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SOUVENIR

TO COMMEMORATE THE COMPLETION OF THE
RESTORATION OF THE ANCIENT VIHARA AT
KELANIYA, DESTROYED BY PORTUGUESE
VANDALS FOUR CENTURIES AGO.

1575—1946

Edited by

D. C. WIJEWARDENE

AND then the prowess of Europe faced the East. Gold-hunger entered Lanka along with the Cross, and the long struggle began between the Sinhalese who cherished their Independence and their Religion, and the 'just and fair intentions' of the Western Church and the Western Princes, who, while professing that they were out to sell a place in Heaven to the Sinhalese, were determined to wring, in the shortest possible time, as much wealth as possible, from them and from their land.

—*The Revolt in the Temple*

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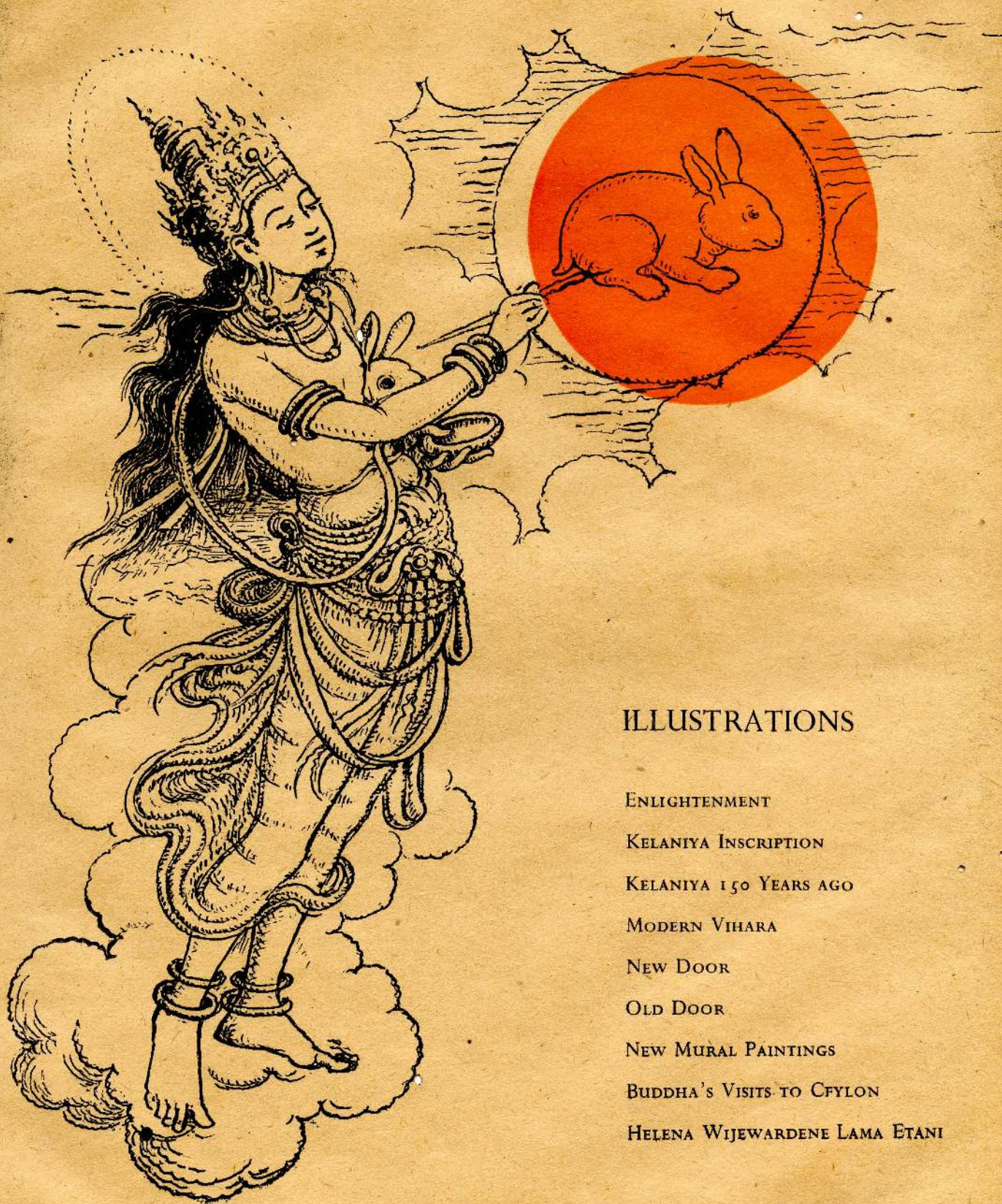
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ENLIGHTENMENT

KELANIYA INSCRIPTION

KELANIYA 150 YEARS AGO

MODERN VIHARA

NEW DOOR

OLD DOOR

NEW MURAL PAINTINGS

BUDDHA'S VISITS TO CFYLN

HELENA WIJewardene LAMA ETANI

ON this day we assemble in the new Gandhakuti (Fragrant Chamber) at Kelaniya Vihare to pay our obeisance to Wisdom to worship in the temple of our hearts the spirit of Right, and, above all, to dedicate ourselves to the pursuit of Truth wholly and unreservedly. Our obeisance, our worship and our self-dedication are directed to eternal verities. Wisdom Right and Truth are of the spirit and have no material form. Why, then, one would ask, have the Buddhists, often spoken of as, philosophers, taken recourse to all these incense-burnings, all these offerings of flowers, and all these prostrations before an image? Why should Wisdom be conceived as a god? Did the lovers of Wisdom, the philosophers of ancient Rome, bow down before the image of Minerva? Did the wise men of the East, the Vedantic Philosophers of Ancient India, bow down before the image of Sarasvati?

The Eternal Beauty and Harmony to which the poet pays homage, the Eternal Truth and Perfection which is the quest of all philosophers, the Strength and Force of character held high by men of action, all these are, to the Buddhists, symbolised in the image of the Buddha, the One who showed mankind the Way of Salvation. We, lesser mortals, have in our make-up something of the poet and the philosopher. When the philosopher in us predominates, we decry music and flowers, incense burning and prostrations. When the poet in us holds sway, the perfume of flowers and the soft strains of sweet music captivate our hearts and we decry the empty abstractions of the philosopher. Thus we see that obeisance to the formless and the adoration of that which has a form are essentially the same. The form is but a symbol of the reality behind it.

As Browning said :

" Truth is within ourselves ; it takes no rise
From outward things, whate'er you may believe,
There is an inmost centre in us all,
Where Truth abides in fulness. "

There is no more important injunction in all the world, nor one with a deeper meaning, than " To thine own self be true. " In other words, Be true to your own conscience,

" And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou can'st not then be false to any man. "

The Truth is often unpleasant : We really have no difficulty in finding the standard. We know the yard-sticks of measurement. We know the vocabulary of human justice all too well. We know and must admit, if we are honest with ourselves, that the standards of moral conduct are neither vague nor obscure. They are clear and unmistakable. They are before our eyes, in our minds, where they have always been. We may choose to ignore them. We may make excuses that times are different and circumstances more complex than they were 2,500 years ago. We may even argue that the language of the moral code is a bit trite and that perhaps it needs to be streamlined or attuned to modern receptiveness.

But these are the evasive excuses of the guilty mind as we face so often the inexorable Truth. We do not like Truth because sometimes it is unpleasant, it is inconvenient, and also it is frequently expensive in pride as well as money. This, nevertheless, does not and cannot alter the basic principles of human ethics. We know in our conscience the difference between Right and Wrong, though, to be sure, we may rationalise a thousand explanations for failing to perceive that difference. So it is with nations. They know wherein they err. They know well what they neglect to do. They know now every bit as much as we ever will know as to the true causes of war and revolution.

Peace can only come when the causes of war and revolution are removed. So long as there is the domination of one country over another or the exploitation of one class by another, there will always be attempts to subvert the existing order, and no stable equilibrium can endure. The facts are there, the Truth is engraved on the tablets of history. When will men begin to admit that Truth? When will they begin to see that all wars and revolts are man-made, and that they are the direct result of the unwillingness of man to face Right and correct his conduct to conform with Truth?

Man is his own deliverer. He has brought about his thralldom ; he can bring about his emancipation. All through the ages he has looked, and is still looking, for an external deliverer, but he still remains bound. The Great Deliverer is within ; He is the Spirit of Truth ; and the Spirit of Truth is the Spirit of Right ; and he is in the Spirit of Right who lives habitually in Right Thoughts and their effects, Right Actions.

The convulsions of history may transform the map of nations or the abodes of individuals, but the basic ingredients of human behaviour remain the same. Circumstances change but principles are immutable. Constitutions may come and go, laws may be repealed or amended, but the codes of morality and the compensations of a righteous life are always with us, abiding for ever. For whether we examine them in the Light of the Aryan Eightfold Path of the Buddha, or review them in the teachings of other religions, we see human conduct so clearly defined that there can be no doubt as to what is or is not Right. We know if we will admit or confess it—if we will be absolutely honest with ourselves.

Throughout all the struggles and strivings of the human race, all its blunderings and conflicts, all its stupidities and failures, those ideals guided many simple and noble minds, and that faith helped them through. Only by such conviction again—re-awakened and strengthened by new knowledge, distributing more fairly the fruits of toil, working for peace, and raising the standard of maitri—

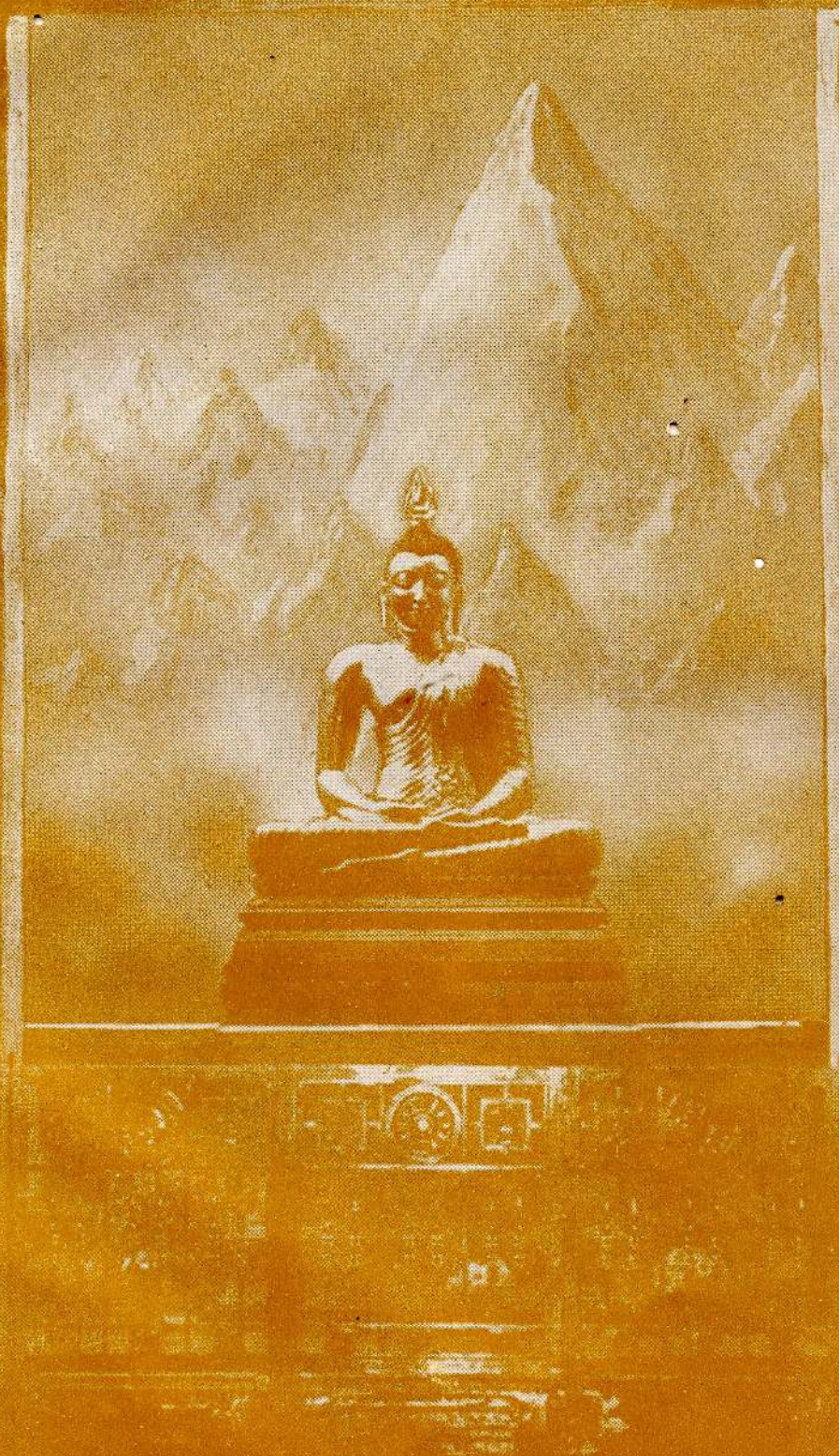
“ May the wise man make for himself an Island
Which no flood can overwhelm. ”

දීපං කසිරාව මෙධාපි—
යං මහොන්ධා'විකිරති

—Dhammapada



ENLIGHTENMENT



Digitized by Noolaham Foundation.
The Statue of the Buddha in the new shrine room at Kelaniya Vihara

ENLIGHTENMENT



TWO THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED years ago, was born an heir to a ruler of a small State at the foot of the Himalayas. He was named Siddhartha. From an early age he was troubled by the amount of suffering he saw around him, suffering connected with birth, disease, old age, death, running the whole span of man's life.

Possibly, too, he was struck by the contrast between the splendour and luxury of his court life and the squalor and poverty of the poor who lived in the mud huts around. That grinding poverty of the common people of India is still to-day the thing that strikes and appals any thinking man who loves his fellow-men.

This consciousness of universal suffering so worked in the young Prince's mind that finally he left his father's court, his wife and new-born child, to try and discover for man a way of release from suffering and infelicity. Thereafter we know him as Gautama.

THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH

His search led him to sit at the feet of the leading sages and mystics of his day, to study the various philosophical schools, to undergo every form of asceticism. But in none of these did he find a solution to his problem, and, despairing of outside help, he decided to seek his goal by himself and within himself. At last Understanding came to him, as he sat in meditation under the Bo-tree at Gaya. From that time on we know him as the Buddha, the Enlightened One.

Between Siddhartha's renunciation and Gautama's Enlightenment there elapsed six years. He was twenty-nine when he left home, thirty-five when he gained Wisdom. It was a long quest.

In the course of his search, he wandered from place to place, from teacher to teacher. He tried to master several doctrines, but found them wanting in the thing he was striving for; he worshipped at many strange altars, but found no solace. He subjected himself to the most painful penances which any man is capable of enduring, but discovered there was nothing in it, nothing at all.

He had been almost at death's door. His most devoted companions had left him in the moment of his greatest need. Even the strong bonds of friendship, he saw, were an illusion. And at the end of this struggle and suffering, he appeared to have achieved nothing. The quest for the land of his heart's desire had proved a failure. So it seemed to all those who had watched his career with interest, so, too, perhaps it seemed to his own mind in moments of despair.

During those six long years he strove in such wisdom as no man before or since has striven, and out of that travail was born the Illumination by which he discovered the Way to Peace.

What was the nature of this experience of Gautama?

In the first place, it is quite clear that all along Gautama had followed the strictly scientific method of elimination through trial and error. He had gone as far as it was possible to go with the metaphysical inquiry, only to find that theoretical knowledge did not touch the heart of the matter, and that, in fact, it led one into a mental wilderness.

With utmost scrupulousness he had practised the disciplines enjoined by the well-known mystics and ascetics, even subjected himself to such horrible penances as wearing hair-cloth and lying among decomposing corpses in the cemetery, but found them fruitless.

With the realisation of the futility of these methods there had been born in him an entirely new conception of the problem. The emphasis had shifted from the metaphysical to the moral issue. The question was no longer the attainment of a super-conscious state of ecstatic bliss, but the extirpation of grief and tribulation, of ill, and sorrow, and distraction in the "here and now."

This transference of emphasis was one aspect of Enlightenment. The other was the working out of a technique of living which would be conducive to passionlessness, to tranquillity, to insight....and

"Nirvana"; or, in other words, "to the extirpation of grief and tribulation, of ill and sorrow, and distraction in the here and now."

There was thus no mystery attached to Gautama's enlightenment. It was a simple and intelligible experience: or, perhaps, it would be more correct to say that it was neither more nor less mysterious than, for instance, the discovery and formulation of the Laws of Gravitation, or of those governing the 'Origin of Species', or of the Theory of Relativity in our time.

What happened to Gautama under the Bo Tree was the same that happened to Newton in his orchard, to Darwin in his carriage, and to Einstein while wheeling his son in a perambulator.

It is one of the mysteries of psychic phenomena; all that we know is that a light flashed and radiated and illuminated the night of ignorance.

To Gautama the mass of accumulated experience of countless births, years of diligent search combined with moments of vivid inspiration, suddenly fell into order, and the hidden meaning flashed out of the obscurity.

Gautama and these others, it is true, worked in very different fields. Ultimately, however, that difference counts for little. What is more significant is the essential identity of their methods. Gautama's field of investigation was the Universe of human mind, the relationships and laws that govern it, and the properties and behaviour of those subtle elements which enter into its structure.

It is by no means an easy field to investigate on scientific lines. It is easy enough to be objective about a dead frog, but not so easy to be objective about one's heart, pulsating with a whole world of desires. Nevertheless, Gautama did succeed in subjecting "the world within" to some kind of critical scrutiny, and thus succeeded in introducing a certain measure of objectivity into the subjective chaos. This was his distinct achievement: this, too, the meaning of his Enlightenment.

He saw life face to face—the interminable waves of life's great ocean all around him, the pulsing, breathing, and gleaming sea of beings; and he saw also the further shore beyond. He saw the grim reality behind the smiling face and the cause of all sorrow and infelicity. He saw that cause in the very thing, so dear and so precious, for the sake of which all beings are ready to suffer interminable pain.

To the Buddha, the world we live in is a world of suffering, of inexorable processes of life and death. The process of becoming and ceasing to be, is profoundly bound up with suffering: at the root of it there is an ever-throbbing sense of grief, of deficit and desolation, like a thorn in the flesh.

This, in essence, is the noble truth of Unhappiness, which the Buddha took as the tragic starting point of his critique of life. He took it as the starting-point because he was, above all other things, concerned with the analysis of the content of human experience, with understanding the elusive pattern of man's subjective universe.

His interpretation remains essentially a psychological interpretation. While the metaphysicians of his age, the amateurs as well as the professionals, were wrangling heatedly over abstract problems, the Buddha was content to focus his whole attention on psychological observation.

These observations led him to a most disconcerting discovery: the discovery that suffering is the most universal, and the most significant, element in human awareness. This explanation remains remarkable—remarkable for its originality no less than for its depth and comprehensiveness.

The Buddha resolved the problem of human suffering in psychological terms. His diagnosis does not attempt to postulate a metaphysical and abstract cause for human suffering. It does not attempt to drag in the deity and appeal to an arbitrary dualism of good and evil, after the fashion of theologians.

The tormenting sense of sin, which plays so important a part in the pathological philosophy of the Church Fathers and their latter-day devotees, does not enter into it. There is no "doctrine of original sin". The critique is kept on a humanistic level; the explanation of human suffering is found in an immediate and intelligible cause.

Professor Barua of the University of Calcutta, in a lecture delivered recently to the Buddhist Brotherhood of the University of Ceylon on "Buddha's Greatness and Role", said: "Buddha's *Abhisambodhi* (Enlightenment) proved itself to be of far-reaching effects on man's civilization. India gained through it a dynamic view of reality in lieu of the static view in the Upanishads. The world got a religion without the belief in a personal God, but which fully functioned to create the ideals of character and conduct and to awaken and establish faith in their reality, and also a vigorous missionary religion, which was destined to become a living force in Asiatic and World civilization. A sound system of ethics was built upon psychological foundations, defining and raising the standards of human conduct and heightening the values of human life, efforts and experiences. It gave rise to a system of philosophy, critical in its spirit, dialectical in its mode of argument, analytical in its method, synthetic in its purpose, positivistic in its conclusions, mystical in its practice but rational in its structure".

