

*benevolence. And having thus given without limit, he himself becomes partaker in that security, amity, benevolence. Secondly, the Ariyan disciple, having put away taking what is not given, wrong conduct in sense-desires, lying, and occasions for indulging in strong drinks, is opposed to these. Thus renouncing, bhikkhus, he gives to all beings without limit security, amity, goodwill. And so giving, he himself becomes partaker in that unlimited security, amity, goodwill. These, bhikkhus, are the five Great Dāna's. . . .*<sup>1</sup>

If the Suttanta says thus, then giving is a mental state.

[6] *Th.*—According to you, then, dāna is not something to be given. But was it not said by the Exalted One: ‘Take the case of one who gives food, drink, raiment, a carriage, a wreath, a perfume, ointment, a couch, a dwelling, means of lighting’?<sup>2</sup> Surely then dāna is a thing to be given.

[7] *R. S.*—You say then that giving is a thing to be given. Now you do not admit that the thing to be given has as its direct result something desirable, agreeable, pleasant, felicitous, a happy capacity and consequence. On the other hand, the Exalted One said that dāna had such a result. Now you say that a robe, alms-food, and the other requisites are dāna. Hence it follows that a robe and so on has such a result, which cannot be. Therefore it is wrong to say that dāna is a thing to be given.

### 5. Of Utility.

*Controverted Point.*—That merit increases with utility.

*From the Commentary.*—Some, like the Rājagirikas, Siddhattikas, and Sammitiyas, from thoughtlessly interpreting such Suttas as ‘merit day and night is always growing,’ and ‘the robe, bhikkhus, which a bhikkhu enjoying the use of . . .,’<sup>3</sup> hold that there is such a thing as merit achieved by utility.

<sup>1</sup> *Anguttara-Nik.*, iv. 246.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, iv. 239. This is a ‘stock’ catalogue; cf. *op. cit.*, i. 107; ii. 85, 203; *Dīgha-Nik.*, iii. 259.

<sup>3</sup> See below.

[1] *Th.*—By your thesis you imply [that other mental experiences are increasing quantities :—] that contact, feeling, perception, volition, cognition, faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, understanding, can each keep growing<sup>1</sup>—which you deny. . . . And that merit keeps growing just as a creeper, a liana, a tree, grass, or brushwood grows—which you deny. . . .

[2] Again, in affirming it, do you also admit that a giver acquires merit when, having given his gift, he does not consider it further?<sup>2</sup> You do. But this is to imply, in other words, that merit accrues to one who does not consciously advert to, reflect upon, consider, attend to, deliberate, anticipate, aim. Is not the opposite the case? You assent. Then it is wrong to say that merit goes on growing with utility.

[3] Again, in affirming your thesis, do you also admit that a giver may acquire merit who, on giving a gift, entertains sensual, malevolent, or cruel thoughts? 'Yes,' you reply. Then have we here a combination of two contacts, feelings, perceptions, volitions, cognitions? No? Think! 'Yes,' you now reply.<sup>3</sup> Then you are maintaining that good and bad, guilty and innocent, base and noble, sinister and clear mental states, can co-exist side by side [at the same moment]. You deny. Think again! 'Yes,' you now reply.<sup>4</sup> But was it not said by the Exalted One: '*There are four things, bhikkhus, very far away one*

<sup>1</sup> Merit (puñña) is an abstract notion or human estimate of the balance of anyone's chances of a surplus over unhappy experience in the future in consequence of deeds done now. Thus, for both estimator and the subject of the estimate, it is nothing else than a series of mental phenomena, and should be considered as such, and not as some external and mystic entity or continuum.

<sup>2</sup> Na samannāharati, *i.e.*, the 'adverting,' having arrested the subconscious life-flux, does not 'smoothly conduct' the will-to-give (dāna-cetanā) along its own path.—*Comy.*

<sup>3</sup> He now assents, because he includes the consciousnesses of both donor and donee.—*Comy.*

<sup>4</sup> He now assents, because by his opinion that which is derived from sustained enjoyment is not a conscious phenomenon.—*Comy.*

from the other. What are the four? The sky and the earth, the hither and the yonder shore of the ocean, whence the sun rises and where he sinks, the Norm of the good and that of the wicked.

‘Far is the sky and far from it the earth lies;  
Far too the further shore of ocean, say they;  
And whence the radiant sun at day-dawn rises,  
And where he goes, lightmaker, to his ending.  
Yet further than all these asunder, say they,  
The Norm of good men’s lives and that of bad men.  
Co-operation of the good can never perish,  
True to its nature while it yet endureth.  
But swift dissolves the intercourse of bad men.  
Hence far is Norm of good from that of evil’?<sup>1</sup>

Therefore it is wrong to say that good and bad, etc., mental states, co-exist side by side in anyone.

[4] R. S. S.—But, if your rejection is right, was it not said by the Exalted One:

‘Planters of groves and shady woods,  
And they who build causeway and bridge,  
And wells construct and watering-sheds,  
And to the homeless dwellings give:—  
Of such as these by day and night  
For ever doth the merit grow.  
In righteousness and virtue’s might  
Such folk from earth to heaven go’?<sup>2</sup>

Therefore merit goes on growing with utility.

[5] Again, was it not said by the Exalted One:  
‘Bhikkhus, there are these four streams of merit and of good, sources of happiness and blissful fate, resulting in happiness, conducive to heavenly life, conducive to that which is desirable, agreeable, and sweet, to welfare and happiness. What are the four? When a bhikkhu, enjoying the use of robes, or of alms-food, or of shelter, or of medical requisites

<sup>1</sup> *Anguttara-Nik.*, ii. 50.

<sup>2</sup> *Sajyutta-Nik.*, i. 33.

given him, is able to attain to and dwell in infinite concentration of mind, to the giver each of these four gifts is an infinite stream of merit and of good . . . ?<sup>1</sup>

Therefore merit goes on growing with utility.

[6] *Th.*—You still affirm your proposition. Now, does a giver who has given a gift acquire merit when the acceptor, having accepted the gift, throws it away, abandons it? ‘Yes,’ you reply. But you cannot possibly say of that giver’s merit that it goes on growing.

[7] Or if, when the gift is accepted, kings, or thieves, take it away again, or fire burns it, or water bears it away, or hostile heirs take it back? The same holds good. Hence merit is not dependent upon utility.

### 6. *Of the Effect of Gifts given in this Life.*

*Controverted Point.*—That what is given here sustains elsewhere.

*From the Commentary.*—It is held by some—for instance, the Rājagīriyas and Siddhatthikas—that because of the Word :

‘By what is given here below

They share who, dead, ’mong Petas go,’<sup>2</sup>

gifts of robes, etc., cause life to be sustained there.

[1] *Th.*—Your proposition commits you to the further statement that robes, alms-food, lodging, medical requisites for ailments, hard food, soft food, and drink, given in this life, are enjoyed in the after-life—which you deny. . . . And it commits you further to this [heterodox position], that one person is the agent for another; that the happiness or ill we feel is wrought by others; that one acts, another experiences the consequences<sup>3</sup>—which you deny. . . .

<sup>1</sup> *Anguttara-Nik.*, ii. 54.

<sup>2</sup> See next page.

<sup>3</sup> *Saṅyutta-Nik.*, ii. 75 f. Judging by the Commentary on the verses just below [§ 3], gifts to the memory of dead kinsfolk were made to the Order, the donor specifying that he made them in the name of