from the skin! Even the brain itself, is, at its first beginning, merely an infolding of the epidermic layer and thought physiologically + evolutionally, is thus a modification of touch. Certain vibrations, acting through the visual apparatus, cause within the brain these motions which are followed by the sensations of light + colour; other vibrations

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acting upon the auditory mechanism
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- other vibrations, setting up changes
in specialized tissue, produce
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All our knowledge is derived
+ developed, directly or indirectly,
from physical sensation; -
from touch - of course this
is no ultimate explanation
because nobody can tell us
what feels the touch.

„Everything physical“ well said
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time metaphysical.“ But
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physical experiences of the race
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Nirvana contd. (6)

The striving for Nirvana is a struggle perpetual between false + true, light + darkness, the sensual + the super-sensual, + the ultimate victory can be gained only by the total decomposition of the mental and physical individuality. Not one conquest of self can suffice, millions of selves must be overcome.

X// But what is it that feels the phantom or the reality?

All phenomena of Self-Consciousness belong to the false self - but only as a physiologist might say that sensation is a product of sensiferous apparatus, which would not explain sensation. In Buddhism the only entity is the Absolute; + to that entity the false self stands in the relation of a medium through which light perception is deflected + distorted - in which + because of which, sentiency + impulse become possible. The unconditioned Absolute is above all relations. It has nothing of what we call pain or pleasure; it knows no difference of 'I' + 'Thou', - no distinction of place or time. But while conditioned by the illusion of personality, it is aware of pain or pleasure.

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Pleasures + pains + all the
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exists, + sentiency + desire, +
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of that sleep –

Here is a point at which
science + Buddhism diverge.
Modern psychology recog-
nises no feelings not evolutionally
developed through the experiences
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but Buddhism asserts the existence
of feelings which are immortal
and divine. It declares
that in this Karma State the
greater part of our sensations,
perceptions, ideas, thoughts,
are related only to the
phantom self; that our
mental life is little more than
a flow of feelings + desires belong-
-ing to selfishness; – that one loves
and hates, hopes + fears, pleasures
+ pains are illusions; but it also
declares there are higher feelings
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Nirvana cont. (7)

"Pleasures and pains have their origin from touch; when there is no touch, they do not arise;" Atthaka-vagga, II.

The purely unselfish feelings, impossible to grosser natures, being to the Absolute. In generous natures the divine becomes sentient, - quickens within the shell of illusion, as a child quickens in the womb (whence illusion itself is called The Womb of the Tathagata.) In yet higher natures the feelings which are not of self find room for powerful manifestation, - shine through the phantom - Ego as light through a vase. Such are purely unselfish love, larger than individual being - supreme compassion, perfect benevolence. They are not of man, but of the Budha within the man. And as these expand, all the feelings of self begin to thin + weaken - the condition of the Phantom - Ego simultaneously purifies; all those opacities which darkened the reality of Mind within the mirage of mind begin to illumine, + the sense of the infinite, like a thrilling light passes thus the dream of personality into the awakening divine.

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"To reach the state of the perfect and everlasting happiness is the highest Nirvana; for then all mental phenomena – such as desires, etc. – are annihilated. And as such mental phenomena are annihilated, then appears to the true nature of true mind with all its innumerable functions and miraculous actions."

'Kuroda, outlines
of the Mahayana'

As name + form, the false self dissolves, but its impulse live on and recombine; and the final destruction of these impulses – the total extinction of their ghostly vitality, - may require a protraction of effort through billions of centuries. Perpetually from the ashes of burnt-out passions subtler passions are born – from the graves of illusions new illusions arise. The most powerful of human passions is the last to yield; it persists far into superhuman conditions. Even when its grosser forms have passed away; its tendencies still lurk in those feelings originally derived from it or interwoven with it, - the sensation of beauty, for example, + the delight of the mind in graceful things. On earth these are classed among the higher feelings,

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Nirvana contd. (8)