There are very few things on which it is possible to get men to agree. Perhaps there is only one thing which all men agree that they want. That is happiness, wisdom may be above rubies in value, but happiness is always worth while—it is the “pearl of great price”, for in the word “Happiness” is summed up all the desires, all the needs of mankind, yes, even of angels, or the gods themselves.

The demand for happiness has been so constant, the need for it so pressing and universally felt that, had it been at all easily attained, surely by now we should have understood how to secure it. Yet in this age of the “Four Freedoms” and of the Atomic Bomb, 6,000 years or more since the founding of the first civilised city, we do not seem to be getting any closer to happiness—quite the reverse. Evidently then, happiness is not something which simply happens.

Man's quest of happiness goes on from age to age and the “pearl of great price” is never found. For the mind of man is never content and in his spirit there is a sword of pain. The more sensitive he becomes to the beauty and splendour of life, the more he suffers because of its inequalities, its tragedies and its horrors. The more he loves—and that is the only way in which he can fulfil his nature—the more he agonises ; because love is itself a pain as well as a joy, caused by the essential loneliness of the individual and the thought of death. The more knowledge he attains, the more elusive becomes the ultimate mystery of Truth. As Athanasius once confessed, “the more he thought, the less he comprehended”, So with all of us. For the understanding in which we put our trust appears to recede with the increase of knowledge. We journey and never arrive.

On the walls of Kelaniya Temple are seen some of the masterpieces of a Sinhalese artist. There on one wall, is depicted the “Birth of a Nation”,—the Buddha on his death-bed, and Sakra and Vishnu receiving the Master's command to protect Vijaya and Lanka. On another wall, is a whole panorama of the landing of Vijaya and his followers in Lanka. Let us suppose the *Vihara* inhabited by a colony of flies, to whom the pictures are familiar objects. They have crossed and recrossed them many times. They perceive the irregularities of their surface. They may be aware of the varieties in the patches of colour, and possibly of the odour of the pigments employed by the artist. Knowledge in a certain sense of the pictures they may be said to have, but how much ? They have experience of some of their features, and scientific flies may have analysed, from a fly's viewpoint, their ingredients. Yet of why they are there, or why those colours take those particular patterns, they know and can know nothing. They see, indeed, all that is to be seen. There is no obstacle, no barrier between them and the wealth of artistry, of

beauty and meaning in the paintings. None the less a sort of veil intervenes, so that the scenes in the pictures ; the Birth of the Sinhalese Race to carry aloft the Torch, the setting into motion of what was destined to become a great civilization, they are and must forever remain ignorant. For them all this is eternally remote though near, and impenetrable though unguarded. The fault is not in the pictures, but in themselves ; nor in a thousand, nor in ten thousand lives can they cross the invisible and inviolable threshold. Even for the human observer, unless he is already in their secrets, they have no voice, and analysis of their physical features avails nothing. The deeper the analysis goes the further it wanders from the true path of understanding, even from entrance through its open gate to the labyrinthine corridors of past and present time.

So with us and the universe. The obstacle to our comprehension of its nature and structure and the laws governing it is nowhere else than in us ; the disability is ours. The banquet is spread, and nothing is denied us that we can take for ourselves, but we are “bound and leashed.” “Just like a dog, brethren”, says the Buddha, “tied up by a leash to a stout pillar or stake. If he goes on he goes up to that pillar or stake. If he stands . . . squats . . . lies down . . . it is close to that pillar or stake ; so is the human being, leashed and bound down.”

Even thus disabled, philosophers and thinkers throughout the ages, have attempted to picture reality. And up to date, with what results ? The results, it may also be allowed, and as might be expected, are disappointingly sketchy, among them a few bold drawings, by great masters of technique, from Plato's sweeping hand, or Hegel's, have attracted attention ; the majority of efforts have been as water spilt upon the ground. And, indeed, no one can be so bereft of intelligence as to enter so light-heartedly upon such an undertaking, to suppose it within the compass of any man to solve the overwhelming riddle of being, or to fancy that the best of minds can do more than perceive the profundity of the abyss. “The man of philosophic turn has a foreboding that beneath this reality in which we live and move and have our being another and altogether different reality lies concealed”, says Nietzsche, that hard, disillusioned thinker.

We move in a world of assumptions that are almost as unnoticed as the air we breathe. Yet at moments every alert intelligence senses the void beneath these formulae, and asks with Pilate : “What is truth ?” Can we know anything outside the narrow circle of our own perceptions ? How did life originate ? What is the purpose of existence ? Do the dead exist ? Whither is humanity tending ?—This anxiety of man to know the end is essentially human ; it is a kind of infirmity of the mind, and has nothing in common with universal reality. The mind is

certainly a part of reality, but the part is not the equal of the whole. There will remain throughout time and beyond time the final unaccountableness.

"That man", says Professor W. Macneile Dixon, "can do so much as set about an inquiry into his own origin: is sufficiently astonishing, and his chief claim to dignity. That he should succeed is a fantastic notion, never on this side of sanity to be entertained. Enough that he has had the audacious fancy to spread his wings for such a flight. 'He who knows that he does not know', says the proverb, 'is never a fool.' Reality is not to be caught in the meshes of our human concepts and categories. The net we fling contains no water when it returns to us, only a few drops cling to it."

Since humanity began to exist, it has not advanced a single step on the road of the mystery of life. No question which we ask ourselves on the subject touches, on any side, the sphere in which our intelligence is formed and moves. There is, perhaps, no relation possible or imaginable between the organ that puts the question and the reality that ought to reply to it. The most active and searching enquiries of late years have taught us nothing.

THE ETERNAL VERITIES

Cogito, ergo sum, said Descartes. 'I think, therefore I am'. He desired a platform, or rather an undeniable proposition, as the foundation of his philosophic thought. His successors have not found it either undeniable or sufficient. They have rejected, too, such alternatives as 'I act, therefore I am'. 'I desire, therefore I am'. Let us suggest still another. No philosophers or religions, have so far attempted to deny us our pains. They relieve us of all else. They have taken from us our personality and our freedom. They have, however, left us our sorrows. Let us take, then, as our foundation the proposition 'I suffer, therefore I am'. And let us add to it the converse and equally true statement, 'I am, therefore I suffer'.

The story of humanity becomes the story of a long procession of sufferers, for whose sufferings no justification is offered, of "poor souls" intellectually and morally confounded, who entered existence blind to any reason for the coming and will leave it blind, who cannot so much as conjecture their origin, or the meaning of their lives, whose elevation above the lower creatures has been their direst misfortune, their ideals an accentuation of their sorrows.

Sorrow—that which is, as a man's shadow, with him along the pathway of life. The existence of a man begins with weakness, which is sorrow; in childhood the reins of duty bring sorrow: in the prime of manhood the ceaseless strife of achieving a living for self and family brings sorrow: in the declining years are sickness, weakness, dependency, sorrow and death. Such, O Brethren, is the round

of existence. The stirring of the passions, the lust of hate and envy, the thirst for power, the pride in self in the harvest of years, all these are barren in the winter of old age—in the chill frost of disillusionment. Hear, O Brethren, the Noble Truth! That which abides in sorrow. The tides of time wash the shores of *Samsara* (ocean of birth and death) ceaselessly where being is. I proclaim, therefore, the Truth of Infelicity.

See ye these leaves, O Brethren! This hand which now crushes forth their sweet fragrance was powerless to produce, and is equally powerless to recover the delicate stems and fronds to their original state. Hear the Truth! As this hand hath crushed these leaves, so shall all things bend to the law of impermanency. All aggregates, all composite things are without permanency, nay, lack a permanent ego. Therefore, insomuch as ye cling to this and to that, seeking to grasp it for its fragrance, ye cling to passing shadow, ye grasp sorrow, for all that ye grasp or cling to is impermanent. As ye sit in the sun, warm though it be, yet is its light obstructed by your bodies, your forms, your materiality. Hear then, O Brethren, the second Noble Truth, the Truth of the cause of Infelicity.

The sun sets, O Brethren, far beneath us, yet immeasurably beyond the real ball of the sun lies the city by the lake with its myriad lights, myriad sounds, its myriad colours, its bulk now veiled in shadow while we here above enjoy the lights. Hear, O Brethren, the Third Noble Truth—The Truth of the cessation of Infelicity. Bright is the Doctrine and clear, nor ceases to shine forth, yet but a little glow touches the city. Here, far removed, the clamour of senses, the lust of wealth, the stench of hypocrisy, do not touch us. In the still waters of reflection can ye see mirrored all the myriad deceits of the city. Thus is the Law exemplified; for as the light shineth in the day so shall observance of the Precepts lead ye a little at a time upon the Path. Thus, O Brethren, do I proclaim the third Noble Truth—The Truth of the cessation of Infelicity.

In the love of Self lies suffering, in the clinging to the thought of a permanent ego lies error. In the grasp of material possession lies insubstantiality. In the aspiration for personal fame lies folly. Cease not, O Brethren, to follow the Precepts, and abide in love of all—not as ye see them, but as ye know them. In not-clinging, not grasping, not aspiring, lies the way to the cessation of Infelicity. Thus, O Brethren, do I proclaim the Noble Truth of the Path that leads to the cessation of Infelicity. Verily, it is the Aryan Eightfold Path, to wit: Right View, Right Aspiration, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Living, Right Effort, Right Thought, and Right Rapture.

Never has a religion set out its case with so complete an appeal to human rational powers and empirical judgment. There is no misericordia, no thought of anyone having suffered and died to provide an escape from this present evil world. In Buddhism, at the foundation, in the four Noble Truths, there is an appeal to the moral experience of man : (1) the Truth about suffering—we are asked to observe and to generalise to the effect that life and suffering are inseparable ; (2) the Truth of the cause of suffering—we are asked to follow a close analysis which shows the root of suffering to lie in craving ; (3) the Truth of the cure of suffering—a clear deduction from the diagnosis, this craving must be extinguished ; (4) the Truth of the way to effect the cure—an adjustment of means to end, resulting in the Aryan Eightfold Path.

These are the eternal verities that the Buddha discovered whilst meditating beneath the Bo tree in far off Gaya. There, whilst in *dhyana* (deep meditation) Gautama passed into *Samadhi* or became “ In Tune with the Infinite ”, that is, became one with the universe and received an influx of great understanding—Enlightenment.

The shackles of the body—its earthly limitations—can be thrown off and man’s mind can be attuned to the Universal Mind (*Dhammatā*). During this period, intuitive knowledge, great inspiration, and a new vision of life are had, some call this great experience a psychic phenomenon. But the ancients knew it and taught it as *Samādhi*, the merging of man’s mind with the Universal mind.

It is not a religious doctrine ; it is “ Cosmic consciousness ”, it is the application of simple, natural laws to uncover the veil of illusion between us and reality. They make possible a source of great strength and a regeneration of man’s personal powers. Those who develop these powers are not Saviours or Prophets, they are Guides of humanity, who show the Way to those who say with Omar Khayyam :

“ There was the Door to which I found no Key ;
There was the Veil through which I might
not see ”.

They are often called Mystics. They are content with sensing the Mystery. They are mysterious people. They do not see visions ; they develop vision. They do not possess second sight—whatever that may be. They possess first sight. They are often spoken of as possessing a higher state of consciousness than their fellows. It would be simpler

to say that they are men who have taken the trouble to keep awake, to be fully conscious, and

“ Open for ye the Doors to the Deathless State ”.

(*Ariyapariyesena Sutta*)

The fourth verity of the four Noble Truths shows us the Way to the “ Deathless State ” where exists that “ Pearl of Great Price ”. The Path hither, lies through the overcoming of ignorance by knowledge, of passion by self-control, of perversity by steadfastness, of hatred by love. In other words : “ Let the shell perish that the Pearl may appear. ” What it would be like no words can tell ; “ Beyond the world of the born, the produced, the compounded, full of beginnings and ends, of origins and dissolutions, lay a region invisible, indefinable where death entered no more ” (*Iti-Vuttaka*).

Death throws its shadows over man before he is born, for the stream of life flows most swiftly through the embryo and young foetus, and then inexorably slows down, even within the uterus. Out of the unknown into the womb, in the womb into the image of Man, from the image of Man to dust. This is the whole history of the one who, during his brief span on earth, says : ‘ I am the monarch of all I survey. ’

And what that ‘ Monarch ’, during his short span from cradle to grave, is heir to, the Buddha in His first discourse entitled, ‘ The Foundation of the Kingdom of Righteousness ’ (*Dhamma Chakka Sutta*), summed up thus : “ Birth is painful, and so is old age ; disease is painful, and so is death. Union with the unpleasant is painful, painful is separation from the pleasant ; and any craving that is unsatisfied, that too is painful. In brief, the five aggregates which spring from attachment (the conditions of individuality and its cause), they are painful. ”

Whilst this is the dower of all those who are born in and are attached to this world, all the while the perfect world exists, a world untroubled by the contraries, where discord, change, disunity are unknown. No Satan revolts, no serpent enters, no conflict disturbs that garden of repose. All quarrels are ended, all clamour is stilled. Sin and pain alike are banished, and

No sound of human sorrow mounts to mar

The serene everlasting calm of Nirvana.

—Reproduced from Parts I & II of
The Revolt in the Temple, a forthcoming publication

“Kelaniya, the eternal City, regenerated from age to age.”

SELALIHINI SANDESAYA

KELANIYA

Through The Ages

KELANIYA, in her own rights, is the undisputed mistress of ancient Lanka. Nobody made her the Capital City, and through the history of ancient Lanka we see that Kelaniya is one of the cradles of civilization. He who seeks to evolve the history of this eternal city from the mass of nebulous tradition and legend, will find it no easy task, particularly when he comes in contact with the traces of widely different nationalities and diverse religions. Only after consulting the annals of the ancient Aryans, the legends of Nagas, Rakshasas and Yakkhas, the epic of sage Valmiki, the *Ramayana*, and our own old chronicles, the *Mahāvamsa* and *Dipavamsa*, would he be able to obtain a true picture of the history of this everlasting city. I am not a historian, nor do I propose to adopt the didactic style of the scholar. I propose, as the mood moves me, to speak of the principal events enacted in this city sanctified by the touch of the feet of the Master. Wherever possible, we will identify ourselves with the time and the language of the epoch of which we speak. I shall remember the images and silhouettes of princes, lovers and monks, beautiful temples, and the stately palaces, of a city whose very name is the saga of the centuries.

THE EPIC AGE

The earliest mention of Lanka as well as Kelaniya, known also as Kalyani, is made in the *Ramayana*. Here Valmiki describes Lanka as being inhabited mainly by Rakshasas, a highly civilized non-Aryan race with martial tendencies, skilled in warfare. Although the Rakshasas inhabited and dominated the greater part of India, they made Lanka their central kingdom. Here dwelt Ravana, the mighty Emperor of the Rakshasas, who ruled his many kingdoms under an organised system of government.

Ravana's abduction of Princess Sita, wife of the Aryan Prince Rama, was the cause of the invasion of Lanka by her husband in order to rescue his wife. Rama with his brother Lakshman and the faithful Hanuman, gathered together a vast army, to invade Lanka. Unable to find any other mode of transporting his army across the sea to Lanka, he constructed the Rameswaram Causeway. While awaiting the completion of this Causeway, Rama was able to obtain information of Sita's whereabouts as well as of the strength of Ravana's armies and of his stronghold, Lankapura. Through his ingenuity, Rama contrived to gain the sympathies of Vibhishana, a brother of Ravana, by convincing him of the righteousness of his cause. Vibhishana rendered invaluable help and guidance throughout the struggle.

A long and arduous contest ensued, and ultimately Ravana was slain in a duel, by Rama. Prior to his departure to India, the victorious Rama crowned Vibhishana as King of Lanka, with his capital at Kelaniya. Vibhishana was deified after his death and the present *Devale* at Kelaniya is dedicated to him as the patron deity of the place.

Apart from this memorable epic *Ramayana*, Kelaniya is mentioned in the *Valahassa Jataka*, one of the birth stories of the Buddha. One fact to be gathered from this story is, that Kelaniya existed in that ancient era as a centre of civilization. Being almost the only city to be mentioned in these early annals in connection with Lanka, it is not unreasonable to infer that Kelaniya was the principal city of Lanka in those days. The inhabitants were then referred to as Yakkhas.

The three visits of the Buddha to Lanka are recorded in the *Mahāvansa* and the *Dipavansa*, the oldest chronicles of Lanka. In the account of the first two visits of the Buddha, the only reference to Kelaniya is the record of the incident that Maniakkhika, the Naga king of Kelaniya, who became a convert to the faith on the Buddha's first visit to Mahiyangana, requested the Enlightened One, on his second visit to Naga Dvīpa, to come to his capital city, Kelaniya.

The third visit of the Buddha was made to Kelaniya, when he came accompanied by five hundred *Arahats*, at the personal invitation of Maniakkhika, the Naga King of Kelaniya. On arrival the Enlightened One and the Brotherhood were received with great rejoicings and veneration. The Buddha, having bathed in the river Kelani, was conducted with the Brotherhood in ceremony to a *Mandapa* (canopy) in which there was set up a Throne-seat studded with gems, and was served with sumptuous foods. Enshrining this *Mandapa* and the gem-studded throne the king built a Stupa, which became known as the Kelaniya Chetiya or Dagoba. To this day, a spot in the bend of the Kelani River, opposite to the Vihara, is shown as the place where the Buddha bathed. The *Selalihini Sandesaya* mentions a Vihara known as *Sivuru Dā-gē* built on the spot where Buddha left his robes. This is not in existence to-day.

2000 YEARS OF HISTORY

From that time until the reign of King Devanampiyatissa, (307—247 B.C.), the first Buddhist monarch of Lanka, no mention of Kelaniya is made in the chronicles. The younger brothers of King Devanampiyatissa, Mahanga and Uttiya, became rulers under his suzerainty, Mahanaga in Rohana and Uttiya at Kelaniya. King Uttiya (267 B.C.) reconstructed the original Chetiya built by King Maniakkhika, and maintained a fraternity of Bhikkhus. His nephew, King Mahanaga's son, Yatalatissa, enhanced the beauty and importance of the place by constructing a splendid five-storeyed building within the precincts.

The reign of Kelanitissa, the grandson of Uttiya, was a mixture of romance and tragedy. It was then an established custom at the palace for the king, assisted by his Queen, to supervise the daily offering of alms to the Sangha. The king's brother, who had previously fled from the court to avoid the wrath of the king for carrying on an intrigue with the Queen, adopted an ingenious ruse to correspond with his beloved. He arranged for his servant to enter the palace in the guise of a bhikkhu with the rest of the fraternity, and to drop a letter for the Queen. This was done, but the rustle of the note attracted the attention of the king, who picked it up.

The king in his blind rage, misled by the similarity of the writing to that of the Maha Thera, ordered that saintly High Priest to be thrown into a cauldron of boiling oil. Later it transpired that the king's brother, who had been a pupil of the Maha Thera, had acquired a similarity of writing to that of the High Priest.

Very soon the sea began to encroach rapidly upon the west coast of Lanka, and the King firmly believed this to be a curse upon him for the sacrilege he had committed. Whereupon he consulted the wise men of his realm who advised the king to make a sacrifice of what is "most near, most precious and most dear", to appease the *Devas* of the sea, whereupon his only child, the beautiful Prince Devī, volunteered to make the sacrifice. Devī was placed in a covered boat, on which was inscribed her name and her royal connection, and launched into the ocean. The floods then subsided and, upon hearing the stories of the havoc wrought by the waters, the King proceeded to view the devastated land. It is stated that when he reached the place now known as Etubunwala, the earth suddenly opened up and the King with his elephant was swallowed up in the chasm.

The boat containing the Princess drifted towards the southern coast of the island, where it was brought ashore, at Kirinda, by some fishermen. This was brought to the notice of King Kavantissa, the ruler of Rohana, who proceeded immediately to the spot. When he read the inscription and found her to be a princess of royal blood, she was led in procession to his capital, Mahagama, where he made her his Queen. Throughout history she is known as Vihara Mahadevi.

