

BUDDHISM

The Buddhist religion teaches that truth and virtue must be realised through spiritual evolution. They cannot be acquired by merely assenting to creeds or believing doctrines. The following ideas which are widely held among Buddhists are offered solely as helpful signposts set up by those who have travelled the Way before us.

I

We think that the universes originate, develop, change and perish through the operation of natural and inherent causes, and that this series of cycles has neither beginning nor end.

II

We think that man is not a mixture of physical form and everlasting spiritual substance, but a complex of processes which persists as long as it functions, just as a fire lives only while the fuel lasts.

III

We think that at death the vital forces cohere and, after an interval, precipitate again at biological birth.

IV

We think that the unenlightened life is suffering, transitory, and empty, and we heartily desire to be free from it.

V

We think that sin is thought, speech and actions which spring from wrong views and evil passions, and which obstruct compassion and insight.

VI

We think that evil deeds are to be avoided and good deeds are to be done, not through fear of punishment or through desire for reward, but rather through understanding and compassion, and through unselfish devotion to virtue.

VII

We think that the object of living is not the pursuit of wealth and pleasure, but the increase of virtue and wisdom.

VIII

We think that when the clouds of passion and ignorance are dispelled, the sun of insight will illuminate this world, and will reveal that its true nature is Buddhahood.

IX

We think that Buddhahood is perfect wisdom, perfect compassion, perfect power of accomplishing good, the underlying ground of all existing things, and the seed of enlightenment which lies within all living beings.