CODE OF CONDUCT, TRAINING AND SUBJETS OF STUDY OF
THE MONKS AND NOVICES AS DEPICTED IN THE NIKAYAS
AND EARLY VINAYA TEXTS
In the previous discussion, we have mentioned the reasons which led the Buddha to consider the idea of imparting education to the new entrants. In fact, he noticed many a mishap in the functioning of the Order even at an early stage. That made him keep a very watchful eye on the new entrants into the Order. He took personal interest in the training of his disciples. Once, while taking rest after midday meal at Kapilavatthu, it occurred to him that the number of the entrants in his Order was growing and so it was incumbent upon him that he should look after the new entrants, otherwise they would go the wrong way. They should be nurtured, as a young plant is nurtured by a gardener. Puṇṇa Māntānīputta, one of the distinguished disciples of the Buddha, was complimented by Ānanda as one who was very helpful to the new entrants. The Buddha found that the son of his father's sister, Tissa, had many failings, and so, one day, he accosted him and imparted to him necessary instructions. He also corrected the son of his mother's sister,
Nanda, who used to pay much attention to his body and robe. He, in fact, attempted to correct many monks who were arrogant, quarrelsome, distracted and negligent. But it was not physically possible for him to look after all of them. It was for this reason, perhaps, that he made provision for every senior monk to keep one or two novices with him. Those monks and novices were brought together in the monasteries chiefly for that purpose.

We have already seen that the monastery was a kind of federation of group teachers and pupils, of junior monks living in dependence upon the seniors. Every bhikkhu was expected to accept a pupil "to provide himself with a sāmanera, to give nissaya, and to confer the Upasampadā ordination."

The observance of moral precepts (sīla) in general was regarded by the Buddha to be the proof of the satisfactory progress towards the direction of the attainment of the goal i.e. the arahantahood. In fact, one who was found to be lax in them was aptly regarded as not an adept. We find, these sīlas enumerated almost in stereotyped fixed-word form in various discourses in the Nikāyas. An almost exhaustive list of these moral precepts appears in the first sutta of the Dīghanikāya. Here, these precepts are divided into three categories. They are named as cūla, majjhima and mahā. The apparent meaning of these words may prove to be confusing, when we

go through the details given therein. It seems that these categories are named cūla, majjhima and maha, because comparatively a greater degree of understanding in ascending order is required to grasp and comprehend them separately. The precepts under the first category are —

(1) non-killing of beings, and laying aside rods and weapons, and extending kindness and goodwill to all beings;
(2) non-stealing, and accepting only what is given voluntarily, and leading a pure and honest life;
(3) chastity, not adopting the life of a common householder;
(4) non-drinking of wine and other intoxicants;
(5) non-speaking of falsehood and remaining always firm, truthful and trustworthy, and never breaking promise;
(6) non-indulging in malicious talks and not sowing discord among persons, on the contrary, seeking harmony and concord among them;
(7) shunning harsh words, and using sweet, charming and pleasing words;
(8) refraining from desultory talks and speaking always the correct, suitable, instructive, meaningful, reasonable and valuable words;
(9) no destruction of any kinds of seeds, plants and shrubs;
(10) no meals at night, and not more than one meal a day;
(11) no use of scents, garlands and unguents;
(12) no use of high and large beds;
(13) no acceptance of gold and silver;
(14) no acceptance of raw paddy or raw meat;
(15) no-acceptance of gifts of female attendants, girls, maidservants;
(16) no acceptance of gifts of animals or of cultivated and uncultivated fields;
(17) refraining from buying and selling or using false balance, weights and measures;
(18) non-acting as messengers or go-betweens;
(19) shunning bribing, deceitfulness and crookedness;
(20) never wounding or locking up any person, or committing robbery.

The second category is more or less an enlargement of the above-mentioned precepts.

The third category directs the monks to refrain from the functions performed by men in religious garb, e.g. performance of rituals, use of magical charms and incantations, making astrological and astronomical prognostications or making forecasts about dreams and other superstitions beliefs. The monks were also forbidden from rendering services as valuers of jewels, metals, animals and such other objects. In short, the monks were instructed to abstain from secular functions, even including medical treatment.