This union brought together the two royal families of Lanka. But what is more important, it gave Lanka a great hero in their elder son, Dutugemunu, who brought Lanka under one sovereignty by subjugating the Tamils. In his reign (161—137 B.C.) Kelaniya is said to have held five hundred bhikkhus.

King Kanittha Tissa (223—241 A.C.), reigning at Anuradhapura, built an Uposatha Sala at Kelaniya. From then on until the reign of Jayabahu I (1108—1145 A.C.) for nearly nine hundred years historical records are devoid of any mention of Kelaniya. During the reign of Jayabahu, Prince Vikrama Bahupursued Manabharana to Kelaniya. And it was used as a recruiting camp during the reign of Gajabahu II (1131—1153 A.C.) by Prince Parakramabahu (Parakrama the Great). A reference to Kelaniya is made in an inscription at Polonnaruwa, as among the important places visited by King Nissanka Malla.

Destruction swept over Kelaniya when that south Indian invader, Prince Magha of Kalinga, with his army of 24,000 Keralas, conquered and pillaged Lanka for a long years. When Vijaya Bahu III (1220—1224 A.C.) in his campaign against this vandal gained Kelaniya, he repaired the image house and the Dagoba, and the gate tower on the east side, and crowned the Dagoba with a pinnacle of gold.

His son and successor, King Parakramabahu II (1239—1269 A.C.) of literary fame, restored the decayed Pas Mahal Pasada built by Yatalatissa to its original splendour, paved the courtyard of the chetiya with stone slabs, and generally continued the munificent gifts of his father.

From this period onward, Kelaniya resumed its past splendour once more. It flourished as a great seat of learning and culture. Under Vilgammula Ari Parakrama Sangha Raja, the head priest of the Raja Maha Kelani Vihara, it gained fame in Theravada Buddhism.

When Jayawardhanapura (Kotte) became the capital, Kelaniya Vihara became the principal shrine of the King and the nation, and received its present royal title of Raja Maha Vihara. The beauty and the splendour of the city of Kelaniya with her places, image-houses and chetiyas, her gorgeous shops and gate towers, and banners with bells tinkling in the wind, inspired many a prose and poem in Sinhalese literature in the halcyon days of Parakramabahu VI (1412—1467 A.C.). And Kelaniya continued to be similarly favoured by the succeeding Kings of Kotte.

In the reign of King Bhuvanaika Bahu VI (1472—1480 A.C.), the fame of Kelani Vihara reached other eastern lands. In 1476 A.C. the King of Burma sent a mission of Bhikkhus to Lanka, to be instructed in the Dhamma and to be ordained at the "spot where the Buddha bathed". Religious institutions had perished and the Bhikkhus were scattered and were without leaders of guidance when Ramadhipathi came to the throne. He, by his valour, brought about a united land, consolidated the provinces of Ceylon and reigned at Hamsavati. He then set about organizing the religious activities of the people. The King consulted some of the learned Sangha in his Kingdom and among them was Mogalyana Thera who possessed great influence.

The King with the advice of this Thera decided to send an embassy to Lanka with 45 Bhikkhus to receive the ordination of the Maha Vihara fraternity of Ceylon. The King of Burma assembled 45 members of the Sangha who were known to be pious and learned, and invited them to proceed to Ceylon and obtain ordination according to Theravada rites at the river Kalyani. The Burmese embassy started in two divisions for greater security in accomplishing their object. One ship was in charge of minister Parakrama Duta, and the other of minister Chandra Duta.

King Bhuvanaika Bahu received this embassy from a foreign State with due honour. He caused the Sacred Tooth Relic to be exhibited to the visitors and held a great festival. He consulted his ministers and the Sangha Raja regarding the request of King Ramadhipathi for the Maha Vihara *Upasampada* (Ordination) to the Bhikkhus from Burma. Twenty-four Maha Theras of great repute and influence were selected from the Ceylon Sangha to officiate at the ceremony.

A decorated canopy was set upon boats, hitched together upon the Kelani river and amidst great rejoicings, the Ceylon Sangha headed by Vidagama Maha Sthavira admitted the Burmese Bhikkhus to the Maha Vihara Fraternity. The ceremonies lasted for three days. King Bhuvanaika Bahu proceeded in state to the assembly of Bhikkhus and, addressing the Burmese Theras, offered them many valuable and rare presents of robes, fans, carpets and such articles as a Bhikkhu is authorized to receive. The king was not satisfied with these. He told them further, that all these presents would last only a few years, and he desired to bestow on them an offering that would last the lifetime of each recipient; thus declaring he gave each of the Bhikkhus a new name of Sinhalese origin—names of those who had gained distinction in the Buddhist History of Ceylon.

King Ramadhipathi did a great service. Not only did he establish the Ordination but built a Chapter house in strict accordance with tradition. This he named Kalyana Sima in memory of the ceremony at Kelani river. The King of Burma recorded the history of Buddhism and of Buddhist missions to Ceylon and the details of his own mission on slabs of marble which are preserved to this day, and are known as Kalyani Inscriptions, in commemoration of the great event.

The beauty of Kelaniya induced King Dharma Parakrama Bahu IX of Kotte (1509—1528 A.C.) to make it his residence by building a five-storeyed palace, which the Kings of Kotte thereafter used as their summer residence. In the Vihara precincts, there is an inscription carved on the front face of a large slab of granite, dating from this King's reign. Where this slab originally stood is not known; but it was not spared in the wanton destruction of Kelani Vihara wrought by the Portuguese in the 16th century; it is in eight pieces now.

The inscription is dated the 19th year of the reign of *Siri Sanga Bo Sri Parakrama Bahu*. It details repairs executed at the *Raja-Maha-Kelani Viharaya* through the agency of the *Gana-nayaka* and the *Minister Parakrama Bahu Vijayakkonnara*. The title of *Sri Rajaratna Piriwan Thera* was conferred by this *gal-sannasa* on the incumbent of the time; it further specifies the several shrines, &c., then comprised in the Temple purlieus, and the boundaries of the lands, &c., attaching to it. Few of these original shrines remain; but most of the villages mentioned are in existence to this day.

TEXT OF INSCRIPTION

1. සමස්ත ශ්‍රී සම්මානිරාජ ත්‍රිකුටනානතුකර ශාසන කුල
2. තිලක සකල ලෝක දිව්‍යාකර අමාත මහානිව්‍යාණ දායක ගෞතම
3. සවිඤ්ඤ රාජෝක්තමයාණන්වහන්සේට දෙදුන් එක්පණස්වනුව ලංකා රාජප්‍රියම
4. පැවිණි ශ්‍රී සිංහලාබ්‍යවිර පර රාජ රාජප්‍රියම සාමන්ත රාජ කිරිවරත්ත [. . . .]
5. සෙවිත පාදමුළුප් සිරිකර කිරණායමාන කිරිති බඩ බන්ධුර [. . . .] ගුණ
6. රත්නාලකාන විශුඬු බුද්ධාංකුර ශ්‍රීමත් සිරිසක්කෝ ශ්‍රී සරත්තමානු චත්‍රවර්ත
7. සාමන්තවහන්සේට දායකවනු නමම, සුර එකොලොස්වක රජමහා කැලණි
8. විහාරසෙසි බුදුන් වැඩ ඉඳ වලඳු බමුණ දෙසනාකලාවු උත්තම ස්වාත
9. යෙක එහි මෙ දවසට පරාවාසව තිබෙන පින්තම් කවරෙදුයි නියමදුන වෛතසා
10. දිවු සිසු නැන් පිණිණිව තිබෙනායි අසා රජයෙන් නොයෙක් විශ්දමුත් දී කර
11. වන්ට සියා ගණි නායකතානව හා සරත්තමානු විජයක්කොනාර අමාත්‍යය
12. ණන්ට භාරකල පසු වෛතසයෙහි පුණ්‍ය පිරිසම් ආදිවු සුන්වුන් කම්මානත්
13. කරවා උතුරු දිග සැට රියන් කළුගල් පවුරක් හා නැගෙනහිර සඳකඩ පහනක්
14. න් සුක්ක ගල් පසියකුත් බදවා සමාදි පිළිමගෙය නා පිළිමගෙය මෙම විහාරයෙ
15. හි පුළුදිග වාසල මෙම තැන ගල්පසිය කුඩා ත්‍රිවන්ත ගෙය තෙල්තවාරගෙය සාංඝික
16. වැසිසලිය බස්නාහිර වාසල ඇතුළුවු තැන් මුල් පිසකරවා පස්මාල් පාය සැටපිළි
17. මගෙය පිවුරුදුගෙය යනාදිවු මෙකී තැන් තටු කොහොල් හරවා අතිකුත් විහාරේ නො
18. යෙක් සුන්වුන් කම්මානත් පිරිසම්වා සමාධාරවු පසු ශ්‍රී නාමයෙන් මෙ සියන පිහා
19. රගෙහි අපගේ පිරිදු නාමයක් පවත්නට උවමැනවයි ගෙගණිනි නායක තැනට
20. ශ්‍රී රාජරත්න විජිවන්තෙරත් අස්වා විහාර සනකයෙන් ඇත්තල අස්සල මුළුතැන්ගෙය උණ
21. පැන්ගෙය ආදිවු කොයෙක් මුරවෙ අයව හා දෙමල සංඝල අය ආදිවු නොයෙක් දෙනාව මිලයට සිල්
22. යෙන් හා අය ප්‍රචණ්ඩව සිරිසෙන් සිවුටට අමුණක වසට සතර කැලය ගන්නා ලාසෙන් පි දෙ
23. පැලක් අය දෙනවත් පොල්ගස් දසයට පණමක් බැගින් පවුරු දෙනවත් නියමකො
24. ට සිරසද පවත්නාගෙන් පවතිනා ලෙසට පින්කම මුදුන් පත්කරවු ගෙයින් එන දවස පැ
25. මිණෙන රාජ රාජමහා මාතෘදිත් පිසින් දියුණුව වඩනකරවා පින්පුරවා ගන්නා ලෙ
26. සට සලස්වා සිලාලෙකඩය ස්කරවා පිළිවෙක නයාසෙන් පියවඩන කෝට්ටයෙහි ශ්‍රී මාලිගාවේ
27. සිංහාසනයෙහි වැසිසල මුදුලිවරුන් මැදවා වදල මෙහෙවරින් මෙ සිලාලෙකඩය ලියා දුන්
28. බවට සන්තස් කිරුමරගන් පේරුමාවම්භ රජමහා කැලණියට හිම වත්තල මල්සක්කො
29. රයි කුඩා මාබොලයි ගල්වළුතොටයි ගොන්නිතොටයි ගොබරුබ ගල්පොත්තයි ඊරුබොරුව
30. වැලියදද ඇතුළුව ගොස් ගෝණසේනේ වැසිසි රත්මුදු ඇලයි කෙස්ස කෙටු ගලයි වට
31. ගලයි ඇසල පාළුවයි පසුරුතොට ඇතුළයි දිවියාමුල්ලේ ඇතුළයි සුරත් දෙමයි ඉමිංඝිම
32. හ ගහයි.

TRANSLATION OF Inscription

Hail ! On the eleventh day of the bright half of the month of Nawam, in the 19th year of the reign of HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY SRIMAT SIRI SANGA BO SRI PARAKRAMA BAHU, Supreme Ruler of TRI SINHALA, (Ruhunu, Maya, Pihiti), Sovereign Lord of other Rajas, on whose lotus-feet have settled (like bees) jewels in the crowns of Kings of the neighbouring (countries) ; whose store of fame is bright as the beams of the moon, who is adorned with delightful... qualities like unto gems ; who is an immaculate embryo Buddha ; and who ascended the throne of LANKA in the year 2051 of the Era of the omniscient and supreme Gautama Buddha, sovereign lord of the glorious and true doctrine (*Dharma*), who gladdens the three worlds (of gods, men, and nagas), who is a *tilaka* ornament to the Royal race of Sakyas, and who is the sun of the universe and the giver of Nirvana, great, undying.

(The King) having reflected that the Vihara at RAJA MAHA KELANIYA was a holy spot where Buddha had vouchsafed to sit, to partake of food, and preach his doctrine, ascertained by inquiry what works of merit by way of repairs there were to be executed at this time ; and having heard that the *Chaitya* and all other edifices were in ruins, allotted much (money for) expenditure from the Royal Palace, and assigned the task of causing the work to be done to the GANA-NAYAKA, and the MINISTER PARAKRAMA BAHU VIJAYAKKONARA. (They) had the plastering of the *Chaitya*, and other repairs, executed ; built a parapet wall of granite sixty cubits (in length) on the north ; and constructed the eastern flight of steps with a *sanda-kada-pahana* (moonstone) ; and thoroughly rebuilt the *Samadhi-pilima-geya*, the *Na-pilima-geya*, the Eastern Gate of the same Monastery and its flight of stone-steps, the minor *Trivanka* house, the *Tel-katara-geya*, the *vesikiliya* (latrine) of the priesthood, and the Western Gate ; cleared the rubbish in the *Pas-mahal-paya*, *Sala-pilima-geya*, *Siwuru-da-geya* and other structures ; and repaired also various other dilapidations, and the like, in the Vihara.

(Continued on next page)

After the complete accomplishment of these works, (the King), considering it desirable that HIS MAJESTY's Royal name should be perpetuated in this Vihara, conferred on the CHIEF PRIEST of the Monastery, the title of SRI RAJARATNA PIRIWAN THERA, and ordained that all who were in occupation of the lands of the Temple, (as well as) those who served in the elephant stables, the horse stables, the kitchen, hot-bath rooms, persons employed in various other occupations, Tamils and Sinhalese, and those who paid rent and owned land, should give (to the Temple) two *pelas* of paddy (measured) by the *laha* of 4 *nelis* for every amuna of sowing extent, and money payment at the rate of one *panama* for every ten cocoanut trees. (His Majesty) thus completed this meritorious work so that it may last so long as the sun and moon endure.

In obedience to the command delivered by His MAJESTY, seated upon the throne at the Royal Palace of JAYAWARDHANA KOTTE in the midst of the *Mudalivaru*, that an inscription on stone should be made, in order that Kings and Chief Ministers and others in future ages may acquire merit by preserving and improving (the Temple), I, SANHAS TIRUVARAHAN PERUMAL, certify to the engraving and grant of this lithic record.

The boundaries to RAJA MAHA KELANIYA are, *Wattala*, *Malsantota*, *Kuda Mabola*, *Galwalu-tota*, *Gongi-tota*, *Godaruba-gala galpotta*, the stone pillar at *Gasgona-sena*, including *Uruboruwa veliyadda*, *Rammudu-ela*, *Kessa-ketu-gala*, *Wata-gala*, *Esala-paluwa*, *Pasuru-tota-etula*, *Diviya-mulle-etula*, *Kurandole*, the boundary pillar, and the great river (Kelani ganga).

THE PORTUGUESE ERA

The reign of King Dharma Parakrama Bahu is notable in the history of Ceylon for one outstanding event in particular—the arrival of the Portuguese, on the pretext of establishing a trading station at Colombo.

In 1550, the aged king Bhuvanaika Bahu VII (1528—1550 A.C.) was murdered in his summer palace at Kelaniya at the instigation of a Portuguese Viceroy. John M. Senaveratna, in his book *Vidiya Bandara* thus describes the incident: "The king, grown old and enfeebled and weighted down by the cares and anxieties of recent years, entrusted the government to Vidiya Bandara and retired to Kelaniya. One day, the 29th December of 1550, while standing at one of the windows of his palace in Kit-Siri-Mevan Kelaniya, he was shot through the head by a Mulatto slave named Antonio de Barcelos, the murder having been arranged by that slave's master, the Viceroy Don Afonso de Noronha, in resentment for the humiliation which that official had felt when a few weeks previously he was peremptorily ordered out of the Kingdom of Bhuvanaika Bahu".

Upon the death of Bhuvanaika Bahu, Don Jo Dharmapala (1551—1597 A.C.) succeeded to the throne. This Roman Catholic donated Kelani north and south of the river, and the income of temples, to Portuguese monks, to establish Roman Catholic institutions. Twenty years later the Portuguese followed up their victories at Wattala and Kaduwela with the total destruction of the Kelani Vihara. "To their lasting dishonour, it was left to the Portuguese, before the close of the 16th century, first to confiscate its revenues, and twenty years later to destroy ruthlessly this Vihara. One of Ceylon's choicest Temples, hoary in its old time fame". (*Ceylon Antiquary* Jan'y. 1916).

In spite of the Roman Catholic Church near by, the sanctity of this sacred spot, though bare and desolate, was undiminished, and people still continued to visit the ruins of this once renowned temple. Medieval vandalism was unable to wipe away what was ingrained in the minds of the people.

THE DUTCH PERIOD

When the Dutch conquered the Portuguese, there was nothing left for them to destroy except the devotion of a people to their heritage and the simple rituals at the ruined shrine. While at war, the Dutch had not the time to restrict this worship, but they had barely settled themselves, when they issued an edict in 1682 A.C. against the continuance of worship, and began their policy of establishing Christian schools.

When in 1689 A.C. Vimala Dharma Suriya, the King of Kandy, wished to rebuild Kelaniya, a refusal was sent because the Dutch clergy objected. In a letter to the Representative of the Dutch East India Company, the Dutch Consistory appealed for support "in the contest between the Kingdom of Darkness and Light, that the cause of God might prevail over the cause of the Devil". By enforcing the edict of 1682 against the public exercise of "heathen ceremonies" at Kelaniya, the Dutch India Company supported the Dutch clergy, and withheld permission to carry on the simple rituals in a place held in veneration from time immemorial. In 1699, a solitary Bhikkhu with a casket of relics and three flags, with an escort of four drummers, was allowed to enter Kelaniya, and the King of Kandy was informed of this benevolent act.

Fifty-one years later, in 1750 A.C. another attempt was made to settle down at Kelaniya. A chief priest accompanied by a large retinue, sought permission to make Kelaniya his place of sojourn for the purpose of obtaining medical treatment. The Dutch doctor pronounced him to be of sound health, and a letter from Leuke Disava enabled him only to settle down just outside Colombo. Later, in their anxiety to please the King of Kandy, the Dutch, in 1782, allowed King Kirti Sri (1747—1782 A.C.)

ve the Chetiya restored. The British, who assumed rule in 1796, were more tolerant than their predecessors, and did not interfere in the worship of the people.

The undying honour of inaugurating the present suscitation of Kelani Vihara falls on Ven. Dehigaspe Atadassi, a pupil of that illustrious Thera, Velivita Ranankara, the last Sangha Raja of Ceylon, who inspired King Kirti Sri to restore the Vihara and grant endowments. In 1780 Kirti Sri granted a papper Sannas decreeing the incumbency of the Kelani Raja Maha Vihara to the pupillary succession of Mapitigama Buddharakkhita, the pupil of Dehigaspe Atadassi, and granted paddy land at Maniyangamuwa, near Avissawella, for the maintenance of the Viharakkhus. Up to this date the incumbency has continued in the Mapitigama succession, and has produced the chief priests of the Vihara who are always known by the names of Buddharakkhita, Sammarakkhita and Sangharakkhita, in order.

Since then, no important event has marked the story of Kelaniya. Nevertheless it shared the vicissitudes of the country. And a new chapter in the history of Kelani Vihara commenced in 1880, when Tudugala Don Philip of Sedawatte, who had an abiding interest in the Vihara at heart, was married in 'holy matrimony' to a 16-year old Helena Dep Weerasinghe by Canon Dias at Christ Church Cathedral, Mutwal. One full-moon day, in 1888, on entering the Vihara, she found herself, knee deep, in the mud churned up by the feet of the pilgrims, on its then unpaved floor. She had the Vihara paved and an inscribed stone with the initials D.W./1888, near the main entrance records a great benefaction which was to fructify into greater blessings in years to come. Perhaps it was then that the idea was born in her to restore this historic Vihara and bring it back to its ancient splendour.

In 1902, she replaced the old wooden flower altar (*pal-asna*) in the Vihara, with a marble one.

