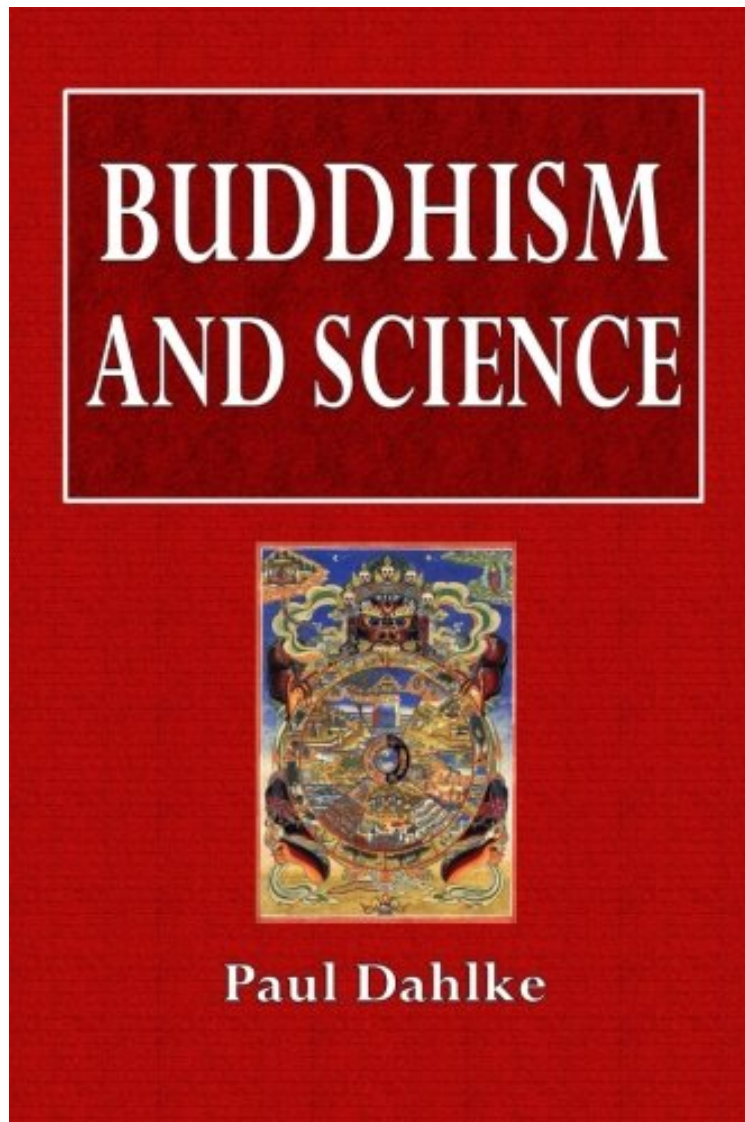


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Buddhism and Science

Paul Dahlke

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Paul Dahlke : Buddhism and Science before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Buddhism and Science:

From the Introduction. The Purpose of the Book. Three kinds of books there are. First, those that give nothing and from which we demand nothing. These constitute the greater portion of the book-world; empty entertainment for the idle. Secondly, those books that give the unfamiliar and are unfamiliar to us that is, demand only our memory. These

are manuals of instruction presenting facts. And thirdly, those books that give themselves and demand ourselves. These are the books that are mental nutriment in the real sense of the words, and impart to the entire process of mental development a stimulus which, like the stimulus imparted to a growing tree, never again can be lost. The present book makes claim to belong to the last category. As something experienced by myself, it is meant to become such an experience to others. The mental poverty of our time finds its most accurate expression in the prevalent lack of individual experience. We are not impressed where we ought to be impressed, because we allow ourselves to be impressed where in truth there is nothing impressive. We mistake our true interests. The interesting is something in which we have an interest, in which we have a share. But there has been such a derangement of positions that in presence of our true interests we stand stupid spectators, whilst for the interesting in the banal sense, we are ready to go through fire and flood. To the average man of to-day it is far more interesting to read hair-splitting investigations into the question as to whether Christianity is a branch of Buddhism or Buddhism of Christianity, than to think out and live that which both have taught and continue to teach. All this is inherent in the conditions under which we live at the present time. Thought is ever confronted by life as by a question a question that of necessity becomes actual in me, the thinker. For as a candle illuminates a certain portion of space and thereby first calls forth question-raising objects, so does thought itself illuminate these stellar spaces and thereby first calls forth question-raising objects. The I is the natural point of departure of every view of the world, being the objective as well as the subjective point of departure. Now that philosophy, in the endeavor to construct a world-conception out of pure thought alone, has come to ruin on her own nothingness, natural science has constituted itself the emissary of the world-conception idea, and in contradiction to philosophy has sought to realize it over the head of the I, so to speak an attempt which, despite all its grandeur, is forever doomed to failure, seeing that, as the last to include the I itself in this world-theory, the problem is insoluble. Hence the fact that we no longer possess a philosophy such as the ancients and the schoolmen possessed; and do not yet possess a natural science that can give us any genuine aid. Every thinker, every seeker and every thinker is a seeker to-day in a state of mental interregnum. And it is the hope of this book that, as masses of atmosphere in labile equilibrium frequently at the slightest impulse break into whirling motion, so also the minds of our time that are in this state of labile equilibrium may prove themselves still more susceptible to stimuli, and respond, if not exactly with a mental typhoon, at least with a gentle zephyr.