Here, it is noteworthy that the moral precepts enumerated

above were meant for all those who left their homes for homelessness on the path shown by the Buddha, the Blessed One. That is to say, these precepts were meant for the full-fledged monks as well as the novices who aspired to be the members of the Order. Thus, the code of conduct prescribed for the former was higher than that prescribed for the latter. For the latter only ten sikkhāpadas were normally prescribed. These are —

(1) abstinence from killing beings,
(2) abstinence from stealing,
(3) abstinence from committing sexual intercourse,
(4) abstinence from speaking falsehood,
(5) abstinence from drinking liquor and other intoxicants,
(6) abstinence from taking meal at prohibited time,
(7) abstinence from dancing, singing and playing on instruments,
(8) abstinence from using scents, garlands and unguents,
(9) abstinence from costly and high beds,
(10) abstinence from taking gold and silver.

When we compare these two lists, we come to the conclusion that all the ten sikkhāpadas are included in the list of the moral precepts given above.

The Majjhima Nikāya records that, once, while the Buddha was sojourning at Migāramātupāsāda in Sāvatthi, he was interviewed by a learned Brahmin named Gonaka-Moggallāna. His questi—

1. cf. Khuddakāpātha.
2. cf. Majjhima Nikāya (Nālandā Devanāgarī Pāli Series), pp. 61, 62
was that all kinds of training demanded a graduated course, e.g. in constructing a building, in study, in mathematical calculations; and enquired of him whether there was any graduated course in the training of Buddhist monks. The Buddha answered in the affirmative and described the graduated course of training prescribed by him. This course consists of seven stages, of which the first one is regarding observance of moral precepts (as enumerated above), abiding by the disciplinary rules of Pātimokkha and so on. The monk is then enjoined to exercise control over his sense-organs. He is next instructed to take food without causing injury to any being for the bare maintenance of his body, to keep it just fit for leading a pure and holy life. He is then advised to sit at one place in circumambulating walk and try to rid his mind of the impurities (Kāmacchanda, byāpāda, thinamiddha, uddhāccakukkucca, vicikicchā), which cause hindrance to spiritual advancement. He is then instructed to practise the first satipaṭṭhāna i.e. to be aware of what he is doing physically, never to be absent-minded in any action and so on. He is then sent to a lonely place, where he is to sit cross-legged, keeping his body erect and mind alert and thus trying to purify his mind of greed, of hatred, of idleness, of arrogance, of doubts about the true dhamma. Lastly, when his mental impurities have been almost eliminated by knowledge, he is to practise meditation, of which there are four stages.

1. cf. Śāmyuttaṇīkāya, Vol. V, p. 94.
The last stage in this graduated course is comprehending the Four Truths. The last among them is called the Atthaṅgilka-magga or the Path of Eight-fold Practices. It states broadly the course of practices to be adopted by one seeking emancipation. It is divided into three sections (i) moral precepts (Silā), i.e. observance of all the disciplinary rules embodied in the Vinaya Piṭaka, (ii) mind-control (citta) through various methods including meditations, and (iii) acquisition of knowledge (pāṇā) by comprehending the nature and constitution of a being. This division is based upon certain suttas in the Digha and the Majjhimanikāyas, where it is clear that the compilers of those suttas had these three divisions always in their mind. But we find the list somewhat different in the Mahāvagga. It runs as follows:

1. Sammā diṭṭhi (Right Views),
2. Sammā saṅkappo (Right Resolve),
3. Sammā Vācā (Right Speech),
4. Sammā Kammanto (Right Conduct),
5. Sammā ājīvo (Right Livelihood),
6. Sammā vāyāmo (Right Effort),
7. Sammā sati (Right Mindfulness),
8. Sammā Samādhi (Right Concentration).

The positive benefits, which can be derived through the

1. cf. Dighanikāya, I, p. 48; Majjhimanikāya, I, p. 301.
practice of the Eight-fold Path, when it is accompanied by solitude (viveka), detachment (virāga), cessation of impurities (nirodha) and sacrifice (vosagga) are also mentioned. These are:

(i) attainment of the four fruits of sanctification (Sāmaññaphalas i.e. Sotāpatti, Sakadāgāmi, Anāgāmi and Arahatta);

(ii) attainment of higher powers (abhiññā);

(iii) perfection in the thirty seven bodhipakkhiyā dhammas leading to full enlightenment; and lastly

(iv) realization of Nibbāna.