The year 1927 saw that vision of 1888 taking shape when she, the 61-year old Sedawatta Lama, the widow of the late Tudugala Don Philip Wijewardene, Muhandiram, laid the foundation stone for the complete restoration of the old Vihara, together with new additions. The annual Durutu Perahera which exists now was also revived in the same year. A few years before the completion of the work which she had so enthusiastically undertaken to accomplish, she was seized with a fatal illness to the great sorrow of everyone. But some time before her death, she was, at her own wish, brought to the Vihara, which she herself consecrated and endowed munificently.

Thus we see the renaissance of this ancient shrine, with 2500 years of history and splendour impregnated into its very soil, the pride and heritage of every

Sinhalese, be he Buddhist or Christian. Surely, four centuries of alien religion could not have drained out what was seeped into Sinhalese blood for twenty centuries. Assuredly it is a national heritage, and has shared the vicissitudes of the country throughout the ages. When Kelaniya fell, Lanka fell; when Kelaniya rose, Lanka rose.

Exactly 396 years ago (December 29, 1550) on the opposite bank of the Kelani river, in the then Royal Summer Palace, a gun-shot took effect. That shot, fired by a Mulatto slave at the instigation of his dastardly master, the Portuguese Viceroy, killed a great Sinhalese, Bhuvanaika Bahu VII of Kotte, and gave the right of succession to the throne of Lanka to the Portuguese puppet, Don Juan Dharmapala. With that shot there came upon the Sinhalese a period of gloom which gradually overpowered the whole nation and ended in total darkness in 1815.

With that darkness, national language and culture, national costumes, national customs and, last but not the least, the national religion, the greatest heritage of the Sinhalese, in short all that was national, suffered almost a total eclipse. Until the early part of this century, under the pall of a foreign yoke, local society aped the West in all things with zest and zeal, regardless of the suitability or otherwise of what was adopted.

During the latter part of the last century there came a national awakening. It was slow. It was sure. It came to stay. The everlasting honour of creating that first wave of enthusiasm falls to a few such as Migettuwatte Gunananda Thera, Colonel Olcott, the Anagarika Dharmapala, Walisinha Harischandra and Mrs. Musaeus Higgins.

The Durutu festival that takes place at Kelaniya this year signifies something far more than the annual celebrations. It is to celebrate the completion of the restoration of the Vihara destroyed by the Portuguese vandals four centuries ago and of the ancient ceremony of setting the eyes on the "awakening" of the Buddha Image. It is a tradition prevalent among the Sinhalese, that until the eyes are placed, no statue is regarded as a complete representation of the Enlightened Buddha, the eyes being symbolical of the Mind and Light.

This event, which will take place on the 28th December, 1946, with a gathering of the Sangha and laity from all parts of the Island, will be a day of memorable significance to the people of Sri Lanka. A shot fired on the opposite bank of the river and the pillage of the sacred shrine, started the decline of the Sinhalese. Will not the resurgence, 396 years afterwards, of this national heritage, with the complete symbol of the Enlightened Buddha, seated, serenely, facing the very spot where that fatal shot was fired, be a portent of great events yet to come?



Landing of Vijaya

ONE of the greatest migrations in Indian history, most far reaching in its shaping power on the fortunes of this country, took place when Vijaya and his followers landed in North-Western Lanka in 543 B.C.

In less than four generations barren wastes were turned into fruitfulness by thousands of immigrants from Northern India. Thousands of them came, ready from the day they landed on these shores to turn their strength to the development of the newly established State.

Most of these people were Sinhalese in heart and mind before they left their motherland. They brought with them, within them, rather, the ripened fruit of centuries of civilization, literature and art, poetry and music. Aryan culture was bodily transported to create and enrich the virgin civilization of Lanka. They dotted the country with settlements of farmers. They turned their industrial genius to the founding of diversified industries, building of cities, and the construction of wonderful irrigation works.

They fused easily and readily with those who had longer traditions than theirs of life in Ceylon. The mingling of these two streams of tradition and achievement quickly created a social civilization which advanced steadily from almost its inception.

The stage was thus set for the greatest and the grandest event that has ever happened in this country—the introduction of Buddhism into Ceylon.

*“Patiṭṭhissati devinda
Lankāyam mama Sāsanaṃ,
Tasmā saparivāraṃ taṃ
Rakkha Lankam ca Sādhukam.
—Mahāvamsa*

The Birth of A NATION

For a comprehensive understanding of this epoch-making event in the history of this country, it is necessary to go back to the very times of the active missionary period of the Master himself. The Buddha had blessed this Island with three visits. On his first visit, on the full-moon day of Durutu, nine months after he had reached Buddhahood, he took steps to ensure that the Island would be the scene of a great civilization. And so it came to pass that when after forty-five years of toil for the welfare of the world, the Buddha, on the day of his passing away, lay on the bed spread for him in the pleasure-garden of the Malla Princes in the city of Kusinara in India, from among the gods of the ten thousand world systems gathered there, the Lord addressed himself to Sakra, the Lord of Gods, who stood near :

“My doctrine, O Sakra, will eventually be established in the Island of Lanka ; and on that day, Vijaya, eldest son of Sinha Bahu, King of Sinhapura in the Lala country, lands there with seven hundred followers, and will assume the sovereignty there. Do thou, therefore, guard well the King and his train and the Island of Lanka.”

On receiving the Buddha's command, Sakra summoned Vishnu :

“Do thou, O Lotus-hued one, protect with zeal Prince Vijaya and his followers and their doctrine that is to endure in Lanka for five thousand years.”

This command of the Master induced Vishnu to make himself responsible for the welfare of this land in general, and of Buddhism in particular, for the ensuing five thousand years. And Vishnu, in order to be more effectively to discharge his responsibility and duty, took under his protection a vessel which was at the moment drifting off the coast of Ceylon.

Thus did it happen that on the very day the Lord landed at Kusinara, Vijaya of the Solar race and his band of 700 followers, of Sinhapura, in pursuance of the sign of the Master, and of the gods, landed in

Ceylon and so helped to found in Lanka what thereafter came to be known as the Sinhalese race.

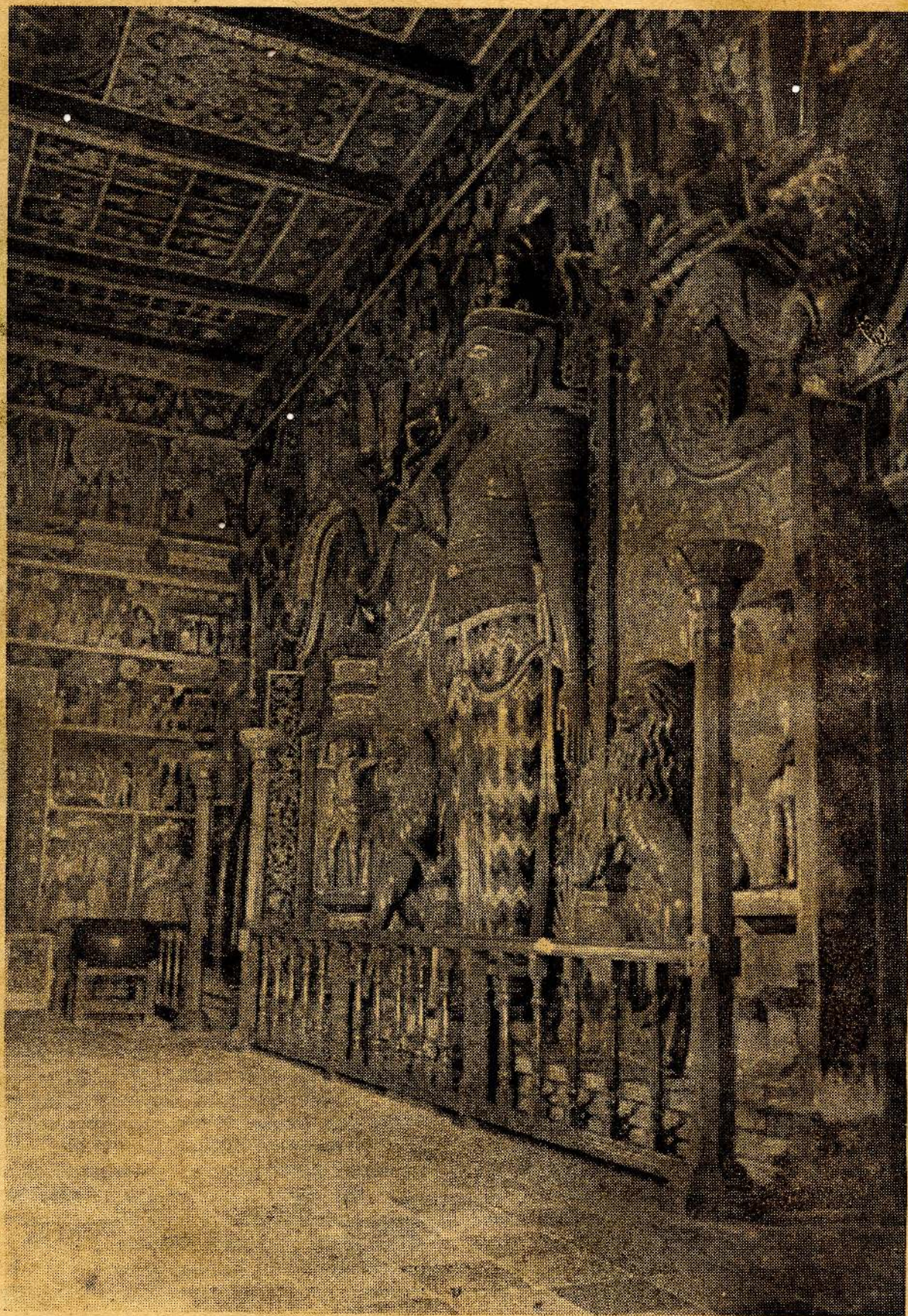
The birth of the Sinhalese race would thus seem to have been not a mere chance, accidental occurrence, but a destined event of high import and purpose. The nation seemed entrusted, as it were, from its rise, primarily to carry aloft for fifty centuries the Torch that was lit by the great World-Mentor twenty-five centuries ago.

—Reproduced from Part I of *"The Revolt in the Temple,"* a forthcoming publication.

Britain subscribed to the Atlantic Charter by signing the joint declaration of the United Nations early in January, 1942, and the clause in that Charter which bears most significance to the people of this country is this : *"They respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of Government under which they will live ; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them."*

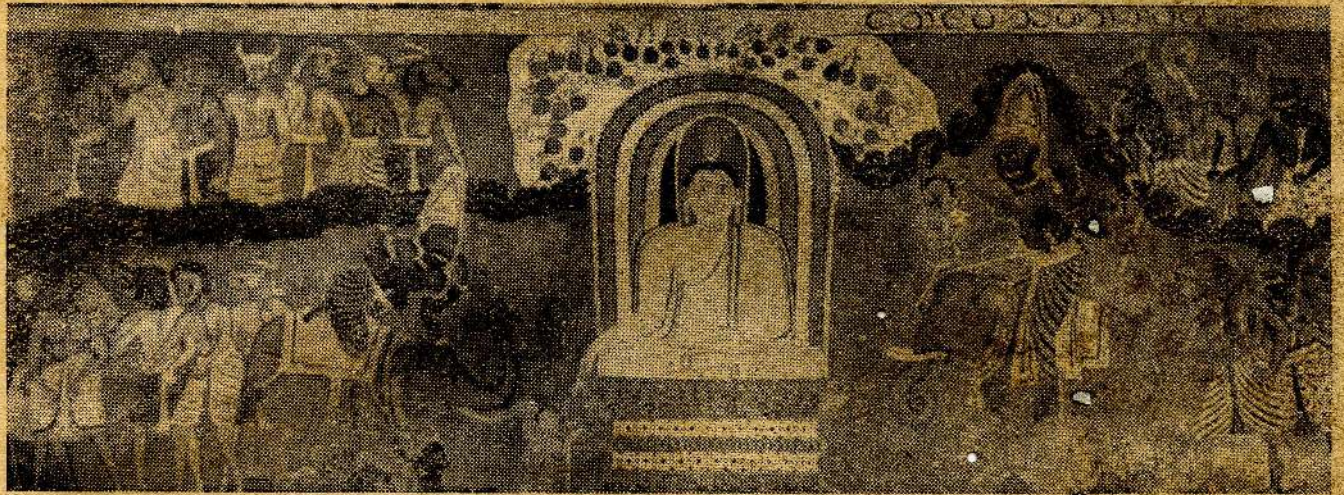
If one reads the story of Britain's wars in Ceylon, they are about the most aggressive and least justified in the nineteenth century : Hitler enlarged and improved only a little on the technique. Indeed, one will be amused to learn that, in 1815, the British neatly anticipated Hitler's technique by a Proclamation which began by declaring : *"Led by the invitation of the Chiefs and welcomed by the acclamations of the people.....and the unanimous and direct demand of the people of five provinces constituting more than one-half of the Kandyan Kingdom to be taken under British protection..... the British have invaded Kandy."* Thus occurred the invasion of the Buddhist Kingdom and the extinction of Sinhalese Independence which had existed for 2,358 years.

—*The Revolt in the Temple*



The 18th Century portion of Kelaniya Vihara with the colossal statue of Maniakkhika
Digitized by Noolaham Foundation.
noolaham.org | aavanaham.org

OLD-TIME PAINTINGS



AT KELANI VIHARE

by Dr. Andreas Nell

AMONG the treasures of antiquity in remote rock caves as well as among the remains of royal cities and famous temples are the paintings on ceilings and walls so numerous and so scattered throughout Ceylon as to indicate a widespread practice of the art and the existence of many groups, guilds and families, of painters. There is no record of the names of the painters and in many places there are only traces of extensive works, but the quantity and quality justify an answer to the visitor's first query after the pause of radiant surprise and emotion. By reason of the quantity and characteristics we may reply to that query "Who did these?" that indigenous artists were the painters. Naturally the reminiscent likeness to well-known and more celebrated paintings in India evokes further query and leads to investigation and study.

The resemblance of the Ceylon paintings to the Indian paintings is remarkable in the style, the methods and the materials. The roughnesses of the bare rock or of the plaster upon brickwalls were treated with a thick filling of red earth to produce a level surface, and upon this a thin layer of white clay was spread to produce a smoother ground. The paints were vegetable and mineral substances, the medium a vegetable gum; the application was partly a *fresco buono* (when the ground was newly laid and

still wet) and mainly a *fresco secco* (when it had been allowed to dry). More remarkable is the resemblance in execution; the painting is in terms of surface not depth nor background, there is a sureness of touch in the bold freedom of stroke with grace of line, and a rhythmic presentation of figures whether in profile or looking forward.

To those who have seen the Ajanta paintings in India, Sigiriya paintings at once proclaim themselves as of the Ajanta school of the Gupta era. The figures in cloudland are depicted emerging from ill-defined-masses of cloud suggested rather than displayed; the execution of the figures, the types of cloud and the relations of cloud and figure, the colours and tones are sufficiently different to suggest that two or three artists were engaged in this triumphant undertaking. The Polonnaruwa paintings are of the reign of Parakrama Bahu, (circa 1153—86), many centuries later than Sigiriya. These Polonnaruwa paintings show, as much as in its architecture and sculpture, the effects of the permeation of South Indian influences; the exterior of the building is more of South Indian character; how much of an affinity the paintings bear can be better ascertained with further study of the many Buddhist paintings recently discovered in S. India. The paintings in the great rock caves



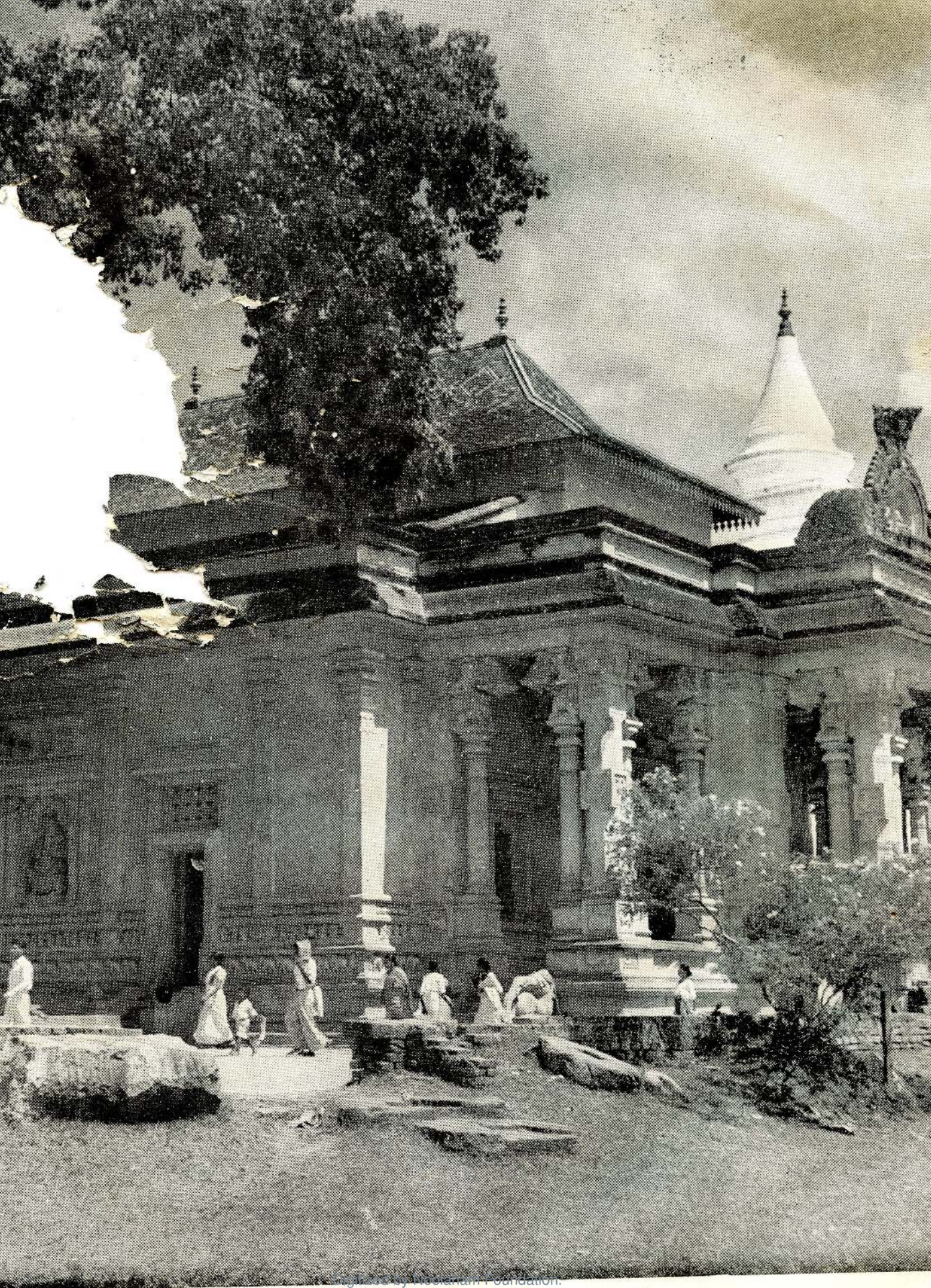
INSCRIPTION OF DHARMA PARAKRAMA BAHU IX, OF KOTTE

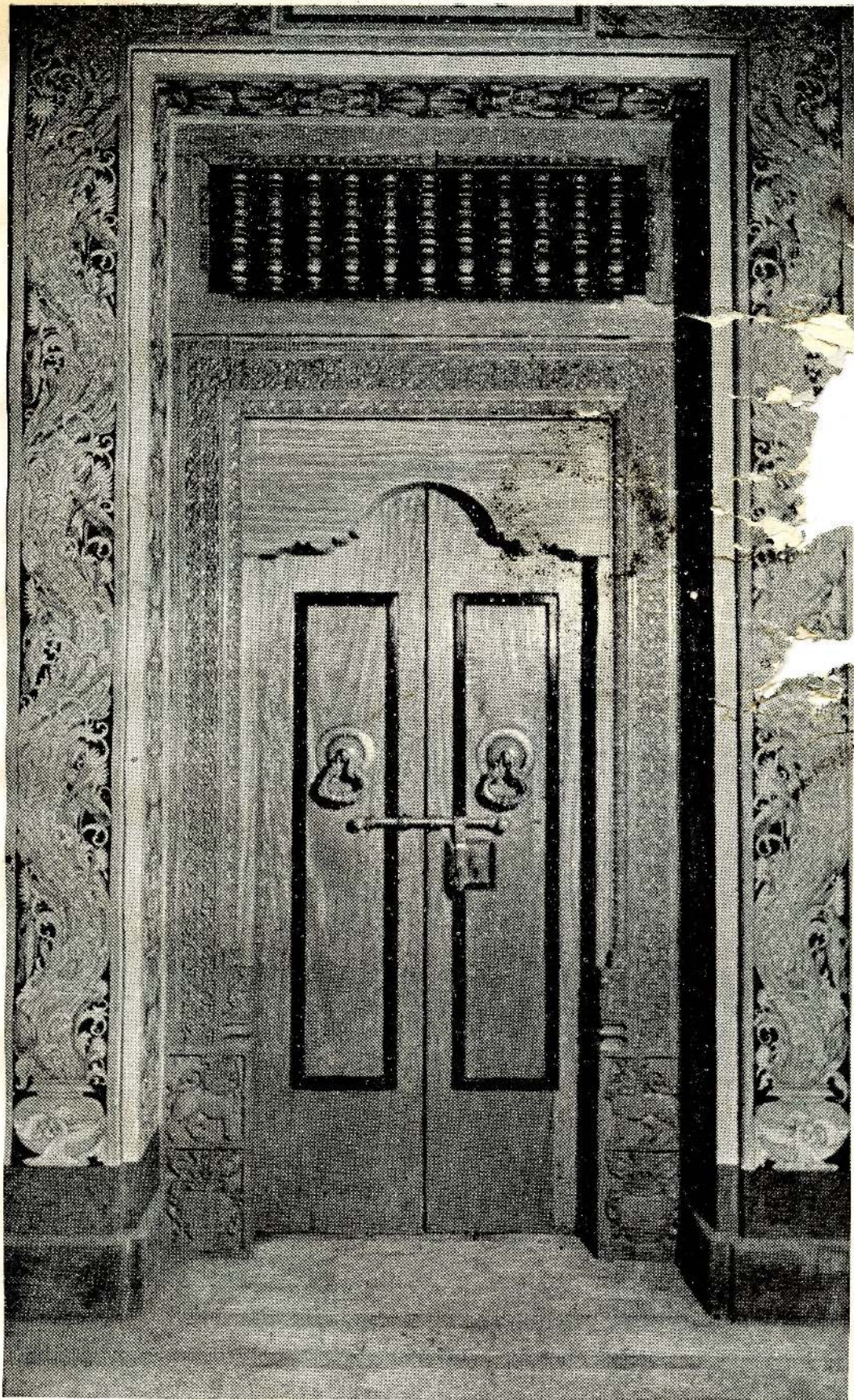
(1502-1528 A.C.) at Kelaniya Vihara
Digitized by Noolaham Foundation
noolaham.org laayanaham.org
 (destroyed by the Portuguese in 1575)