But in a supra-mundane state their indulgence is fraught with peril; a touch or a look may cause the broken fetters of sensual bondage to reform. Beyond all worlds of sex there are strange zones in which thoughts + memories become tangible + visible objective facts, - in which emotional fancies are materialized, - in which the least unworthy wish may prove creative - throughout the greater part of this vast pilgrimage, and in all the zones of desire, the temptations increase according to the spiritual strength of existence. With every successive ascent there is a further expansion of the possibilities of enjoyment, an augmentation of power, a heightening of sensation, immense the reward of self-conquest: but whosoever strives for that reward strives for emptiness: One must not desire heaven as a state of pleasure; "Erroneous thoughts as to the joys of heaven are still entwined by the fast cords of lust. One must not wish to become god or an angel - etc. -

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'Non-existence is only the entrance to the Great Vehicle.'

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Nirvana 8, 2

'Nin mité, hôtoké' (see first the person, then preach the law) – is a Japanese proverb signifying that Buddhism should be taught according to the capacity of the pupil –

Higher Regions

The way of spiritual progress from the world of men up to Nirvana – rises from terrestrial conditions to other + superior worlds, - passing first through the Six Heavens of Desire (Yoku Ten), thence through the seventeen Heavens of Form (Shiki-kai) – and lastly through the Four Heavens of Formlessness (Inushiki-kai), beyond which lies Nirvana.

The requirements of physical life – the need of food, rest, + sexual relations – continue to be felt in the Heavens of Desire, - which would seem to be higher physical worlds rather than what we commonly understand by the expression 'heavens'.

Some Buddhist texts actually place them in remote constellations - declaring that the Path leads from star to star, from galaxy to galaxy, from universe to universe, up to the limit of Existence.

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Nirvana contd. (9)

Description of Regions

In the first heaven of this zone called Heaven of the Zone-kings (Shi-Tenno-Ten), life lasts 5 times longer than life on this earth according to no. of years, + each year there is equal to fifty terrestrial years. But its inhabitants eat + drink, + marry + give in marriage, - In the succeeding heaven (Sanjiu-San-Ten), the duration of life is doubled, while all other conditions are correspondingly improved; + the grosser forms of passion disappear. The union of the sexes persists - a simple embrace producing a new being,

In the third heaven (Emma-Ten) where longevity is again doubled, the slightest touch may create life.

In the fourth, or Heaven of contentment, (Tochita-Ten), longevity is further increased -

In the fifth, or Heaven of the Transmutation of Pleasure (Keraku-Ten) strange new powers are gained, subjective powers become changed at will into objective pleasures, thoughts as well as wishes become creative forces; and even the act of seeing may cause conception + birth.

In the sixth heaven: (Také-jazori-Ten) the powers obtained in the 5th heaven are further developed; + the subjective pleasures transmuted

Nirvana contd. (9)

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Nirvana 9, 2

into objective can be presented to others, or shared with others, - like material gifts. But the look of an instant, - one glance of the eye, - may generate a new karma.

The Yoku-kai are all heavens of sensuous life, - heavens such as might answer to the dreams of artists + lovers + poets. But those who are able to traverse them without falling - pass into the Supercasual Zone, first entering the Heavens of Luminous Observation of Existence + of Calm Meditation upon Existence (Ujin-ushi-shonyo, or kate-kwan)

- (3) (3) These are in number three - each higher than the preceding, and are named the Heaven of Sanctity, + the Heaven of Higher Sanctity, + the heaven of Great Sanctity. After these come the heavens of Non-Existence, + of Calm Meditation upon Non-Existence - (Mujin-munsho (3) Shoryo). These also are three + their names signify 'Lesser Light', xx Light Unfathomable, + Light || 'Making Sound' or 'Light Sonorous'. Here there is attained the highest degree of supersensuous joy possible to temporary conditions.

Above are the states

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Above are the states

[Nirvana 10, 1]

Planes contd.

(10)

- (3) named Riki-Shonyo, or the Heavens of the Meditation of the Abandonment of Joy. Their names in their ascending order are: - Lesser Purity, Purity unfathomable, + Purity Supreme. In them neither joy nor pain, nor forceful feeling or any sort exist. There is a mild negative pleasure only, - the pleasure of heavenly Equanimity.