Such a graduated course, when pursued properly was bound to result in overall mental and spiritual health of the monks. That health reflected in the general contentment and a glow in their complexion. The Majjhimanikāya supplies us with an evidence to that effect. Once, while the Buddha was staying in the Sakyan country, Pasenadi, King of Kosala paid a visit to him. He explained to him his devotion and the reasons thereof. One of the reasons as narrated by the King was that he found the bhikkhus joyful and elated, jubilant and exultant, enjoying life with senses satisfied, free from anxiety, serene, peaceful and living with a gazelle’s mind i.e. light-hearted. This, he considered, was due to the fact that the bhikkhus had realized the great and full significance
of the teachings of the Blessed One. On another occasion in answer to a question as to how the complexion of the monks, who live a quiet and simple life eating only one meal a day, could be so bright, the Buddha said: "They do not repent the past, nor do they yearn for the future. They live in present. Therefore, their complexion brightens up. By brooding over the future and repenting over the past, fools become dried up like a green reed cut down."

We have ample evidence to prove that this particular care on the part of the Buddha to prepare his disciples in a disciplined band of workers had met success as well. There were a few indisciplined and disobedient monks in his Order no doubt, but on the whole his Order secured a good reputation in this respect. The Mahāsakuludāyī Sutta records that even the non-Buddhist ascetics at the time of the Buddha were quite convinced of the complete discipline of the Buddha's Order. Once the Buddha paid a visit to the hermitage of the ascetic, Mahāsakuludāyī. While the Buddha was seen proceeding towards his place, the ascetic was heard advising his pupils not to make noise, nor to show indisciplined behaviour, as Sāmaṇa Gotama was very much touchy on this point. The Buddha had trained the members of his Order in such a way that whenever he, for instance, sat in front of


the assembly of his monks for delivering discourses, the monks behaved in such a disciplined manner that not even the sound of coughing could be heard in the hall. There is another very interesting story which fully exemplifies the Buddha's concern for discipline. Once the Blessed one was staying at the village Cātumā. Sāriputta and Moggallāna went there with five hundred junior monks to pay respect to him. Those newly ordained monks made a lot of noise. The Buddha overheard the noise and inquired of Ānanda the reason thereof. When Ānanda reported the matter, he was so much displeased with those people that he immediately ordered them to go away. These are some of the instances which show how the Buddha cared for discipline in the life of the monks and the novices. This was probably the reason that he had framed the rules for admission in such a way that no indisciplined and raw hand could get admission to the Order. Even after the ordination, when one became full-fledged member of the Order, he was asked to live under the supervision of two senior monks, designated as Ācariya and Upajjhāya ordinarily for complete ten years. This gave them opportunity to comprehend the teachings of the Buddha and to live up to them. If we count the number of years required to attain the status of 'thera' or elder, who could be reliable in matters of Dhamma-Vinaya and could give nissaya (dependence) to others, it comes to at least thirty years. It can well be imagined that the life at thirty

years is considered to be the stage when maturity comes to the people.

Further, we presume, it was due to this strong feeling of discipline in the Order and adherence to the true training given to the members of that community that even after the passing away of the Master, there was no disintegration in the Order, in spite of the fact that the Buddha had not appointed any one as his successor. In the Mahāparinibbāṇa Sutta which was the last of the discourses in the Buddha's career, we find him anticipating this anxiety about the succession of leadership into the minds of his disciples. The Buddha was quick enough to remove any apprehension in this respect. He made the position amply clear to his monk attendant, Ānanda slightly before his passing away. He told him, "Ānanda, you might think like this: The teaching is without Master, and we have no Master; but Ānanda, you should not think so; whatever Dhamma and Vinaya is taught and declared by me, that will be your Master after my death." Thus, after the death of the Buddha his teaching and not an individual served the purpose of the guiding factor in all odds. This was really a remarkable achievement on the part of the Buddha that the training imparted by him to his disciples could play such a vital role in the history of the Buddhist Order in the post-Buddha era for quite a long time. We notice the same spirit echoing, not only in the First Assembly of five hundred 'arahants', held immediately

after the death of the Buddha under the leadership of Mahā-
kassapa, Upāli and Ānanda, but also in the Second and the Third 
Assemblies held roughly one and three centuries respectively 
after the death of the Master. The Second Assembly was held 
under the collective leadership of Yasa Kakandakaputta, Sambhūta 
Sāṇavāsi and Revata and the Third one was under that of Moggali-
putta Tissa; incidently, none of the leaders was a direct discipl 
of the Buddha.