KELANIYA TEMPLE 150 YEARS AGO

(Earliest extant picture of Kelaniya Vihara, drawn by a French artist during the early British period)





THE NEW
(a Doorway in the new Shrine Room)

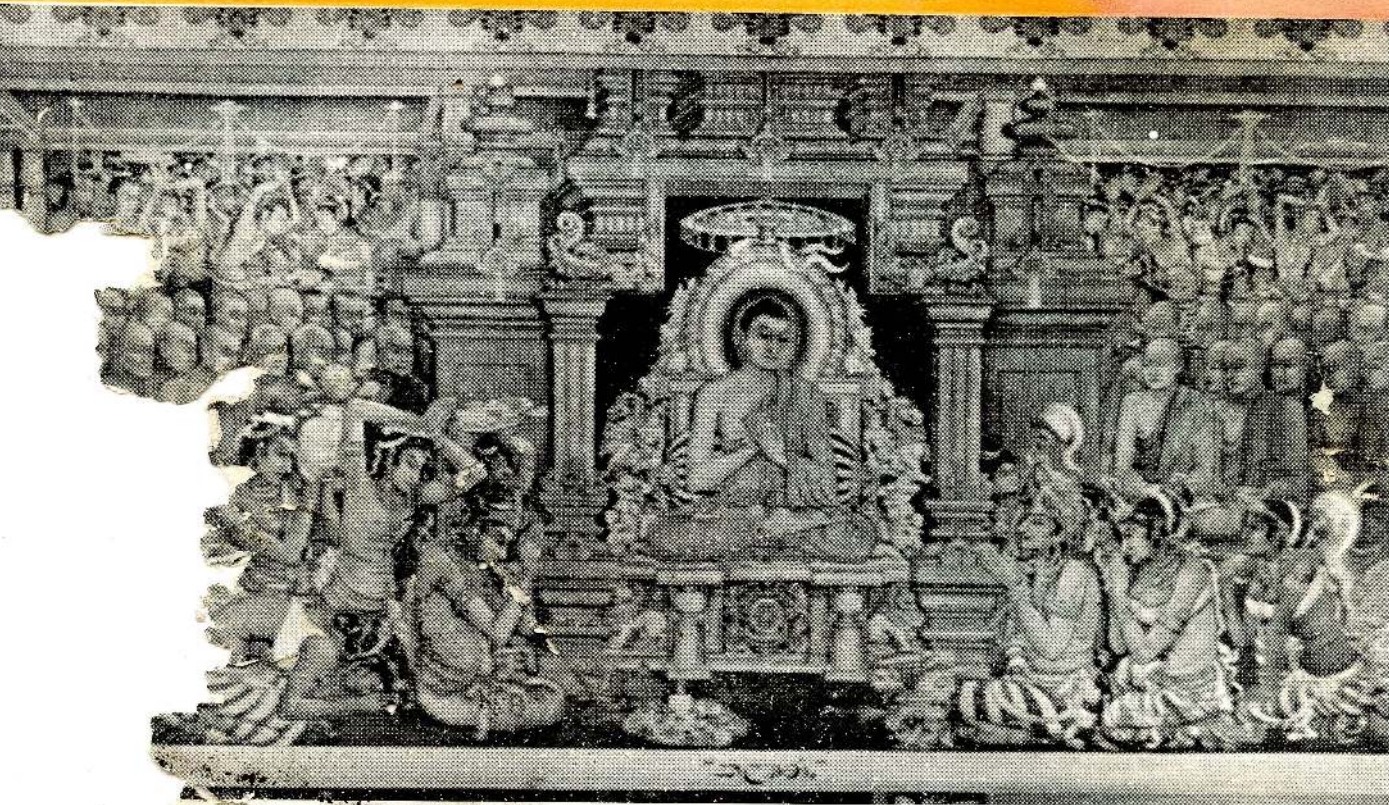


THE OLD

(a Doorway in the old Shrine Room)



THE FIRST VISIT OF THE BUDDHA TO MAHIYANGANA
THE SECOND VISIT OF THE BUDDHA TO NAGADIPA



THE THIRD VISIT OF THE BUDDHA TO KELANIYA
THE BUDDHA IMPRINTING HIS FOOT ON SRIPADASTHANA ON HIS THIRD VISIT



HELENA WIJEWARDENE LAMA ETANI

(The benefactress whose munificence enabled the restoration of a nation's heritage.)

at Dambulla are assigned to the second reign of Vatta Gamani Abhaya (Valagam Bahu) (circa 29 B.C. to 16 B.C.) ; there is nothing in the style of the principal paintings against this ; however, there was an order to restore made by King Kirti Sri, (A.D. 1747—1780) and possibly there were occasional restorations previously, but the primitive character of the paintings is evidence that restoration where flaking and fissures occurred and freshening the colours were the only measures adopted because custom and tradition forbade replacement of old paintings by new."

The old-time paintings at Kelaniya Viharaya are in the 18th century portion of the temple. This part consists of two lofty oblong rooms, outer and inner shrines—the vestibule and the sanctum. In these paintings one notices not only South Indian influences on Sinhalese art but also signs of the permeation of Western influence in respect of the social life of the country. In the delineations of incidents in the *Jataka* stories, the painters would appear to have been unable to detach themselves entirely from the influences of the environment in which they lived. A salient feature of the vestibule is the colossal statue, in bold relief, of the Naga King, Maniakkhika, resting his back against the middle of the right wall, with two figures of Naga *Kanyas* painted on the wall on either side ; the three being flanked, beyond the pair of door-ways leading to the Sanctum, by *Doratu-palayo*, janitors, also of superhuman size and in similar relief.

The greater portion of the walls of the vestibule is taken up with panoramic delineations of well-known *Jatakas* (Yessantara, Dahamsonda, Sachchankira, Maha Silava, Telapatta, Maha Kanha, Dharmmapala, Devadhamma, Sama). In the ceiling of this room are depicted 2 unique features, the *Nava-grahayō* (planetary gods), and the twelve Zodiacal signs. The front wall shows the Buddha seated, with the Rahats surrounding Him after their arrival at Kelaniya ; below at one end are silhouette figures of the first three Abbots of the present Kelaniya succession, Buddha-rakkhita, Dhamma-rakkhita, and Sangha-rakkhita. Similarly, on the opposite, or further, wall are portrayed the two Kings, Yatthala Tissa and Kelani Tissa ; and, high up, the *Sat Satiya*, or first seven weeks of Gautama's Buddhahood. On the left wall are also displayed the *Solos-masthana* (Sixteen Sacred Shrines) and *Mara Yuddha* (Mara's Temptation of the Buddha).

"Mara's Temptation of Buddha" is a local form of a scene depicted everywhere in Asia, even in remote and now almost inaccessible places in Central Asia, with the grouping of the figures extremely similar, the first phase of the demon Mara's assault upon the impenetrable serenity of the Buddha. The seated figure in deep meditation under the Bo-tree is unheeding of the murderous demons who failed to overcome his resolution before the advent of Mara's second phase, of bands of seductive femininity seeking to allure him away from his purpose. The baffled chief demon is in the usual place in these compositions, betraying his vexation at failure by his looks, whilst the unmoved sage sits calm with his right hand extended downward, palm inwards, in the *mudra* (attitude) of *bhumisparsa*, "calling upon the earth to bear witness."

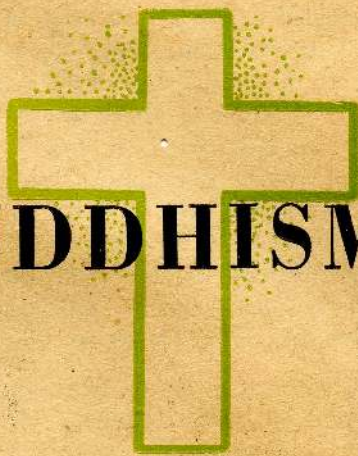
Passing into the long, but narrowed, inner-shrine, the long stretch of the wall at back is seen to be lined with images—in the middle the Seta-pilimaya, or reclining figure of the Buddha "of 18 cubits" ; at his head are ranged two *oth-pilima* or sedent Buddhas, one the old *Samapatti* stone image. Beyond the feet of the *Seta-pilimaya* stand gigantic statues of deities, Natha, Vishnu, and Skanda-Kumara (Kartikaya) ; above is painted the *Su-visi Vivaranaya*, or twenty-four Approbations accorded to the Buddha. The wall opposite the recumbent Buddha bears, at one end, coloured representations of Hanuman, Gana Deviyō, and Mahesvara ; at the other end, Saman and Vibhīshana ; with the *Satara-waram Deviyo*, or Four Guardian gods of the four cardinal points or four quarters of the world, between the doorways.

All lovers of Sinhalese art are under a great debt to the late Mrs. Helena Wijewardene, by whose pious zeal and generous munificence the restoration of this ancient Viharaya has been accomplished. There was great danger of these paintings being lost for ever, by the crumbling down, owing to decaying timber, of the roof of the old building. Now an entirely new roof, resting on new walls surrounding the old building, has been built, and the security of the paintings ensured.



A Challenge

To BUDDHISM



THE introduction of Buddhism to Ceylon was not merely the introduction of a religion to a country, but it was also the dedication of a nation to a religion. The King and the people became subordinated to the Faith and the Sangha. The King became the "Protector of the Faith", and, as Dutugemunu on his death-bed said, "the servant of the Sangha". For over 2,000 years, the social structure of the land rested on this basis, until that fateful day, March 2, 1815, on which "Christian Governors" replaced Buddhist Kings.

After the Generals had won this ancient Buddhist Kingdom for the British Crown came the Missionaries, to "win Ceylon for Jesus Christ." At first, with direct subsidies from the State and afterwards through indirect subsidies as educational grants, Christian Missionaries embarked on an open career of "conquest". Western Princes and the Western Church replaced the Buddhist Kings and Buddhist 'Church'; and the Sangha, who had been throughout the centuries not only the Guardians of the spiritual, but also the sponsors of the material welfare of the people, were relegated to the background.

In this humiliating position it has been their shame and sorrow to witness the proselytising of the country, the neglect of its national institutions, the despoliation of its pious foundations, and its governance for the benefit of those who came to exploit it, rather than that of its own indigenous population.

To substantiate the latter statement, it is not necessary to do more than refer to the reports (quoted elsewhere) of the Special Commissioner of Relief of Distress occasioned by the 1935-1936 Malaria Epidemic. The result of over a century of British Rule, in the Commissioner Mr. Newnham's own words, was; "privation", "starvation", "inappropriate food", "disease", "lethargy", "ignorance", "pessimism."

The Commissioner, a British Civil Servant, might well have been describing the conditions of the millions of serfs in Russia before they, in sheer desperation, sought refuge in Bolshevism. The

verdict of the Commissioner, that the distress revealed by the epidemic had been the normal level of life in thousands of villages, constitutes the most terrible indictment yet published of over a century of British rule in Ceylon.

Nevertheless, even though driven to taste this bitter cup for over a hundred years, the Sangha, in keeping with the traditions of their religion, inculcated in the people the spirit of tolerance as well as loyalty, as is evidenced by the fact that there has been no political disturbance or upheaval whatsoever in the country during the last one hundred years.

* * * *

During the days of Colonial Office administration the Church had obtained, free, an acre of land near Galle Face in Colombo for the building of a new Anglican Cathedral. An architect specially got down from England had prepared plans for a Cathedral of conventional church architecture. Now, all those plans have been discarded and this acre of land has been exchanged for nearly fifteen acres in Buller's Road, valued at a million Rupees, and a Cathedral, imitating the national architecture of Kelaniya Temple; "and the complete absence of the traditional Gothic influence" is being planned for the site. Arrangements are also proceeding to set the Christian hymns to the tune of Buddhist *gāthās*. And we hear talk of *hēvisi* or tom-toms replacing bells in the new Cathedral to call the faithful to divine service.

The selection of the new site is significant. When the present Governor's residence was condemned some time ago, a large site in Buller's Road was selected for the building of a new "Queen's House." Now, on a part of this site, is to be built the new Cathedral and the Bishop's Palace. In the ancient days, the Temple of the Sacred Tooth, the principal religious edifice in the land, was always situated next to the King's Palace. In future, the "Christian Governor's" residence, and the Anglican Cathedral are to be the beacons in this Buddhist land.

"There is a Pagan streak in all of us, and we might be surprised to find in unexpected quarters the persistence of a heathen element," says William Romaine Paterson in his *Problems of Destiny*. "Modern Christians", he adds, "are infinitely more epicurean than Epicurus, and their luxuries would astonish that frugal Greek. In the history of symbolism there is nothing more remarkable than the deterioration in the significance of the symbols. Modern Christians do not carry the cross, far less mount it. Or rather they "mount" it in diamonds, and even an Atheist becomes willing and eager to wear it as a decoration set in brilliants. It is the spirit of worldliness that gains the victory everywhere, so that even the cross becomes a trinket. Moreover, it may be eaten in the form of hot-cross buns. It is surprising how much material comfort and how much pomp have come out of the simple teaching of the Galilean. Even the churches are made as comfortable as opera-houses; and indeed most religions have had an operative tendency. The founder of Christianity had nowhere to lay his head, but his Bishops have palaces. He wore a crown of thorns, but his chief representative now wears a tiara. Christian civilization is a coalition of hypocrisies, but the Pagan foundations remain intact."

* * * *

The bewilderment of the Buddhists who have been, for some time, wondering what was behind all these manoeuvres of the Christian Church, became more confused when, lately, with feverish haste, the Churches began to create "sons of the soil" as Bishops. Now, by the unguarded statements of British Statesmen and local churchmen, light has been thrown on these strategic moves. During the war days Lord Halifax and Sir Samuel Hoare declared that England was fighting to "win the world for a Christian civilization". And in Ceylon the cat was let out of the bag, when, on the day he was elevated to the dignity of Assistant Bishop of the Anglican Church in Ceylon, the Rt. Rev. Lakdasa de Mel declared that the task of the Church in Ceylon would not be finished till the remaining ninety per cent. of the population, who were not Christians, were converted.

The cry of 'conversion' by Bishops in outposts of the Empire is only a subdued note of the louder pedal of "win the world for a Christian civilization" by Imperialists in the heart of the Empire. Winning for a "Christian civilization" simply means winning for the Empire, and 'winning for the Empire' means enslavement for purposes of exploitation. In the figurative language of Churchill and lesser lights of the Conservative Party prophets, it is, "we have not become the King's Ministers in order to liquidate the Empire".

"What do these worthies

But rob and spoil, burn, slaughter and enslave
Peaceful nations?"

—MILTON

As a result of four centuries of persecution, proselytism, and what Sir Emerson Tennent described as the "rapacity, bigotry and cruelty" which characterised every stage of the "spiritual and temporal conquest of Ceylon", ten per cent. of the population of Ceylon has been converted to Christianity; and now the Bishops openly declare that they are out to convert the remaining ninety per cent. also. This means the Christianising of four million Buddhists and one million Hindus. What impudence! "Conversion, we would remind Rev. de Mel, is an ugly word", writes Dr. Malalasekera in *The Buddhist* of December, 1945. "To us in this country", adds the learned Professor of Pali of the University of Ceylon, "it has all manner of undesirable associations, of force, of bribery and corruption, of de-nationalisation, of the exploitation of poverty and ignorance and greed, of disease and helplessness. Attempts at conversion breed strife and ill-will; the days when Buddhists and Hindus tolerated proselytisation are gone. They will meet the challenge to their faiths with vigour and determination. They will no longer accept the claims of any religion to be the sole path of righteousness or happiness."

* * * *

The Buddhists are quite prepared to meet the challenge. But we fear the fight is not going to be a clean one. The Bishops are already in the ring, hitting below the belt. In his address to the 1945 Diocesan Council, Bishop Horsley said that the Christian Church which flourished in the 6th century A.C. in the Capital city of Anuradhapura was swept away by persecution. "Christianity is, then", said the Bishop "no new thing—but Christianity is a challenge. We are always bound to raise opposition to ourselves if we are true to our Master. Anyway, the persecution of 13 centuries ago brought back the Church 11 centuries later."

This reference is to the stone with a Nestorian cross in sunk relief dug up by the Archaeological Department amidst the ruins of Anuradhapura. For the presence of Nestorian Christians at Anuradhapura in the 6th century, reference may be made to Cosmas Indicopleustes (Winstedt's edition, p. 322). This is the only reference in an ancient authority to this subject, and Cosmas has nothing to say about any persecution of the Christian community by any one.

But any stick is good enough to beat the Buddhists with, and Bishop Horsley has hurled his stick to mark the opening of the great campaign of conversion. The days when stories of persecution and villainies of heathens, induced rich English widows to contribute

to Church funds are gone. In this enlightened age deluded people are not so easily picked up, as they were a century ago.

The Bishop speaks of persecution having swept away the 6th century Nestorian Church at the ancient Capital of Lanka. What does the Bishop expect to find amidst the ruins of Anuradhapura? A 6th century Nestorian Church still standing in all its glory like that most historical tree in the world, the 2000 year old Sacred Bo-Tree is existing amongst the splendour that was Anuradhapura's? Gone are the days of the miracles of the Christian Church.

