PREFACE

Hatred is never appeased by hatred in this world; it is appeased by loving-kindness (Mettā). This is an eternal law. (Dhammapada, verse no.5)

It is one of the bitterest ironies of human life that although virtually all human beings cherish a desire to live in peace, the world today continuously finds embroiled in a war and conflict, pitted against others in relationships marred by tension, distrust or open hostility. This irony is particularly poignant because it is immediately evident to us that cordial, harmonious relations with others are a necessary condition for our own genuine happiness. Not only do such relations allow us to pursue undisturbed the goals we consider essential to our personal fulfillment, but they bring us the deeper joy of meaningful communion with our fellow human beings. Contentious living, in contrast, is always intrinsically painful, involving a hardening of our subjective armor, a tightening of the knots of anger and hate. Indeed, whatever may be the outcome of war and conflict—whether victory or defeat—the result itself is ultimately detrimental for both victor and victim alike.

As private individuals we cannot hope to resolve our problems by the larger patterns of war and conflict that engulf the societies and nations to which we belong. We live in a world that thrives on war and conflict, and in which the forces that nurture war and conflict are pervasive; obstinate and terribly powerful. But what we can do and must do is to testify by our conduct to the supremacy of peace: to avoid words and actions that engender animosity, to heal divisions, to demonstrate the value of harmony and concord. The model we must emulate is that provided by the Buddha in his
description of the true disciple: “He is one who unites the divided, who promotes friendships, enjoys concord, rejoices in concord, delights in concord, and who speaks words that promote concord (Dīghanikāya, Vol (i), p.4).”

In the world today, many people are trying to resolve their problems by force, moneybags by wealth, world powers by weapons etc. The nations are arming to the teeth and frightened of one another that they now possess nuclear weapons. Human life is endangered by nuclear weapons which may be released at any moment. According to Buddhism, just as we cannot extinguish the flames by flames, even so we cannot solve our problems by force, wealth, weapons etc. We will not be able to conquer one who has done us wrong through hate. We will be able to conquer one who abuses us through loving-kindness (mettā) just as we can extinguish the flames only by water. The world of today is sorely in need of the universal loving-kindness so that all human beings can live in perfect peace and harmony like brothers and sisters. To establish peaceful and harmonious human society, it is necessary to practise completely loving-kindness.

Loving-kindness should be practiced first towards oneself. In doing so a person should change his mind and body with positive thoughts of peace and happiness. He should think how he could be peaceful, happy, and free from suffering, worry and anger. He then becomes the embodiment of loving-kindness. He becomes ever tolerant and tries his best not to give occasion for anger to any. Himself beaming with happiness, he injects happiness into others not only inwardly but also outwardly by putting his loving-kindness into practice in the course of his daily life.
When he is full of peace and is free from thoughts of hatred, it is easy for him to radiate loving-kindness towards others. What he does not possess he cannot give to others. Before he tries to make other happy he should first be happy himself. Loving-kindness is a priceless gift to bestow one to another. Through loving-kindness, we can provide the warmth to satisfy the burning needs of an individual to be loved, for those who love and are loved in return are happier than those devoid of love. The more love we give the more will we receive in return. This is in accordance with eternal law of cause and effect.

In this connection, the researcher has shown the ways and means to make peaceful, happy, and free from suffering, worry and anger and to radiate his loving-kindness towards all his near and dear ones individually and collectively, wishing them peace and happiness and freedom from suffering, disease, worry and anger. Researches on loving-kindness have been confined mostly to the materials available in the Pāḷi Tripiṭaka. The work must be viewed as a sequence to the concept of loving-kindness. Its major sources are Suttanipāta Pāḷi, its commentary and Visuddhimagga of Buddhaghosa.

If someone has a genuine loving-kindness, he will regard the whole world as his motherland and all as fellow-beings in the ocean of life. The present work is aimed at constructing peaceful and harmonious human society like a family without killing, torturing, oppressing, and bullying each other and without influencing by caste, class, national, racial, or religious prejudice.
And this research work is also aimed at creating a society where the ruinous struggle for power is renounced; where calm and peace prevail away from conquest and defeat; where the persecution of the innocent is vehemently denounced; where one who conquers oneself is more respected than those who conquer millions by military and economic warfare; where hatred is conquered by kindness, and evil by goodness; where enmity, jealousy, ill-will and greed do not infect human minds; where compassion is the driving force of action; where all, including the least of living things, are treated with fairness, consideration and love; where life is filled with peace and harmony, in a world of material contentment, is directed towards the highest and noblest aim i.e., the realization of the Ultimate Truth, Nibbāna.