

from on high. Let us join our prayers with hers, and heap our gifts upon the altar ; for however much we give, the staunch hearts in the valleys of Piedmont are giving more.

A BUDDHIST DOCTRINE OF SALVATION BY FAITH.

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THE Buddhism of Gautama was atheistic. Such scholars as Monier Williams, Max Muller, Hardwick, Coppen and Edkins are agreed that the teachings of the canon adopted two hundred and fifty years after the Buddha's death discarded all divine help, and at least ignored a first cause. "Trust in thyself and in no other, God or man," was the word of the Indian saint to his disciples. Cotemporary and rival Brahmins charged him with atheistic teaching and influence. They claimed him as the ninth incarnation of Vishnu, on the theory that Vishnu, wishing to destroy certain demons, came in the form of Buddha in order to betray them into the fatal doctrines of atheism. Gautama also denied the permanent and distinct entity of the human soul. By a sifting process worthy of Herbert Spencer, he considered what we call the soul as only a succession of conscious experiences. In his view it is only the current of our thoughts and emotions as they pass. To regard this as a soul is an illusion similar to that of a boy who whirls a lighted stick and thinks he sees a ring of fire. There is no ring, but only a succession of points of light. It is not a soul, then, that passes over in transmigration.

Only the "kharma" or character remains at death, and that becomes the responsible inheritance of a new-born successor. There is no permanent being of any kind, but only a perpetual *becoming*. Everything is in a state of flux. There are ranks of intelligence superior to man, but they, too, are subject to the eternal round of life and death until Nirvana shall cut off the necessity of rebirth. Such was the early and canonical Buddhism. I propose to show how its subsequent evolution has been a complete revolution or reversal.

When Gautama died and became extinct, leaving as was believed an interval of four thousand years before another Buddha should appear, his disciples began to realize the cold and desolate logic of his teachings. They could not worship or pray, for there was no object of worship. The heavens were dark and the universe a profound abyss. The cheerless doctrine of Nirvana had practically no attraction ; what mankind longed for was a divine sympathizer and helper, and, in spite of its own canonical authorities, subsequent Buddhism has groped its way toward some such being.

It was understood as a deduction of the system that other beings destined to be future Buddhas were already in existence somewhere in the round of transmigration, and to these "Bodisats," as they were called, human expectation began to turn, and especially to the "Bodi-