

PĀLI BUDDHISMUS IN ÜBERSETZUNGEN.*

A movement has been set on foot in Germany for the dissimination, broadcast, of a knowledge of the Buddhist doctrines with a view to the ultimate adoption of Buddhism by the people, or at least by those, who are beginning to be

* Aus dem Buddhistischen Pali-Kanon und dem Kammavacam übersetzt nebst Erläuterungen; W. Markgraf, Breslau, 10 Marks.

discontented with the faith of their forefathers and whose ranks, we are told, are swelling year by year. A society was formed sometime ago, Die Deutsche Päligesellschaft, with a monthly organ: Die Buddhistische Welt, which is already in the fourth year of its existence; it is through this periodical, as well as by means of the books they publish, that the "German Pāli Society," are confident of attaining their aim. The last publication of this society is "Pāli Buddhism in Translations," by Herr Karl Seidenstücker. It is a beautiful volume of nearly 500 pages, well printed on good paper, and at the very reasonable price of 10 marks. The regretted H. C. Warren, of Cambridge, Massachusetts, had, some years ago, given us in English, a volume with a similar title "Buddhism in Translations", which has gone already through several editions. It may perhaps be the well-deserved success of the English work, which has suggested to Herr Seidenstücker the idea of his own book. But let it not for an instant be thought, that the German is a translation from the English of Warren's. The two works have been conceived on a different plan, and are as different as the similarity of the subject can possibly allow. 'Pāli Buddhismus' is much more philosophical throughout, having passed over in silence the life of the Buddha, which reads like a wondrous tale and occupies 110 pages in Warren's book out of a total of 496; but certainly it would not have been out of place to give a short resumé of the Master's career; this would have made the book complete in itself, although it may be objected that a complete Life, also in translations from Pāli texts, is already in existence (1). The whole work is divided into three parts and twenty chapters, carefully arranged so as to give a good grasp of the subject in spite of its complexity. The translation is good and reliable, but the language of it too formal. In the body of the text are interspersed notes which will prove very valuable to the student. The author in every case indicates the text he is translating, by volume, division (and sometimes subdivision) and Sutta (or Discourse), for instance: Saṃyutta-Nikāyo V, XLV, 1, 13. This looks very imposing; but after all it is very irritating to the reader who wants to refer to the original, and makes him lose no little time, although even he be *un homme du métier*. It is now tacitly agreed among scholars to refer to the text by an abbreviation of the title, the number of the volume and page; in this manner the above reference would be: S. V. 14; short and to the

1. J. Dutoit: "Das Leben des Buddha," eine Zusammenstellung alter Berichte aus dem Kanonischen Schriften der Südlichen Buddhisten, Leipzig, 1906.

point; the explanations of these abbreviations would not have occupied one fourth of a page.

Herr Seidenstücker is to be congratulated on his really good performance. We are told the book was published as an homage to the Buddha on the 2,500th anniversary of his birth, which was celebrated in May, 1911.

C. D.