An inspiring conversation, held a few months after the 
passing away of the Buddha, between Ānanda and Vassakāra, the 
Chief of the ministers in the court of King Ajātasattu, eluci-
dates the spirit that was running through the rank and file 
of the Order. Vassakāra inquired of Ānanda whether the Buddha 
had appointed any bhikkhu to be their 'refuge' (patisarana), 
whom they should now fall back upon after the death of the Master 
In reply Ānanda said, "No". Then Vassakāra asked Ānanda whether 
the Sāṅgha had appointed any bhikkhu to be their 'refuge' whom 
they should now fall back upon after the Buddha's death. Ānanda's 
answer was again in the negative. Vassakāra out of surprise 
remarked : "Venerable Ānanda, when there is no refuge, what is 
the basis of unity ?" Ānanda rejoined : "Brāhmaṇa, we are not 
helpless (not without refuge); we have a refuge, we have the 
refuge of the Dhamma." Ānanda explained the matter in details, 
when he found the poor Brāhmaṇa unable to understand his point. 
Ānanda told him that the rules had been laid down for the bhikkhu 
and the code was recited by the Master. Monks who lived in a 
certain area assembled together on Uposatha days and requested
one of the monks, on whom the turn fell to recite it. If a transgression on the part of any bhikkhu was announced at the recitation, the other monks dealt with him according to the Dhamma. No one, except the Dhamma compelled them to do so. Vassakāra was again ready with another question: "Venerable Ānanda, is there now any bhikkhu whom you respect, honour, revere and esteem and on whom you depend?" When Ānanda answered this question in the affirmative, Vassakāra was confounded at the apparent contradiction in Ānanda's replies. Ānanda explained that the Buddha had praised ten qualities that inspire confidence (dasa pasādeniya Dhammā), and if they found those ten qualities in a monk, they would respect, honour, revere, esteem and depend on him. These ten qualities are, that the bhikkhu be (1) virtuous (sīlavā), (2) learned (bahussuta), (3) contented (santuṭṭho), (4) possessed of four jhānas, (5) possessed of iddhis (miraculous powers), (6) possessed of divine ear (dibbasotadhātu), (7) possess of power to see other's thoughts (paracitta-vijānana), (8) possess of power to remember past lives (pubbe nivāsānussati), (9) possess of power to see deaths and births of beings (dibbacakkha), and (10) possessed of freedom from all āsavas i.e. has attained arahantahood. On analysing these ten qualities we come to the conclusion that they embody the whole training that a monk was supposed to undergo throughout his whole career. One who possess these qualities was supposed to have reached his destination, done

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2. cf. Ibid., pp. 72, 73, 74.
what he was supposed to do, and would have no birth any more
(katāṁ karaṇīyam, nāparaṁ āttattayaṁ). It was this, which
the Buddha wanted his disciples to be.

No doubt, emphasis was laid on extensive ethical training
of this sort by the Master in his early discourses, but it does
not mean that he ignored altogether the other side of the monasti-
life, which contributed a lot to sum total of the grand monastic
culture which evolved through centuries after the Buddha. It was
learning, as stated in the first discussion. As an evidence
to this fact, suttas can be cited, where we find the Buddha
full of praise for Mahākassapa, who was reputed to be the leading
disciple in the matter of moral practices and had unequalled
reputation for holiness, and also Sāriputta who was acclaimed
to be the most superior monk so far as learning was concerned.
The Buddha had complimented him at several occasions and had
even designated him as Dhamma-senāpati (Commander-in-chief of
Law). It shows that the Buddha had a liking for those who were
well-versed in the Dhamma and were capable of delivering
discourses in his absence. In the Tipiṭaka we find some suttas
which are ascribed to Sāriputta, Moggallāna, Mahākaccāṇa, Ānanda
and other senior monks. The Buddha relied upon their ability
to preach the Dhamma properly. The story is recorded regarding
the request made by Mahākaccāṇa to the Buddha to pay a visit to
his native place i.e. the country of the King Canda Pajjota.
. The Buddha, however, could not comply with his request, but
being aware of his capabilities advised him to do it himself.
Mahākaccāṇa is reported to have carried out the task himself
and brought many people to the Buddhist fold from that area.
Another important factor which did influence and might have contributed to lead the Order to take the course which it took as years passed by, was the Buddha's own wide learning and that of the majority of people who joined his Order having solid base of learning, for they came from the upper strata of the society. The Buddha's own missionary career is an open fact: he had to face all sorts of learned people of those hoary days. Most of them tried to embarrass him with their tricky questions. But, we notice the Buddha always emerging with flying colours. Such was the case with his disciples too. In fact, this must be regarded as one of the causes which helped to popularise the Buddha's teachings in the early stage of the history of the Buddhist Order. It goes to the credit of the Buddha's own magnetic power that he could win over the topmost intellectuals of his time. They joined the Order and shaped its course. There are instances, no doubt, when the Buddha had to set them right by correcting their erroneous views. We read in the Cullavagga the story of two Brahmin brothers who after joining the Order were painted at the fact that the Buddha's lofty teachings were taught and learnt through colloquial dialects. They made a formal proposal to the Buddha and offered their services to put his teachings into the Vedic dialect (Chāndas). The Buddha rebuked them and asked them never to do so. In fact, that gave him an occasion to explain to his assembly of monks that they were free to learn the words of their Master in their own dialects.