From tradition, records of history, the trend of opinion prevailing among local students of history is that in old Ceylon there were no religious persecutions. The Buddhist Kings were known to have provided accommodation for other religionists. The very fact that a Church was allowed to be built in ancient Anuradhapura is evidence of the spirit of tolerance which permitted it. When, as it often happened, civil wars raged or foreign armies invaded, religious orders left the country. There were occasions when no Buddhist Sangha could be found in the country, and rehabilitation proceeded by process of sending for Bhikkhus from India, Burma or Siam.

This persecution story of the Bishop is not true, it is a libel on a whole civilization. It is an attempt at propagation of Christianity in a way that has become historic with the Churches. It persecuted and it lied for the greater glory of God. One will find the Christian ethic clearly stated by St. Paul: "If my lie hath abounded to the greater glory of God, why, then, am I judged a sinner?" Truth has always suffered at the hands of the Christian Church.

* * * *

At the 1946 Diocesan Council the 'ballyhoo' of conversion was again raised and the theme of some of the Parsons was "winning the villagers of Lanka for Christ". The Parsons seem to imagine that the introduction of Christianity into our villages will provide a panacea for their ills, and make the people better and happier. They want to make out that the present condition of the people is due to the religion they profess, which one of them once described as a "dead hand". They apparently fondly believe that, given a new label, the people will sing with joy and become prosperous.

The Bishops want the Buddhists of Ceylon to be converted to Christianity. Let us consider, from what and to what we are to be converted? And let us answer the second question first. It is always the texts and actions recorded in their religious books that form the basis of the acts and actions of a people. Christianity has had sway in Europe for nearly two thousand years, and with what results? For hundreds

of years, millions of Christians, 'practical' Christians, 'militant' Christians, and every other sort of Christian, have been invoking the name of Christ in defence of every sort of war, whether it has been a war of defence or of aggression. Their excuse for doing so has been invariably the same—texts and actions recorded in the Old and the New Testaments. We have been horrified during the past six years at the evil behaviour of the Germans, a Christian nation, towards captured men and women who offended a leader who claimed to be what he was by the authority of God. But this was only a belated example of what God ordered his favourite people to do when they entered a conquered city. He said: "*When the Lord thy God hath delivered it unto thine hands, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword; but the women and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shalt thou take unto thyself. Thou shalt so do unto all the cities which are very far off from thee.*"

This reads almost like an account of the invasion of Poland by the Germans. The impartial reader will admit that Hitler did what he could to follow out the commands of God as laid down in Chapter XXX, of the Book of Deuteronomy. He followed the Bible, but the Allies thought that God did not agree with modern warfare—if we except the small incident of annihilating a few hundred thousand humans by the aid of an Atomic Bomb.

Let us now turn to the 34th verse of the tenth chapter of St. Matthew. We read: "*Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace but a sword.*"

"*For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.*" What does this sound like? A world war? Sons, fathers, daughters....mothers-in-law....we repeat, was Christ referring to a 'patriotic' war when he talked about these people? Or was he referring to the bitter family divisions which had already been caused by his doctrine, and are still increasing daily?

Then again, "*Jesus went up to Jerusalem and found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting; And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep and the oxen: and poured out the changers' money; and overthrew the tables.*" A clear act of intolerance and lack of self-control.

The Buddha, on the other hand, was a person of a wonderfully tolerant nature; and in overlooking insults or injuries which his religious adversaries inflicted upon him, in recognizing the excellent doctrinal points of other philosophical or religious systems, in forgiving the faults which his disciples consciously or unconsciously committed, or furthermore in recommending his new converts to offer

food and drink to their old religious teachers and their followers, he showed an unparalleled toleration. He was a wonderfully self-controlled and broad-minded person.

This spirit of toleration inculcated by the Buddha flourishes in all Buddhist lands. Where there is intolerance it is not due to religion, but to frustration and nationalism. When missionaries, hedged behind a Dominating Overlordship, force an unwanted religion down the throats of an enslaved people, they find frustration of their longing to safeguard their heritage. We hear the conversion "ballyhoo" only in countries where the people have lost their independence. We do not hear of missionaries tub-thumping in the Mohammedan world, the countries of the Arab League, they look for their prey to the enslaved Buddhists and Hindus of the Empire. "And it must be said", writes G. Appleton in *Buddhism in Burma*, "that sometimes missionaries in their approach are neither tolerant nor tactful, failing to appreciate the spiritual stature of the Buddha and the goodness and beauty of much of the Buddhist teaching."

And here is one more text. *'And he said unto them...when I sent you without purse, and scrip and shoes, lacked ye anything?'*

'And they said, nothing.'

'Then said he unto them, but now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip; and he that hath no sword let him sell his cloak and buy one.'

'For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end. And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.'

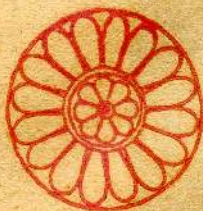
Yes! It is enough. You have, in these verses, a direct command to sell a cloak and buy a sword. Is this not what the Germans did to prepare themselves for a world war?

Now let us consider what a heritage the Bishops are so anxious to wean us from. And let a non-Buddhist, Professor Radhakrishnan, tell what that heritage stands for. In the chapter on "The Ethical Idealism of Buddhism" in his *Indian Philosophy*, that great Hindu Philosopher writes:

"The elevated morality taught by Buddha, that only the pure in heart shall attain salvation, sums up the Law and the Prophets. Buddha justified the practice of the good even to those who did not believe in a personal God. No other independent ethic gives us a more thrilling message of universal benevolence. At a time when bloody sacrifices were not yet out of fashion, the teaching of mercy to all creation had a tremendous effect. His opposition to ceremonialism contributed largely to recommend his doctrine to the masses. The sublime grandeur of Buddha's teaching may be gathered from the following utterances of his: "Never in this world does hatred cease by hatred—hatred ceases by love." "Victory breeds hatred, for the conquered is unhappy." "One may conquer a thousand men in battle, but he who conquers himself is the greater victor." "Let a man overcome anger by kindness, evil by good." "Not by birth, but by his conduct alone, does a man become a low caste or a Brahmin." "Hide your good deeds and confess before the world the sins you have committed." "Who would willingly use hard speech to those who have done a sinful deed, strewing salt, as it were, upon the wound of their fault?"

Are not these Buddhist texts and actions, a heritage we have cherished for over twenty centuries, rarer and far more precious than all the blood-stained rubies of Christendom which the Bishops are offering to us?

—Reproduced from Parts I & III, of
"The Revolt in the Temple", a forthcoming
publication.



Modern Sinhalese ART

AT THE KELANIYA TEMPLE

by John M. Senaveratna

"Touch these mural paintings as much as you like with your eyes, but do not see them with your fingers."

THAT was the burden of the "Notices", in Sinhalese and English, which confronted me as I entered Kelaniya Vihara a few days ago.

And the reason for my visit was the remark made by a European friend, a day or two previously, that as a Sinhalese I ought to be "ashamed" that I had "missed seeing the beautiful and inspiring new works of modern Sinhalese art at Kelaniya Temple."

My friend was referring to the second section of the great Mural Decorations Scheme at the Vihara, which had recently been completed.

And what I saw on my visit—frankly, it is of abiding interest and value not only to the Buddhist but to every Sinhalese as such—emphasised the need for the caution: "Touch with your eyes, but not with your fingers."

* * * *

The desire to "see" works of art, where these are easily accessible to the hand, more with one's fingers than with one's eyes, is not a trait peculiar to the Sinhalese. All peoples on earth have got it in more or less varying degree.

Priceless works of art throughout the world have been spoilt or defaced or damaged by people attempting or trying to immortalise themselves at the expense of immortal art, by scraping their own names or initials on the object of admiration.

Some give way to a sort of itch to scribble something, anything, on what they have come to see, and there are others who would think nothing of even breaking off a small piece of it to take home, to serve as a memento!

* * * *

One would have thought that a nation like the British, for instance, would have been exempt from this kind of failing or feeling. But note what some of their own people did to their own famous Coronation Chair which enshrines the celebrated Stone of Scone.



Bringing of the Sacred Bo-tree to Ceylon



Prince Danta and Princess Hemamala arriving in Ceylon in disguise with the Sacred Tooth Relic

"In Westminster Abbey (says an English writer), in the Chapel of the Confessor, fenced round by the tombs of the old Kings and Queens who lie buried in the mound of holy earth, stands the great Gothic Chair which was made for Edward I.

"Barbarous sightseers in the 18th century, if not later, disfigured its surface with their initials, and ignorant or officious functionaries in our own time have plastered it over with varnish."

In our own land the famous Sigiriya Frescoes—a unique treasure of the nation—have not been spared throughout the centuries.

The polished and once beautiful face of the famous "Gallery" wall has been disfigured and made hideous for all time by the "things" that have been scraped or cut upon it—names and initials of unknown yokels and country bumpkins, versical vulgarities, snatches of songs that include

amatory invocations to the Sigiriya beauties with "bulbous breasts," and all manner of other little barbarities that mark the mind of the silly sightseer.

So heart-breaking was this form of vandalism that it is interesting to recall the stirring yet pathetic "final appeal to thoughtless visitors" made by the late Mr. H. C. P. Bell, of the Ceylon Civil Service, before laying down his office of Archaeological Commissioner of Ceylon. In the Visitors' Book at Sigiriya Resthouse, I found the following entry made by him under date May 15, 1912:

SIGIRIYA (1893—1912)

"*Supremum Vale!* On bidding officially, 'a last farewell' to Sigiriya (endeared to me by twenty yearly seasons of archaeological work upon, and around, the 'Lion Rock'), may I make a final appeal to thoughtless visitors?

"Respect yourselves. Then will you not fail to respect the glories of this picturesque historical stronghold, so redolent of romance."

"Refrain from disfiguring further the unique 'gallery.' Add not to the numberless ignoble names which sear hideously the plastered surface—once mirror-like—of the old-time Wall.

"Many of those who look upon thee now,
Mere 'trotters' drawn from nations near
and far—

Have registered a base unholy vow
To scrawl their names wherever spaces are,
Unheedful of what monuments they mar;
'Vandals' who smirch thy stirring story,
By scribblings which the soul's senses jar,
Till all thy fame is but a 'tripper's' glory."

Salve aeternum mihi, Saegiri galla, Aeternumque Vale!

H. C. P. BELL

These Sigiriya Frescoes (with their connection with the Ajanta Caves) and Mr. Bell's touching "appeal to thoughtless visitors" were vividly brought to my mind when, as I went from room to room in the Kelaniya Vihara, I had my fill at close sight of the mural paintings which my European friend (who had "provoked" my visit) had rightly described as "the beautiful and inspiring new works of Sinhalese Art" at this most ancient and celebrated Temple of Buddhism in Ceylon.

These new Mural Paintings represent the second section of the Mural Decorations Scheme which has just been completed by Soliyas, the gifted Sinhalese artist, blessed with the "Sigiriya touch". All in all, in the words of Keats, "a thing of beauty and a joy for ever".



Offering of the three transcripts of *Visuddi Magga* by Buddhaghosa Thero to Sangharaja Thero of Maha Vihara

If I may make one critical remark in regard to most of the Sinhalese Temple decorators of today, it is to say that in their work they resemble in some degree their modern Tibetan brothers, of whom Marco Pallis in his *Peaks and Lamas* writes :

“ Many capable mural decorators still exist in the country, though it must be admitted that their work usually falls short of the best ancient examples. It is not quite easy to lay one’s finger on the discrepancy. It resides in a thousand subtleties rather than in any single cause : it is doubtless connected with the fact that in respect of the Doctrine itself, which alone gives its impulse and meaning to the art, there has in many places been a tendency to slothfulness. But

even then, the old fire often is not really dead : it smoulders and only awaits rekindling. ”

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But I saw plenty of evidence of creative power, both potential and actual, reflected in the work of Soliyas, to lift him up, above the level of his fellow artists of today. And most of his work, religious as well as historical, is marked by a sort of innate quality of strength which has the capacity, on the one hand to rouse fervour in the heart of the religious devotee and on the other to kindle, in the heart of the historically-minded, the fires of patriotic feeling which nowadays lie dormant in the circumstances under which we live.

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From time immemorial it has been the custom to paint Temple walls, and for the paintings to be connected with scenes from the "Jataka" stories.

The Kelaniya Temple authorities, however, have made a welcome departure from this custom, and, by interspersing important Ceylon historical scenes connected with the birth, rise and progress of the religion in Lanka, have not merely introduced a refreshing variety where a dull sameness was the keynote aforetime, but also succeeded in producing a series of arresting historical pictures such as you never can see elsewhere today.

Right above the door leading to the main Shrine Room at Kelaniya and on the wall opposite is a painting representing what is described as "The Birth of the Sinhalese Nation" as narrated in the *Mahāvāṇsa*. Here you find the Buddha, on the day of his death, declaring from his death-bed, "In Lanka

will my religion be established", and enjoining Sakra, King of the Gods, to take over "the guardianship of Lanka" and also to protect Vijaya and his band of seven hundred followers who would land in Lanka on that day, and thus pave the way for the Birth of the Sinhalese nation. And the picture facing it is a whole panorama of the landing of Vijaya and his followers in Lanka, to carry aloft the torch for 5,000 years and set into motion what in time became a great civilisation.

* * * *

Hitherto, in all Buddhist Temples throughout the Island, the usual way, or rather I should say, the only way in which the introduction of Buddhism to Lanka has been depicted has been by portraying Prince Mahinda's arrival at Mihintale and his reception by the King, Devanampīya Tissa.

King Kirti Sri Rajāsinha conferring rank of Sangharaja on Welīwita Saranankara Thero



Strictly speaking, the introduction of Buddhism to Ceylon did not exactly synchronise with the arrival of the first Buddhist missionaries. It was some time later that the conversions took place and the establishment of Buddhism in the country became a reality.

* * * *

The Kelaniya Temple authorities have struck new and happier ground, ploughed a new furrow as it were, by selecting another and more important event after Mahinda's arrival, to symbolise the introduction of the new religion and its formal establishment in Lanka.

And the painting which depicts this solemn event shows King Tissa presenting the Mahamegha Park in Anuradhapura to the newly established religion, by making the boundaries with a silver plough drawn by two elephants, Tissa himself working the plough.

* * * *

The next painting shows in realistic fashion the transcription of the Three Pitakas into books at Aluvihare—a memorable event in Buddhist history, considering that this was the first time that the Buddha's teaching was set down in writing.

And as he himself told me over and over again in the days when I was editing the "Ceylon Antiquary", with which he associated himself intimately, it was the recollection of this outstanding event in Buddhist literary history that induced Governor Sir Robert (afterwards Lord) Chalmers to give the name of "Aluvihare" to the series of Pali books, the edition and publication of which he inaugurated before he left us.

Four other principal scenes in this comprehensive and well-executed scheme of mural painting at the Vihare are :

Buddhaghosa's presentation of the "Visuddhimagga", written by him, to the Sangharaja of the Maha Vihara, Anuradhapura.

The bringing of the Bo-Tree and the Tooth Relic to Ceylon, apart from scenes from the "Jatakas" and from the life of Gautama, and King Kirti Sri conferring the title of "Sangharaja" on Welivita Saranankara Maha Thero by presenting the Ivory Fan as his emblem of office.

* * * *

"Beautiful" and "inspiring" were the terms used, by one competent to pass judgment, in reference to these mural paintings at Kelaniya Vihara. They are that, without a doubt.

But they represent more, to the Buddhists on the one hand, and to the Sinhalese as such on the other. They are a notable contribution to religion and to the nation, and of a kind which amply demonstrates, not only the creative power of the Sinhalese artist of today, but also that he has something of the "old fire" still left in him to make him not unworthy of being compared with the "masters" of Sigiriya and Ajanta days.

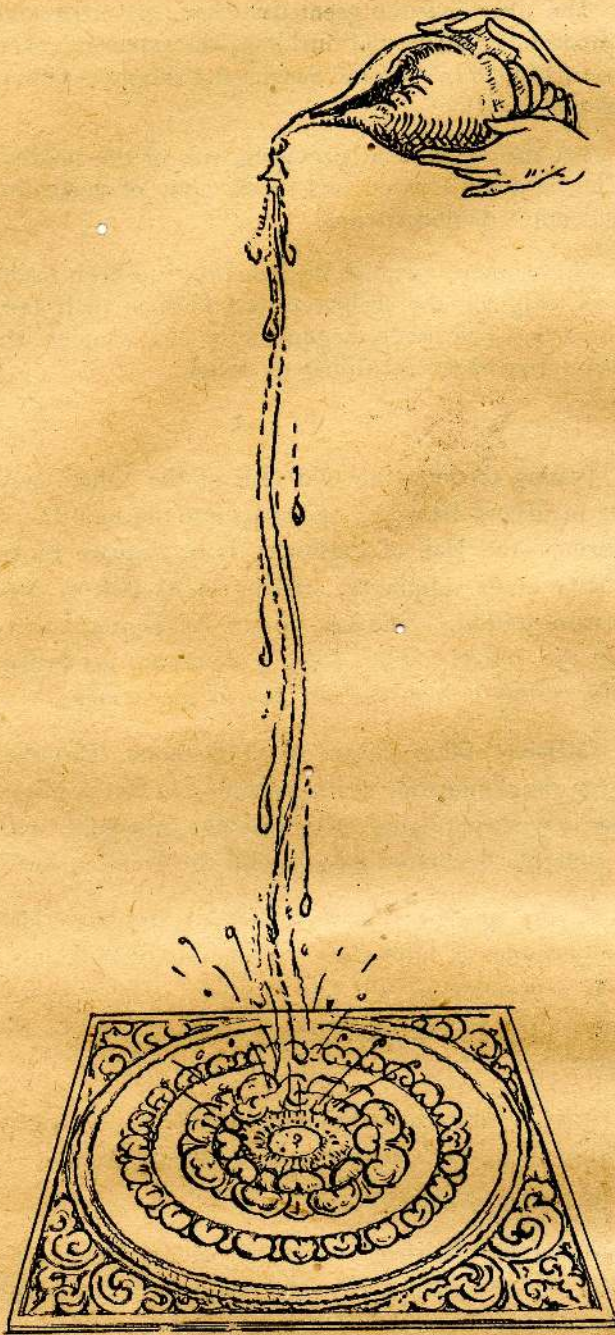
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And for this magnificent contribution to religion and to art in our time, the nation owes at least a grateful thought to the memory of the gracious lady, the late Mrs. Helena Wijewardene, who made it all possible by expenditure on and endowment of the Temple to an extent of more than half a million rupees.

May the memory of her work abide with us for all time and induce others to emulate her great example of devotion and munificence.



I OFFER THIS VIHARE TO THE BUDDHA



seized with a fatal illness and how, before he passed away, he was at his own request taken in a palanquin to be given a last view of the mighty Thupa, to the construction of which he had devoted all his later years.

History also tells us that, before Dutugemunu's eyes were closed in death, he summoned his youngest brother to his side and said to him :

" All the work of the great Thupa which is still unfinished, do thou complete, my dear Tissa, and be not remiss about it. Put thou thy heart into it even as I have done . . . All the ceremonies introduced by me in the name of our religion do thou carry on neglecting nothing, and stinting nothing. "

Almost a similar scene was enacted at Kelaniya Vihara, two thousand and seventy-two years later.

Helena Wijewardene Lama Etani had started, in 1927, the restoration of this ancient Vihara destroyed by the Portuguese four centuries earlier. But in November, 1935, a paralytic stroke made her realise that her end was near.

She therefore summoned her sons and daughter to her bedside, and in simple words that yet moved and stirred the hearts of those she addressed, she told them of the ardent wish that burned in her heart—the wish which was virtually her last in life—which was to see the work she had started accomplished if possible before her death.

Like Dutugemunu of old, she did not live to see that work accomplished in its entirety. But she lived long enough to see the work well on the way to accomplishment.

THE way in which the late Helena Wijewardene Lama Etani figured in the great restoration work, at the historic Kelaniya Vihara, and the circumstances in which she ensured the completion of this monumental work, remind one strongly of a moving incident connected with King Dutugemunu's dying moments and the fulfilment of his last wish.

History tells us how, before the work on the Ruvanveli-Seya was completed, Dutugemunu was to accomplish.

Stone-masons were brought from India, electrical engineers were employed, gilders came from Burma, and these, aided by an army of local artisans and labourers, worked day and night to complete the building.

