

CHAPTER V.

DHYANA

(Meditation or Contemplation).

The Patriarch (one day) preached to the assembly as follows:—

In our system of meditation, it is, fundamentally, neither to dwell upon the mind (in contradistinction to the essence of mind) nor upon purity. Nor does it mean non-activity. As to dwelling upon the mind, the mind is primarily delusive; and when we realise that it is only a phantasm, there is no necessity to dwell upon it. As to dwelling upon purity, our nature is intrinsically pure; and so far as we get rid of all delusive idea, there will be nothing but purity in our nature, for it is the delusive idea that obscures Tathata (Suchness). If we direct our mind to dwell upon purity, we are only creating another delusion, the delusion of purity. Since delusion has no abiding place, it is delusive to dwell upon it. Purity has neither shape nor form; but some people go so far as to invent the 'Form of Purity', and treat it as a problem for solution. Holding such an opinion, these people are purity-ridden, and their essence of mind is thereby obscured.

Learned Audience, those who train themselves for 'Imperturbation' should see not, in their contact with all types of men, the fault of others. They should be indifferent to others' merit or demerit, good or evil. To take up such an attitude would be a case of 'Imperturbation of the essence of mind'. Learned Audience, a man unenlightened may be unperturbed physically; but as soon as he opens his mouth, he criticises others and talks about their merits or demerits, ability or weakness, good or evil: thus he deviates from the right course. On the other hand, to dwell upon our own mind or upon purity is also a stumbling-block in the Path.

The Patriarch once preached to the assembly as follows:—

Learned Audience, what is meditation (坐禪 to sit, to meditate)? In our school, 坐 (to sit) means to gain absolute freedom and to be mentally unperturbed under all outward circumstances—be they good or otherwise. 禪 (to meditate) means to realise inwardly the imperturbation of the essence of mind.

Learned Audience, what are Dhyana (meditation) and Samadhi (concentration or exalted ecstasy)? Dhyana means to be free from attachment to all outer objects and Samadhi means to attain inner peace. If we are attached to outer objects, our inner mind will be perturbed. When we are free from attachment to all outer objects, the mind will be in peace. Our essence of mind is intrinsically pure, and the reason why we are perturbed is simply because we allow ourselves to be carried away by the very circumstances we are under. He who is able to keep his mind unperturbed, irrespective of circumstances, has attained real Samadhi.

Learned Audience, to be free from attachment to all outer objects is Dhyana, and to attain inner peace is Samadhi. When we are in a position to deal with Dhyana and to keep our inner mind in Samadhi, then we are said to have attained Dhyana and Samadhi. The Bodhisattva Sila Sutra says, "Our essence of mind is intrinsically pure." Learned Audience, let us realise this for ourselves at all times (literally from one Ksana, momentary sensation, to another). Let us train ourselves, practise it by ourselves, and attain Buddhahood by our own effort.