There are further instances to prove that the Buddha had a weakness for those who were learned and well-versed in the lore of his time. As mentioned in the first discussion, the condition of probation of four months in case of Jaṭilas and Sākyas was waived aside by the Buddha. In the case of the Jaṭilas, it was quite obvious that the Buddha made this concession due to their advanced doctrines. But some may be tempted to accuse the Buddha of partiality in case of the Sākyas, his own kinsmen. But this was not so. We have evidences to prove that the Sākyas were traditionally lovers of learning and were quite advanced in that aspect. The early education of the Buddha along with his many cousins and Sākyan princes, shows that they were taught in almost all the branches of learning available in those days. In his boyhood days, the Buddha used to frequent the hermitage of Sākyan saints at Nigrodhārāma and other places. Secondly the Buddha needed some loyal and trustworthy men who could render help in the smooth functioning of his Order. His call had good response and we find men like Ānanda and other joining the Order. But this gave a chance to crooked men like Devadatta, who could have been otherwise debarred from entering the Order. Thus, it is clear that the Buddha patronized learned monks very much and inspired his disciples to study, and to improve their knowledge. It may be pointed out that the Buddha was sternly against those who were seen puffed up at the attainment of their knowledge and would speak ill of those who had

no attainment to their credit. In the Sappurisa Sutta, we find the Buddha discouraging those who were found ridiculing such people as were neither 'bahussuta', nor Vinayadhara (knower of Vinaya), nor Dhammakathika (reciter of the Dhamma) and so on. The Buddha declared such tendency to be the characteristic of asappurisa (not noble man). Here, the word 'bahussuta' forces us to pause for a moment to think about the mode of learning in those good old days, when there were no books to read. So one used to acquire knowledge through hearing and keeping that knowledge in memory. In the Tipitaka, we come across various phrases like Vinayadhara, Dhammakathika, Dīghabhāṇaka, Majjhimanabhāṇaka, which indicate that the people in those days had to depend upon their power of hearing and retaining it into their memory.

When we look into the pages of Tipitaka, we get many references to instructions regarding the study of the monks and novices. The Cullavagga records that the ordinary instruction of a pupil-monk consisted of the "giving of recitation, holding examination, making exhortation, and explaining the Dhamma." We read of some bhikkhus specializing in reciting the Dhamma, of others in propounding the suttantas, of still others in the Vinaya. Some are seen specializing as preachers of

The bhikkhus as students were assigned to different classes according to their progress in studies. The lowest class seems to have been made of students who were repeaters of the suttantas. The method recommended for this rote-learning was to chant over the suttantas to one another. On one occasion, we notice Sāriputta paying a visit to Moggallāna and reciting the whole Paṭiccasamuppāda; on another occasion, in his turn, Moggallāna reciprocating the whole thing. At the end of their recitations, they are seen complimenting each other with the words "well-done". It shows that even the high ranking disciples of the Buddha had resorted to this practice, which was the most suitable method in those days. The next higher class was of those students who were in charge of the Vinaya which they would master by discussing it with one another. To a yet higher class belonged those bhikkhus who were training themselves up as teachers of the Dhamma. And, as part of this training, they were required to rehearse the Dhamma before preaching it to others. Of course, the highest class belonged to those bhikkhus who were given to meditation. The disciples like Mahākassapa, Sāriputta, Moggallāna belonged to this class. There were a few other classes of bhikkhus who were otherwise distinguished and classed as Epicurians, being "wise in worldly lore and abounding in bodily vigour." All these different classes of students were often separately lodged in the monastery lest their mixing

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1. cf. Mahāvagga (Nālandā Devanāgarī Pāli Series), p.188.
up should cause disturbance to their studies.