Except the mural paintings (which were completed after her death), she lived to see all this great work done when she was wheeled to the Vihara, just a year after she had expressed her wish, to take part in the solemn dedication of the shrine.

A pen-picture, by "Janus", of that great and deeply impressive ceremony appeared in the "*Ceylon Daily News*" Vesak Number of May, 1937, and it is reproduced below for the benefit of those who were not present at the Ceremony itself.

DEDICATION OF A SHRINE—AUSPICIOUS DAY AT KELANIYA

A long flight of steps, like logical arguments for great principle, leads to the Kelaniya Temple from the red road below.

A dagoba, shaped like a thought of devotion in the mind of a pilgrim, dominates the precincts above.

One Sunday morning in late January this year, as I watched the devotees ascending the steps to the great shrine, I thought of the symbolic grandeur of the easy climb from the world of men to a region far removed from them.

By my side a large tusker stood whisking flies from its spacious territories.

The Kandyan pillars of the new entrance to the Vihare took the morning light and shaded it in regular vertical columns down their octagonal shelves.

A pathway decorated with gentle greenery crept up to the many-pillared entrance.

About me stirred men and women—waiting... watching.

Yet there was a hushed air of expectancy studded with whispers.

* * * *

A few months previously, Burmese workmen had hastened across the sea with a stock of gold leaf for which Burma is famous. Here, inside the newly-built Shrine-room, they turned the new rock-cut sedent Buddha into a golden image with the magic of their traditional art.

In the meantime the new section of the Vihare had been got ready in flurried haste. The last touches were given to the bare new walls of the inner chamber.

It was the wish of the donor of the modern section of the Shrine to see it dedicated at an early date.

And today was the great day when, after ten years of careful planning and building, the extensions were to be handed over to the Sangha at a simple ceremony of consecration.

Yet the excitement prevailing was of the mildest. The moment awaited was a ceremony of dedication and not a demonstration.

No announcement of the function had been made. For, although the architects had finished their task, the artists had hardly begun theirs—to complete the decorative work according to design.

* * * *

Passing through the Old Hall of the Vihare with its mediaeval frescoes, one steps into the new Inner Shrine—the Hall of Perfumes. It is a square room, chaste in its simplicity, striking in its lack of over ornamentation. Sinhalese designs run here and there on the pillars. The door is Kandyan in design. The ceiling is high and sky-like in appearance.

Garlands of flowers curtain off this Inner Chamber from the dominating recess within. In this is placed the new sitting figure of the Buddha, gilt gold, with a superbly decorated halo behind the well-cut head.

As the auspicious hour approaches the Inner Hall of Perfumes is filled with an assembly of Bhikkhus—representatives of all the Nikayas. Their yellow robes give a gorgeous touch of rich colour to the scene.

A large lotus cut in stone embedded in the centre of the floor draws attention by its quiet serenity.

A sound of drums.

The donor is wheeled into the hall in an invalid's chair. She makes a beautiful picture of piety, her aged face aglow with a new happiness—her grown-up sons and daughters around her—and grandchildren looking on with mystified wonder.

On behalf of the donor, one of the sons asks permission from the Sangha to make an offering of the new section of the Shrine to the Buddha.

This is granted.

To symbolise the idea the donor hands a silver tray heaped with flowers to the Chief Representative of the Sangha. He receives it and places it on the altar of the new statue of the Buddha.

The sound of the conch-shell vibrates within the dome of the Hall of Perfumes.

Out of an unique chank (*Dakshina Shanka*) with its convolutions to the right and not otherwise as usual,

water is poured by the donor on to the granite lotus in the centre, the while repeating thrice the stanza :

Iman Viharan Buddhassa pujemi

(I offer this Vihare to the Buddha).

* * * *

This unique kind of chank was in the olden days used in the consecration of a Sinhalese King. It is a highly prized ornament in the ceremonials of royalty.

Immediately afterwards, there is the sound of Oriental Music and blasts of the conch-shell. The actual dedication of the Temple is over.

Sadhu ! Sadhu !! Sadhu !!!

cry hundreds of throats.

Great trays of flowers are offered at the altar by members of the donor's family. Incense fills the air. Lighted tapers burn before the golden Buddha decked with flowers.

Spokesmen from the different sects of the Sangha speak on the meritorious deed of the pious donor, of the fulfilment of her large wish, of the happiness that will follow, of the greatness of the gift, and of the previous examples of piety displayed in the days of the Buddha.

In the meanwhile, outside the crowd is listening to the ritual and words in the chamber by means of loud-speakers placed for their convenience.

Shouts of *Sadhu ! Sadhu !! Sadhu !!!*

By now it is forenoon. It is time for the great breakfast prepared for the 150 Bhikkhus assembled for the occasion.

And, one by one, the crowds disperse and the monks repair to the "dansala" to sit for the meal. Gifts are offered in the name of the donor.





THEIR HEARTS

STILL BEAT

WITH Sri Vikrama Raja Sinha ended not only the last vestige of national freedom, but also a civilization based on an entire and unique ethico-religious philosophy, a civilization which had endured for twenty-four centuries, and which at some periods of its long and chequered career had outshone those of great Empires elsewhere, because of the benevolent and sagacious guidance of the ruling caste by the Sangha, who incessantly strove to make the people prosperous and happy within the bounds of their national culture.

Foes from without, traitors from within, intrigues from within and without, a hostile aristocracy, and an 'alienated priesthood,' all these have been assigned at one time or another by different writers as the causes of the Tragedy of 1815. While some of these factors undoubtedly played their part in that tragedy, we believe the chief cause which brought about the downfall of the Sinhalese Kingdom was the disunity of the people themselves. "It was a repetition of an old and tragic tale", says Dr. Colvin R. de Silva in his *Ceylon under the British Occupation*. "The Kandyan turned with a too facile readiness to the idea of bringing in the foreigner to settle their domestic differences. The pitcher went once too often to the well. The convenient arbitrator became the permanent master. The Kandyans accomplished their own political doom."

Thus ended Sinhalese Independence, which our forefathers, with their toil and sweat and blood and tears, had protected for 2358 years. Although the word 'tragic' is frequently used to describe the happenings of 1815, it is not possible to call those happenings 'tragic', for tragedy implies at least the dignity of fate. And there was no dignity in what happened in 1815, and nothing of fate that the leaders of the people brought upon the nation. The epoch that was closed in 1815 was more shameful than tragic.

On the 2nd March, 1815, the Lion Flag, which Vijaya had planted on our shores at Tamraparni and had waved in one or another part of the country throughout twenty-four centuries, was finally hauled down, and the Sinhalese who participated in that national ignominy, participated in what in effect were the obsequies of their people, as a free nation. In wending their way to their homes after the event, they virtually walked to their chains. To those others who had stood without, the question that then confronted them was the same that had previously, at some critical periods of our history, confronted our forefathers, viz, "Are we at the end of an adventure or the beginning of an epoch?"

Meanwhile the tropical jungle crept over the "Dead Cities", uninhabited villages, breached tanks, and abandoned paddy fields, and enveloped within itself the remains of a civilization, which, with all its ups and downs, had continued to flourish for nearly twenty-five centuries. And tumbled amidst the wilderness were stone images of the great World-Mentor, whose sublime calm, which Fa Hien said "had an appearance of solemn dignity which words cannot express", reminded man that unhappiness was due to insatiate desire. Round the colossal stupas, and over monolith and moonstone, the jungle grew, covering them with carpet of soft grass and canopy of leaf, to hide as it were, from future eyes, the story of man's past sorrows.

Tree roots writhe like serpents through mediaeval court-yards and, having split huge stones asunder, now hold them suspended as a proof of their power. Tiny tendrils, which first lay soft on the breasts of smiling *devīs*, reaching behind their narrow waists, tore the celestial show-girls from niches where the Sinhalese had enshrined them and won them for the unrelenting jungle.

Dead stones, vivified by the nameless artists of a vanishing civilization, still echo the sculptured tramp of

marching elephants. The smiling faces of *devatas* have a vivid liveliness which resists the ravages of time. More charming still are the bands of merry little dwarfs who play and dance round the capitals of stone pillars and in the friezes round Viharas. Guard-stones, sculptured with multi-hooded coiled *nagas*, remind us of the aboriginal cult of serpent worship, which has lived on through Hindu and Buddhist rites and has persisted from the remote age of credulity to that of scepticism.

And *Apsarasas*, perfect in beauty and potent in lure, they are sent to earth to rob saintly ascetics of the spiritual perfection towards which they have striven through denials and meditation. The *Rig Veda* and the *Brahmanas* contain many legends of these demimondaines who traffic their charms between heaven and earth. A large number of them enliven the Sigiriya frescoes. These gay *Apsarasas*, with their elongated eyes, bulbous breasts, willowy waists and lissom limbs, painted hundreds of centuries ago, are as supple and spirited as their breathing sisters in cloth of gold.

"Now", said John Still, of the Ceylon Civil Service, in a Broadcast Talk from the B.B.C., "all this Art died or nearly died. The motive went", he said. "Buddhist kings", he added, "began to be succeeded by Christian Governors."

The 'dead cities,' the stage on which the Sinhalese enacted their drama of life for two thousand years, hold their breath, as if in awe at the tragic downfall of their actors.

But, their hearts still beat.

Here ends the chapter entitled "The Rise and Fall of the Sinhalese Kingdom," in *The Revolt in the Temple*, composed for the social and spiritual redemption of the Sinhalese.

—Reproduced from Part I of "The Revolt in the Temple", a forthcoming publication.



WESTERN RELIGION AND THE WESTERN STATE

“EARL WINTERTON in the House of Commons today raised the question of the effect on Moslems of the recent speeches which contended that in this war Britain is defending the establishment of a Christian civilization.

“He referred, he said, particularly to the speeches of the British Ambassadors in Washington and Madrid, Lord Halifax and Sir Samuel Hoare.

“Earl Winterton said : ‘The British Empire has a minority of Christians as compared with other religions. Words about the Crusades and fighting for the Cross reach our Moslem fellow-subjects. They have very strong religious convictions in these matters. Leading Allied Statesmen should deal with this difficult question on the line that here is a common viewpoint to men and women of all religious faiths in the United Nations.

“‘All condemn the sadistic barbarism of Germany and Japan. Field Marshal Smuts yesterday spoke of Hitler trampling on the Cross. Moslems would say Hitler is trying to trample on the Cross. Only by a broader appeal shall we destroy this great horror’.”

—Reuter, “Ceylon Daily News”, 22nd October, 1942

NOW that Hitler and all his crew have succumbed, what then ? The problem facing mankind is of a magnitude unparalleled in the history of the human race. The need to avoid making another false start is one of almost terrifying urgency. Think what depends on the aims, on the method, on the spirit in which we approach the task. Obviously it cannot be left in the hands of party politicians ; the issues at stake are too vast for that.

The Christian Church is already in the field, claiming, in terms of an ambiguous, guarded, and strictly *ad hoc* unanimity, to be the predestined guardian of the legitimate liberties of the nations. Not very long ago we were favoured with the spectacle of English Primates and the Moderator of the Free Church Council concocting, with the assistance of a Roman Cardinal, the declaration that “no permanent peace is possible in Europe unless the principles of the Christian religion are made the foundation of national policy and of all social life.”

Light has now been thrown from a novel angle on the war aims of the United Nations by the unguarded statements of Lord Halifax and Sir Samuel Hoare, to the effect that Britain fought in defence of Christian Civilization, and by the criticisms these statements provoked both from non-Christians associated with the Allies’ war effort and by Christian spokesmen within Britain.

What exactly do the framers of this declaration mean by “the defence of a Christian civilization” and “the principles of the Christian religion ?” If they mean that unwritten code of ethics deriving from a high sense of social responsibility, which is

observed by all well-disposed and sufficiently enlightened people, the Church has no monopoly of or patent in such principles. If, on the other hand, the declarants mean that certain conceptions of duty peculiar to the Christianity of the Bible and/or of the Church should be imposed on all and sundry, as if they were of incontestable moral validity and of universal obligation, then it behoves us to be on our guard against any such revival of ecclesiastical absolutism. In that case, indeed, the cause of freedom, for which men of all creeds and of none have made the supreme sacrifice, is once more in peril at the hands of the Chief Priests and the Pharisees. There can be no liberty so long as civil or religious dictators arrogate to themselves the right to say “believe and obey, or . . .”

There were occasions on which even *The Times*, (London), considered the dear old phrase “Christian civilization” an unsuitable description for the war aims of the Allies. Discussing General Chiang Kai Shek’s visit to India, it observed : “It is indeed of decisive importance for the world’s future that China and India are ranged together in defence of those principles of freedom and organization which the Axis Powers, and not least Japan, have set themselves to subvert and destroy.” What a strain it must have been to omit the pious adjective before the word “principles” !

Is any Christian Church convincingly in the picture when it claims, as such, to be in the true line of the apostolate of freedom ? No ! and again no ! Freedom cannot be established upon the negation of the one fundamental condition of freedom. The attitude of the Christian Churches to that essential condition

has always been and still is, at the best, equivocal, and, at the worst, openly and actively hostile.

What is this fundamental condition of freedom ? In answer we cannot do better than quote Professor Bury :—" If the history of civilization has any lesson to teach, it is this : there is one condition of mental and moral progress which it is completely within the power of man himself to secure, and that is perfect liberty of thought and discussion. The establishment of this liberty may be considered the most valuable achievement of modern civilization, and as a condition of social progress it should be deemed fundamental. "

And what is this " Christian civilization " these Churchmen and Statesmen talk so much about ? Even to the distracted civilization of our day the contribution of Christianity has been a feeble one. Whatever goes by the name of civilization in our time has very little to do with Christianity. It was quite an accident that the peoples of Europe and America were Christians at the time the Industrial Age dawned on those continents. If, by any chance, Buddhism had prevailed amongst those peoples when they became the " Lords of the Machine ", the history of the world would have been far different. It was, for instance, simply due to historical causes that Europe became Christian and Asia Minor Moslem, and that England, for instance, adopted its particular brand of Christianity. Consequently it seemed improbable that the particular country and age in which one happened to be born had received an exclusive revelation of the truth.

What is the Church of England's contribution to the civilization of that country ? Read *The Bishops as Legislators*, by Joseph Clayton, a Churchman, with a preface by the Rev. Stewart Headlam, who calls it a record of " the crimes and follies of the Bishops ", It is. No Bishop supported the Bill for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in 1809. Only three attended the House of Lords, when, in 1815, a Bill was introduced to Prevent the Use of British Capital in the Slave Trade. They took no part in the discussion

of the Prevention of Cruelty to Cattle Bill in 1824. In 1832 fifteen of them were still on the opposition, though even the King was intimidated, to the Parliamentary Reform Bill. Two only voted for the Bill for the Total Suppression of the Slave Trade, and only one or two ever supported the various temperance measures that were introduced from 1839 to 1844. Lord Brougham bluntly said that " only two out of six-and-twenty Right Reverend Prelates will sacrifice their dinner and their regard for their belly . . . to attend and vote. "

The Bishops opposed every measure to relieve the workers. Lord Shaftesbury was so angry when they opposed his one pet proposal that he described them as " timid, time-serving, and great worshippers of wealth and power. " And he added : " I can scarcely remember an instance in which a clergyman has been found to maintain the cause of labourers in the face of pew-holders. " By voice and vote they resisted every possible reform, such as Catholic Emancipation, the admission of Dissenters to the University, the Jews Disabilities Bills, the Great Reform Bill, successive attempts to repeal the Corn Laws, and Home Rule Bills. Humane legislation, so long as it did not gravely affect the landed interest, did not usually excite their violent antagonism, but, they opposed the use of anaesthetics in child-birth, because God had said : " In pain and suffering shalt thou bring forth. "

They voted against abolishing the death penalty for theft, and, of course, against the opening of Museums on Sunday. Indeed, it is difficult to discover any reform, until recently, in which they took an active part. Can one wonder that Carlyle called them, " stupid, fetid animals in cauliflower wigs and clean lawn sleeves, Bishops, I say, of the Devil—not of God—obscure creatures, parading between men's eyes and the eternal Light of Heaven ? "

—Reproduced from Part III, of " *The Revolt in the Temple* ", a forthcoming publication.





“FROM Hegel Marx took the principle of Dialectics and from Ricardo the Labour Theory of Value,” says Arnold Lunn in his *Revolutionary Socialism*. “Hegel was a subtle philosopher, Ricardo a competent, if limited, economist. Marx was neither a philosopher nor an economist but a gifted revolutionary in search of a scientific rationalization of class warfare.” The real Marx is a curious blend of Hebrew prophet and demagogue. He detested exploitation and social injustice, and the white heat of his invective is as impressive as the denunciations of the major prophets. It is, indeed, interesting to read a chapter of Jeremiah after reading a chapter of *Das Kapital*.”

Marx translated Dialectical Idealism into Dialectical Materialism. He rejected the belief in God and all belief in the independence of spirit and matter. He hated institutional religion, which he identified with capitalistic oppression. Like the Buddha and Hegel, he believed in a Universal Principle, but whereas this Principle in Hegel's philosophy was spiritual, Marx is of the opinion that material, i.e., the economic, conditions regulate and determine the course of history.

The basic tenet of Marxist Materialism is the belief that economic processes are omnipotent in shaping not only man's social activities but also his religion, his philosophy and his artistic creations. “It's not the consciousness of men,” he wrote, “that determines their existence, but, on the contrary, it is their social existence that determines their consciousness.”

Marx adopted from the Buddha and Hegel the conception of a world process in which partial and antagonistic truths are synthesized in a higher truth. He translated the Dialectic of truths into the Dialectic of class warfare. He believed that classes rise to power because they fulfil the economic needs of a particular period. He maintained that the ruling class is compelled by the logic of the Dialectical process to exploit the other classes. The thesis of Dialectical Materialism compels a verdict of Not Guilty on the “liquidators of the exploiters”. Whereas Buddhism declares a verdict of Guilty.

“Dialectical Materialism”, says Leuke in his *Gautama The Buddha and Karl Marx*, “permits the use of force in the restricted circumstances of social necessity. This viewpoint seems incompatible with Buddhism, if the Buddha Dhamma cannot condone the use of force in any circumstances, whether it

involves the taking of life or a lesser degree of force. For the one criterion of ethics, according to Buddhism, is Maitriya or compassion for each and every sentient being.”

As Aldous Huxley has pointed out, a desirable end does not justify evil means : if the means are sufficiently evil they will adulterate the end. Those who deny that there is any standard of right which they must strive to observe, whatever the provocation, will eventually poison the results which they are attempting to achieve. The kind of classless society which the adherents of such a relativist philosophy would produce would be a less stable and a more unpleasant society than any feudal or capitalist order. In the last resort what makes human personality deserving of a Communist or Socialist civilization is that it is capable of placing certain values above all other considerations, above even its own convenience and security.

The Buddha did not incite the proletariat to liquidate the rich ; he urged the rich to liquidate their own covetousness. He warned the Buddhists to control their own love of profit ; and called upon the State to destroy the acquisitive impulse. His “party programme” is not one of confiscation, but of co-operation. He did not promise to the rich an easy ascent to a heaven of eternal happiness with rich wine, melodious song and celestial nymphs. He left men free to grow rich, and he left men free to go to Hell.

“Buddhism is not content with taking away man's property and giving it to another. That is patchwork like social service,” writes Bhikkhu Dhammapala. “Buddhism takes away from people their instinct of possessiveness and gives to those who do not have it a deeper understanding wherewith to grasp the meaning of life. Then for the sake of joy people will have joy in pleasure itself instead of being satisfied with having the means thereto, which naturally leads to hoarding, banking, exploiting and all other outgrowths of private property. To bring about absolute equality will require a fundamental change in man's mental attitude ; and it is here that Buddhist Psychology can compete with Communist Sociology.

“A dialectic process can only be brought to an end by the solution of the cause of the conflict,” he adds. “The dialectic of greed and hate (*loba-dosa*) which are both rooted in delusion (*moha*) can only be solved by understanding and insight. The dialectic, finally, which history shows during the course

of the ages, the conflict between classes, cannot come to an end by dictatorial power but only in a classless society. This is the path marked out for humanity, whereby all conflict, which is based on the distinction between self and others, will come to an end by the solution of the two extremes which are in ignorance opposing one another. It is in the impersonal element of a process that all components become dissolved in perfect harmony."