- (8) Higher than these are the 8 spheres of calm meditation upon the Abandonment of all joy + pleasure, 17 ?? (Riki-raku-Shoryo). They are called the Cloudless, Holiness Manifest, Vast Results, Empty of Name, Void of Heat, Fair-appearing, Vision-Perfecting, + the Limit of Form. herein pleasure + pain, Name + Form, pass utterly away - But their remain ideas + thoughts.

He who can pass through these supersensual realms enters at once into the Mushiki-kai the spheres of Formlessness -

These are four.

In the first state all sense of individuality is lost; even the thought of name + form becomes extinct, and there survives only the idea of Infinite Space, or Emptiness. In the second state this idea of space vanishes, + its place is filled by the Idea of Infinite Reason. But this idea of reason is anthropomorphic, it is an illusion + it

Planes contd. (10)

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fades out in the third state, which is called the 'State-of-Nothing-to-take-hold-of' or Mu-sho-in-Sho-jo. Here is only the Idea of Infinite Nothingness. But even this condition has been reached by the aid of the personal mind. This action ceases; then the fourth state of Mushiki kai is reached, - the Hiso-hihiso-sho-, or the state of 'neither-namelessness-nor-not namelessness.' Something of personal mentality continues to float vaguely here - the very uttermost expiring vibration of karma, - the last vanishing cage of being. It melts; + the immeasurable revelation comes. The dreaming Buddha, freed from the last ghostly bond of Self, rises at once into the 'infinite bliss' of Nirvana.

But every being does not pass there: all the states above enumerated the power to rise swiftly or slowly, it depends on the acquisition of merit + the character of the karma to be overcome - some pass to Nirvana immediately after the present life; some after a single new birth; some after two or three births; while many rise directly from this world into one of the supersensuous Heavens - All such are called Cho - the Corpus of the whom the highest class reach Nirvana after death as man or women -

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Planes contd. (11)

There are two great divisions of Cho – the Fu-kwan, or never-returning ones, + the kwan, Returning ones, or revenants.

The first men at the origin of the world, were beings who had fallen from Kwo-on-Ten, or Heavens of Sonorous Light.