In addition to these studies which were specially meant for the monks and the novices, we find reference of the subjects of study which were tabooed to them. The Lokāyata system was not studied and taught by the bhikkhus. As indicated above, the arts of divination, spells, omens, astrology, sacrifices to gods, witch-craft and quakery were considered to be 'low arts' and hence were kept out of the range of studies of the monks and the novices. The Brahmajāla Sutta informs us that in addition to these prohibitions, they were not supposed to discuss the stories and anecdotes regarding thieves, kings, generals and the like.

Now, what was the method of their study? Was it through hand-written books or manuscripts or any other method? Education especially the monastic, did not depend upon written literature. The art of writing might have been developed at the time of the Buddha or at the time when earlier texts of the Buddhist canon were recited, but its use for the purpose of pressing and transmitting an extensive and sacred literature is not proved by any reference in the Tipitaka. The Mahāvagga records art

   cf.
2. Ibid., pp. 229-230.
of writing as source of livelihood or an occupation. According to Rhys Davids and Oldenberg, there is not the least trace of any reference to manuscripts in the detailed accounts which the Vinaya texts give of the whole of the personal property of the Buddhist árāmas and vihāras, of which all possible items from bigger furniture to the smallest needle are enumerated or refer to. Along with the manuscripts, there are no references to such accessories of writing as ink, pen, style, leaves or other material for writing, nor to the operations connected with the copying out of manuscripts which must have occupied a large part of the activities of the monks, should they have had to do with written literature for their study. There are some positive evidences as well, which prove that the use of writing for the purpose of education was absolutely non-existent. There is a reference in the Mahāvagga of a bhikkhu who was commissioned to learn Pātimokkha from a neighbouring fraternity and import the knowledge. Similarly, we read of a lay-devotee inviting a fraternity of monks to hear him recite an important suttanta, so that they might learn it and preserve from oblivion. Thus, the oral transmission of knowledge was perhaps the only method recognised by the Order. This might have been due to the scarcity of writing material in those days. Otherwise, there was

3. cf. Ibid., p. 147.
no point in not making any use of the art of writing and not sparing the members of the Order from a lot of trouble regarding the authentic words of the Master. We notice in the Tipiṭaka that many quarrels sprang up due to controversies over some word or phrase or the other in the discourses. The serious quarrel among the monks of Kosāmbī could have been averted, or the Second Great Assembly which was convened to solve the controversy which arose on ten points of the Vajjian monks might not had been held at all and shaken the very monolithic character of the Order, had there been a written copy of the Vinaya rules with the monks.

The oral transmission of knowledge was conducted through debates, discussions and discourses. The Buddha and his disciple had, in fact, to rely heavily upon the efficacy of the power of debate and discussion, as they had to face the charges of the exponents of other schools of thought. The Buddha's whole career of forty five years of ministry is a proof to this fact. The majority of his suttas in the Tipiṭaka contain his answer of or solution to simple as well as tricky questions which were put before him in the assemblies of his own disciples or by outsiders at various occasions. The Sāmaṁaphala Sutta, for instance, depicts him as master conversationalist, who satisfies the questioner, of no less a personality than Ajātasattu. Ajātasattu had been always hostile to the Buddha and

his Order and had already interviewed the leading religious teachers of his time for the answer of his question. In the Ambattha Sutta, a powerful Brahmin debater is silenced by the Buddha with his immaculate power of debate, though, unfortunately he is shown here making use of his mystic powers for the purpose. Many more suttas can be cited in this connection. The Vinaya and the Nikāya texts are full of references to the conversions of hundreds of people at one instance following the Buddha’s delivery of discourse. This shows that the Buddha must have possessed extraordinary power of persuasion, by which he could win over people in one or two direct talks. Even a few pages in the beginning of the Mahāvagga can be cited as example. It might be regarded as sheer exaggeration of figures by the early compilers of these texts or it might have been a general practice that if one or two persons of a particular group joined a particular Order, say Buddhist here, the rest used to follow suit. If genuine, these cases may be taken as examples of blind hero worship, as the words of the friends of Yasa show, when it occurred to them: "Now, this can no ordinary Dhamma and Vinaya, nor can this be an ordinary pabbajjā, in that Yasa, the young man of the family, having cut off his hair and beard, having put on the yellow robes, has gone forth from home into homelessness."