Three stages of attainment –

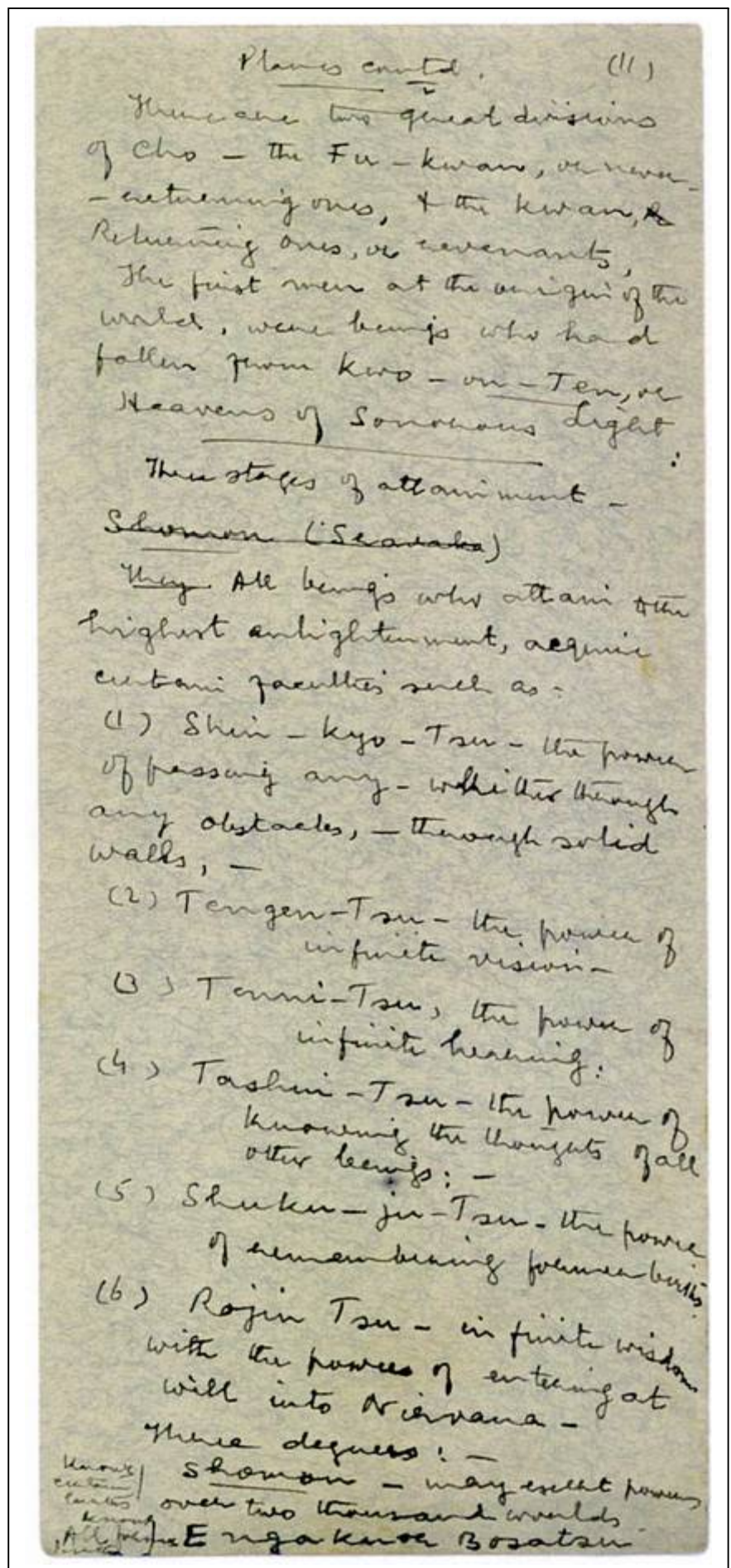
All beings who attain the highest enlightenment, acquire certain faculties such as:

- (1) Shin-Kyo-Tsu – the power of passing any whether through any obstacles, - through solid walls, -
- (2) Tengen-Tsu – the power of infinite vision –
- 3) Tenni-Tsu, the power of infinite hearing:
- (4) Tashin-Tsu – the power of knowing the thoughts of all other beings: -
- (5) Shuku-ju-Tsu – the power of remembering former births
- (6) Rojin Tsu – infinite wisdom with the power of entering at will into Nirvana –

Three degrees: -

Knows | Shomon – may exert powers
certain | over two thousand worlds.
Faculties | Engaku or Bosatsu

Knows
All former
Births



Nirvana 11, 2

(They are not capable of any serious error)
 all | over 3 thousand; but the
 past | powers of Buddahood extend
 + future | over the total cosmos.

The Supernatural Powers
 must never be used for personal
 pleasure, but only for the highest
 beneficence, - the propagating of
 doctrine, the saving of men.

Nirvana is no cessation, but
 an emancipation. It means
 only the passing of conditioned
 being into unconditioned being; -
 the fading of all mental + physical
 phantoms into the light of
 Formless Omnipotence + Omniscience.

The Buddhist doctrine of
 impermanency is the doctrine also
 of modern science - Huxley wrote
 „Natural knowledge tends more + more
 to the conclusion that all the 'choir
 of heaven + furniture of the earth' are
 the transitory forms of parcels of cosmic
 substance wending along the road
 of evolution from nebulous potentiality,
 - thus; endless growths of sun + planet
 + satellite, - thus: all varieties of matter,
 - thus; modes of being of which we
 neither have a conception nor are
 competent to form any, - back to the
 indefinable latency from which
 they arose. Thus the most obvious
 attribute of the cosmos is its
 impermanency. (Evolution + Ethics)

(They are not capable of any serious error)
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