During the Buddha's life-time, the members of many ascetic orders used to roam about and would meet occasionally in assemblies for discussions of their different doctrines. The Suttanipāta characterizes these Brahmin ascetics, paribbājakas, as disputations (Vādasīla), sophists, caṇḍālas and materialists (vitandhas, lokāyatas). These disputations people are compared with wrestlers who were fed by the Kings. The places where such discussions used to take place were the saṅghāgāras or saṃayappavādaka-sālās. We find mention of some places, where such discussions are reported to have taken place. These were the Hall in Queen Mallikā's park at Sāvatthī, the 1 fasted Pavilīor erected by the Licchavīs in the Mahāvana outside Vesālī, the sweetsmelling champaka grove on the lake of Queen Gaggarā at Champā, Moranivāpa at Rājagaha (the paribhājaka centre under Sakuludāyā) etc.

Thus, listening to the religious discourses as a means of instruction had been a common practice in those days. It has been instanced in a passage in Cullavagga, where the secessionist of the Buddhist Order, Devadatta is reported to have instructed and incited and aroused and gladdened the bhikkus far into the night with religious discourse and yet the assembly of monks was still alert and sleepless, whereupon he said to Sāriputta: "Will you, friend Sāriputta, be so good

as to think of some religious discourse to address to the
bhikkhus? My back is tired and I would stretch myself a
little." Then Sāriputta discoursed on the marvels of preaching,
followed by Moggallāna, who discoursed on the marvels of iddhi.
One of the ideal Saṅghas whose seat was at the Pācinavamsadāya
made it a rule that once in every five days they should "spend
the whole night, sitting together, in religious discourse."

So far as the medium of instruction was concerned, the
Buddha was very much liberal and practical. We are again
reminded of the story of the two Brahmin brothers who tried to
put the words of the Master in the Vedic dialect. The Buddha
allowed only the lingua franca of the masses as the vehicle
of their expression. That was Māgadhī, the earlier name for
Pāli language. He was undoubtedly in favour of people learning
his teachings through their own respective dialects.

Thus, we have already discussed the code of conduct,
training and subjects of the studies of the monks and the novice
as depicted in the Nikāyas and early Vinaya texts. It will
not be irrelevant to mention that the Buddha had a fairly clear
idea about what was going to happen with regard to the Vinaya
rules which he framed for the proper functioning of the Order
and with regard to whom he used to confidently say, "The

3. See above.
sikkhāpadas which I have preached, are not transgressed by my disciples even at the cost of their life." (yamī mayā sāvakānām sikkhāpadānā paññattanā, tāni māvā sāvaka jīvitahe tu pi natikkamānti). It is because of this fact that he spoke to Ānanda at the time of his Mahāparinibbāna that in case the Order so desired it could do away with minor rules of Discipline. But, in spite of the clear sanction given by the Master, we find very little change in the Vinaya rules of the monks and the novices of almost all the sects of Indian Buddhism for centuries after the Buddha's death. There were minor changes, no doubt, but so far as the fundamental points of the Vinaya are concerned, they remained almost the same.

As already stated, the text in hand i.e. the Śrīghanācāra-saṅgrahatikā deals with the code of conduct of the novices in detail. It does not, however, directly speak of the subjects of study for the monks or the novices, still some indirect references to this aspect of monastic life can be found in the text, scattered here and there. While dealing with non-stealing as one of the precepts, the author refers to the settlement made by some novices among themselves that they would devote their time and energies for study. In such case, if any one of them breaks the promise, he would be considered the transgressor of the Jina's words. At the end of the text, the novices are given some instructions regarding the proper time and occasion of

1. See the text, fol. 54a.
saluting their seniors. Here, if the novice finds his senior monk or novice (vrddhantika yatih) busy with bathing, drinking, eating or reciting hymns (stotras), reading or writing book, he is instructed to avoid saluting him. This statement clearly refers to the fact that the monks and the novices in their monasteries kept themselves busy with study also. The instructions given to the novices that they should not disturb their seniors at such occasions is an evidence of the serious nature of their studies.

1. See the text, fol. 92b.