The motive power of Revolutionary Communism is, hate (*Dosa*), of 'Revolutionary Buddhism', love (*Maitri*). "'How can people who talk of nothing but destruction and bloodshed lead humanity to freedom and happiness?" asked Firelei, the fiancée of Jan Valtin, the German Communist Leader.

"'You must understand that we are at war,' answered Valtin. 'The purpose of war is to annihilate the enemy. We must destroy before we can build anew.'

"'But why must we borrow the methods from Russia? Everything you do is aimed at violence. I don't like violence.'

"'Every birth is like a revolution—violent. Even the most gentle child enters life amid screams and blood.'

"'I have so much to learn,' Firelei said.

"'You must learn how to hate,' Valtin told her.

"'I wish we could go away and live our own lives,' replied Firelei.'" (*Out of the Night*).

Have we not travelled a long distance from the Buddha's? "Our mind shall not waver, no vile speech will we utter; we will abide tender and compassionate, loving in heart, void of secret malice; and we will be ever suffusing such a one with the rays of our loving thought, and from his forthgoing we will be ever suffusing the whole world with thought of love far-reaching, grown great and beyond measure, void of ill-will and bitterness"—(*Majjhima Nikaya*).

—Reproduced from Part III of "The Revolt in the Temple", a forthcoming publication.

Buddhism is commonly classified as pessimism. This is true in so far as the Buddhist recognizes the existence of suffering, but it is not true if, by pessimism, it is understood that he tamely succumbs to it and remains quiescent. "The true Buddhist," says Oldenberg, "sees in this world a state of continuous sorrow, but this sorrow only awakes in him a feeling of compassion for those who are yet attached to the world; for himself, he feels no sorrow nor compassion, for he knows he is near his goal which stands awaiting him, noble beyond all else." The Buddhist, certainly, does not consider existence a boon.

Existence has been misnamed a boon. It is a jest carried too far. The diamond is paste. And what need to summon witnesses for this certain and central Truth? It is broad-based on universal experience. It is buttressed by reason. Its force has been admitted by philosophers as well as poets, by 'simple souls' as well as by the Enlightened. It reverberates through the thoughts of men in all regions and ages. It finds an echo in every human heart. "One can go on living", as said Tolstoy, "when one is intoxicated by life; as soon as one is sober it is impossible not to see that it is all a mere fraud."

—The Revolt in the Temple

Abstention from all Evil,
Practice of all that is Good,
Purification of Mind and Heart,
This is the teaching of the Buddhas.
—Dhammapada

25

CENTURIES OF HISTORY

ARE LOOKING DOWN UPON US

The Kelaniya Vihara owes allegiance to the Malwatte Chapter of the Siam Nikāya, and the late Maha Nayake of Malwatte Vihara, the Venerable Pahamune Sri Sumangala, was one who took a great interest in the restoration work of this ancient shrine. It is very unfortunate that he is not alive today to take part in the celebrations in connection with the completion of the restorations at the Vihara. He was a great Head, who, more than any other, realised the duty of the Sangha of Lanka, not only to the Buddha Sāsana, but also to the Laity. His foresight and breadth of vision may be appreciated from a Foreword he contributed, a few months before his death, to a forthcoming publication, *The Dhamma Samāja Vipḷavan* or "The Revolt in the Temple". We reproduce below this inspiring message of that revered Supreme Patriarch.

OUT of the darkness of unreasoning life, aeons ago, came a strange being, differing from all who had gone before; in whose eyes had dawned the question:

"Why?"

That word was the birth of consciousness, of creativeness and spiritual responsiveness; the symbol of understanding and progress. The being that could ask that question was not to be the butt of blind physical forces. He was to take a hand in shaping his own destiny.

Yet we, his descendants, thousands of centuries later, waste our lives in accumulating mere wealth, and throw away our wearily accumulated fortunes and even our lives in vain struggle and empty warfare.

Is it not time that we echo the cry of our ancestor of those far off days, and ask: "Why?" Is it not time for us to embark on a new quest, not for perishable wealth or material domination, but rather for added knowledge and the broadening of the foundation on which civilization rests? Is it not even now the time for us to ask what has made us the slaves of money-getting, the victims of war?

If we do so, we shall fulfil the promise of that far-distant ancestor, the promise that man should conquer circumstances through understanding. Then will man be born again. He will come with truth on his lips and understanding in his heart, to forge a new instrument for human service, to build a new civilization.

When we look back through the mist of years to that strange being who came out of the darkness, and review the never-ending procession of lives advancing along the narrow path of light, and then look forward through the endless future that leads to the ultimate attainment, individual lives seem small indeed. Yet life, as a whole, is indebted to a few enlightened guides for its progress, as flashes from their minds illuminate the feet of mankind in its search for happiness.

Remember that only our thoughts, our actions, our unselfishness, can turn humanity, from its lost heritage of happiness, to that new day when man will shed his garments of evil and clothe himself with truth and understanding. The very air we breathe is quickened with thoughts of impending change.

Is there any man, who, in his obdurate pride and indifference to the welfare of others, can refuse this great opportunity to help in remoulding the world? Can any one turn away with callous disregard from so manifest a duty? Can there be any man so selfish as to dare to purchase his individual happiness by separating himself from the common interest of humanity?

A great responsibility rests upon both rich and poor. Men of great wealth, no less than those who toil, must equally yield their best and share all burdens, for mankind can rise above the level of the beast only by placing the good of the whole above the good of the individual. This means sacrifice.

But let us cease counting too meticulously the sacrifices we will have to make, because the essence of sacrifice is that whatever is given or given up should be done spontaneously, not compulsorily. It should be a free-will offering, an impulse of generosity, an oblation that, however great or however small, is presented voluntarily, without thought of the cost, majestic in intention and complete in fulfilment.

Our forefathers, when they made Lanka their home, did not lay its foundations for a civilization without sacrifices. Nor in our own time has it been an easy way for every one of us.

These "foundation-fathers" set in motion ideas and principles of justice which in course of history secured the inalienable rights of the people, an equal chance for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness to grow. But even to-day there can be not much happiness if one is living on the ragged edge of security.

Roughly divided, the social structure of this country, after twenty-five centuries of development, finds only about a fourth of its people at the top possessing any security or freedom from want. The majority of the people, representing about half the total population, are at the bottom,—ill-fed, ill-clothed and ill-housed—many of whom do not know whether the morrow will bring them a meal or not. Midway lies the other one-fourth, who just exist with a sense of security lasting only so long as they are well and working. Let any accidental circumstance occur, and they drop down to the bottom as unemployed and lie helpless.

The revelations noted in this book fill us with shame and sorrow, shame at our own easy-going and comfortable life—we who have taken vows of poverty—and our petty politics of the Temple which ignored this vast multitude of suffering humanity, sorrow at the degradation and overwhelming poverty of the Sinhalese—those on whom we depend for our sustenance.

A new picture of Lanka has risen before us, naked, starving, crushed, and utterly miserable.

Both the United Nations and their enemies promise their respective followers a new world after victory is won and peace is established. It is an issue on which the warring nations are competitors rather than enemies. Perhaps the most important of all the things that go to make up these better lives is "freedom from want and freedom from fear". When we have conquered want we shall have to a large extent conquered fear, since the dread of poverty—particularly in old age—has always been civilized man's greatest nightmare.

We are talking of peace without preparing to build the institutions which alone can make peace possible. It is no use saying that these matters must wait until victory is won. The shape of the future is being

decided by the actions we take now ; to postpone the choice of freedom is to prejudice the hope of freedom.

The first necessity, therefore, of an enduring peace is to begin now, in a profound way, the process of domestic reconstruction. Just as there cannot be peace when nation exploits nation, so there cannot be peace when class exploits class. We must recognise, while there is still time, that we are in the midst of a vast revolution from which we emerge either into a new renaissance or into a new dark age.

In signing this Foreword and commending this treatise to our Leaders—our elected representatives with whom the final decision rests, as is the custom in democracies—we declare that we are in agreement with the general policy here proposed and believe that it embodies a far-reaching but attainable programme of action.

We sponsor the *Dhamma Samāja Vipāvan* or "The Revolt in the Temple", and agree in giving general support to the long-range programme of political, social and economic action outlined in it. We are a section of the community who, for over twenty centuries, have sponsored the well-being of this country through all the vicissitudes of its history. We see the wrongs in our present social order, and we believe that this work indicates both a way out of them and a way in, to a new *Dhamma Samājaya* (righteous society).

Few people read much history. This is an age when it is tacitly assumed that the Sangha is concerned only with another world than this, and in this world with nothing but individual conduct as bearing on prospects in that other world.

What the Sangha did during two thousand years in this country to make its voice heard in questions of politics and economics is a matter of simple history. In our day, however, when leaders, newspapers and political organizations profess to speak on behalf of the people, that role of the Sangha is resented even by those who are Buddhists in personal belief and in devotional practice. It is now commonly assumed that Religion is one department of life, like Art or Science, and that it is playing the part of a busy-body when it lays down principles for the guidance of other departments, whether Economics or Sociology, Business or Politics.

Mr. David Hussey, M.A., in his book, *Ceylon and World History*, summarises twenty centuries of Ceylon history—the period from Vijaya to the coming of the Portuguese—in two paragraphs :—

"The coming of Vijaya and his followers about 486 B.C., began a reign of prosperity which reached its height in the reign of Tissa and Duttha Gamini. After that, Ceylon entered upon a long period of slow decline, due largely

to Tamil invasions. The decline was averted for a time by vigorous Kings, chiefly by the great Parakramabahu, but it soon set in again.

“By 1505, the wars with the Tamils were over. The long and fierce struggle had spoiled the glory and destroyed the prosperity of the Sinhalese Kingdom; but at the end of it the Sinhalese had the two things which they most valued, their religion and their distinct nationality, still in their hands. They had gone through a terrible struggle to keep them, but they had kept them, and to that extent they had won.”

Now, this is altogether a singular and outstanding achievement for a small nation like the Sinhalese. For twenty centuries they stood up manfully against great Empires in the face of overwhelming odds, with varying success may be, but with matchless courage and determination all the time. At the end they definitely preserved the national religion and their distinct entity as a nation.

For a large measure of this triumph credit is due to the Sangha. It was they who, since Mahinda Thera converted the country to Buddhism, acted with unsleeping vigilance as the guides, guardians and the sponsors of the future of the Sinhalese nation. It was they who, as the upholders of religious and moral authority through alternating travails and triumphs, preserved the unity of the Sinhalese as a distinct people.

The discharge of this dual responsibility, that of acting as the religious as well as social guides of the Sinhalese, is, in terms of the last words of the Master on his death-bed, a service which devolves even to-day on the Sangha of Lanka. He prophesied that Lanka would be the repository, for full five thousand years, of the pure doctrine. For the effective fulfilment of that prophecy two parties were and are necessary, the Sangha to keep the Torch burning and the lay people to bear that Torch. Both parties did not fail to shoulder that responsibility for the last twenty centuries, and the nation, if it is to justify its existence, will have to continue to shoulder that responsibility in the same way, during the next twenty-five centuries as well.

From the time of Mahinda Thera, the great procession of Spiritual Elders who followed him have been continually keeping this dual responsibility in the fore-front of their thoughts and actions. Is it necessary to add that this nation should fit itself in every possible way to bear the great Torch in the future? For a similar reason, therefore, the Sangha of old, through their influence with the Kings of Lanka, took it upon themselves, as a duty incumbent on them, to do everything possible to elevate the living conditions of the Sinhalese people.

The Temple, for centuries, was not only the centre from which radiated the spirit of religious devotion, but was also the force which invigorated the people in all other matters and held them together.

We are at present being unconsciously carried on by the momentum of twenty centuries of Buddhism. Our duty to-day, however, is to see to it that the lofty ideals of service to our fellow-beings, which are an inherent part of our mission, are vividly realised and deliberately placed in the fore-front of our policies.

Happily for us, our national chronicles have recorded for posterity the manner in which the Sangha of old not only wielded influence in the election, coronation, and conduct of Kings and sub-Kings, but also, whenever the occasion arose, directed and actively participated in the work of the emancipation of the country and its people.

The *Mahavamsa* describes with much feeling how five-hundred members of the Sangha accompanied the army that Dutugemunu led to liberate the nation from the galling thrall of a foreign yoke. The *Mahavamsa* has references not only to what we may call these periodical “Revolts in the Temple”, but also to the exercise by the Sangha of their influence in the direction of the every-day life of the State.

The same chronicle mentions (Ch. 24) that, when King Kakavannatissa (2nd Century, B.C.) died, Tissa, the younger son, crowned himself King. Dutugemunu came with armed forces and fought his brother who, when defeated, appealed to the Thera Yodhagatta Tissa:—“I have done ill, Sire, I will make my peace with my brother.” The Thera took Tissa in order to effect a reconciliation and, leaving him on the stairs, went into the presence of Dutugemunu and pleaded for the penitent prince, and the brothers were reconciled.

We find it recorded in that same chronicle (Ch. 33) that, on the death of Saddha Tissa (2nd Century, B.C.) a younger brother of the late King was elected as Sovereign, with the consent of the Sangha, at a meeting held at the Thuparama.

It next mentions that Aggabodhi I (6th Century, A.C.) “kept piously to the instructions of the Bhikkhu Dathasiva.”

A more positive reference to the political influence of the Sangha appears in Chapter 57 where it is stated: “Since that time (7th Century, A.C.) the Sovereigns of Lanka act according to the counsel of the Bhikkhus who hold the leading position.”

Again the same chronicle (Ch. 60) records the bestowal of the office of Sub-King, and later of King, on Jayabahu (11th Century, A.C.) by the Sangha of the eight chief Viharas together with the Chief Officers of State, etc.

An 11th Century Tamil inscription states that Vijaya Bahu I wore the sacred Crown with the sanction of the Sangha.

The *Mahavamsa* further tells us that, when Parakramabahu, after a long campaign against his cousin Gajabahu II (12th Century, A.C.), the King of the Rajarata, had brought his adversary to the end of his resources and the prize of the sovereignty of the whole Island was within his reach, the Sangha of the three Fraternities of Polonnaruwa intervened and brought about a reconciliation between the two princes. As a result of this, the dominions of Gajabahu were restored to him, and Parakramabahu retired to his own principality of the Dakkhinadesa, on the understanding that, upon the death of the former, he would become entitled to the sovereignty of the Rajarata.

It is also stated in the same Chronicle that, immediately after the cessation of hostilities, Gajabahu went to Madirigiriya Vihara and had the fact of his bequeathing the Rajarata to Parakramabahu written on a stone in that place. One of the most important epigraphical discoveries of recent times is this rock inscription recording the "Peace Treaty" between Gajabahu II and Parakramabahu I, at the ancient Vihara at Sangamuva, near Gokaralla, in the Hiriyala Hat Pattu of the Kurunegala District.

Again the *Mahavamsa* (Ch. 87) says: "Hereupon he (Parakramabahu II, 13th Century, A.C.) summoned the Great Community (Sangha) in great numbers, and the King asked them: 'Which of these six princes, my sister's son and my own sons, is worthy of the royal Crown?'"

Coming to later times (15th Century A.C.) when one of the Kings fell a victim to a ruse by a Chinese General and was carried away a prisoner to China, and the country was in a state of confusion resulting from the absence of a rightful Sovereign, it was a Hierarch of the Sangha, Vidagama Maha Swami, who put an end to the attempts of ambitious Chieftains to seize the Imperial power, by placing on the throne Parakramabahu VI of Kotte.

It was the Sangha, who saw to it that, in the Treaty by which this *Dhamma Dvipa*, "Isle of a True Doctrine", was transferred to a Christian crown, were embodied those clauses by which the indigenous, political and religious institutions were carefully preserved and expressly safeguarded. And it was again a Sangha, Wariyapola Nayaka Thera, who protested when an attempt was made to haul up the British flag before the signing of the Convention.

This rapid survey of history shows that the claim of the Sangha today to be heard in relation to social, political and economic problems and to guide the people is no new demand, but a re-assertion of a right universally exercised and equally widely acknowledged, up to the British occupation of the country.

We are passing through such an era of change, has never been seen in the past. To realise his aims, to be unselfish, to do good—these opportunities are offered to the present generation.

It is within your power and ours to usher in the birth of a new nation and to realise a new vision of the true meaning of life, for the vast multitude of the sons and daughters of Lanka.

We must now ever be mindful that twenty-five centuries of history are looking down upon us, and that the privilege of moulding and setting in motion another twenty-five centuries of history is in our hands.

Let us not fail to cherish our heritage, nor ignore this great privilege.

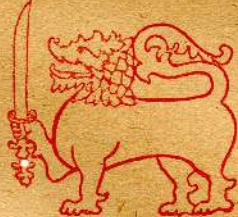
Thus do we declare

Malwatta Vihara,
Kandy,

Durutu 2489 A.B.
January 1945 A.C.

It was the courageous Sangha, who, saying farewell to motherland and braving the seas in frail craft, became to the Sinhalese the first missionaries of ancient learning and civilization. It was under their inspiration and that of their successors that the early Rulers of Lanka fought, according to their lights, with disease and want and ignorance. It was they who, without ornaments and without books, trained some of the greatest of our ancient scholars and kindled the fire of Sinhalese Art.

THE DESIRE FOR FREEDOM



"It is better for a man to go wrong in freedom than to go right in chains."

—THOMAS HUXLEY

THE general situation in Ceylon today is not really surprising. We were, after all, faced with very much the same sort of thing after the First Great War. There was trouble in India, in the Middle East, and so on. One result of it was, of course, the freeing of the Arabs from Turkish rule. Freedom, rather the desire for it, is the root cause of the present unrest in Lanka and trouble all over the Far East.

The problem of Freedom is not, as any one will admit, a simple one. "The only freedom which serves the name," says John Stuart Mill, "is that of pursuing our own good in our own way, so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs, nor impede their efforts to obtain it." It—that is, that freedom "means"—sounds simple, of course. To obtain and preserve freedom, however, is not so simple a matter.

Many years ago the late Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Prime Minister of England during the reign of King Edward VII, speaking on the Irish question, said rather profoundly that it was not enough that men should be free, but that they must also be made to feel free. At that time Irishmen certainly enjoyed what to the Germans, during the Nazi regime, would have seemed an enormous measure of freedom. They had freedom of speech to such a point that any Irishman could advocate the establishment of a republic; they had freedom of action; they had freedom of movement, not only in their own country, but all over the world; they were free to talk in their homes what is called free speech, with no Gestapo listening at the keyhole. Yet, somehow, though they enjoyed a great deal of individual freedom, they did not feel free.

It was thought for a time in England that they would begin to feel free if they were released from the domination of landlords. The British Exchequer, therefore, advanced nearly £100,000,000 to put into operation the Land Purchase Acts, designed to convert the Irish tenant into the owner of his holding—an excellent instance", said Mr. Lloyd George

who negotiated the treaty with the Irish Free State, "of the sincere effort made by Great Britain during the last half century to atone for the grievous wrong inflicted on the Irish people by English misrule in the past." But the fact was that what the Irish had set their hearts on was another kind of freedom, *National Freedom*.

We all feel enslaved if we have not the particular kind of freedom we want. Other people can never understand this. They think that we are unreasonable, and that the freedom of which we dream is no better than a mirage; but in the meantime we are like the child in the Victorian advertisement, trying to reach the soap that has fallen outside the bath. The older generation will remember the picture of the squalling child and the inscription beneath it: "He won't be happy till he gets it."

And it is high time that what we, here in Ceylon, are seeking to get should no longer be mislabelled "Dominion Status"—a popular catch-phrase which in reality has no application to us and which, as Macaulay said of Robert Montgomery's versification, gives no sense or meaning of anything "in the heavens above, in the earth beneath or in the waters under the earth."

The meaninglessness of that rather stupid phrase was admirably emphasised during the debate on India in the House of Lords in October, 1942, when Viscount Samuel said: "The phrase Dominion Status is meaningless and should be dropped in favour of such a term as 'National Status'."

In the course of the same debate, the Lord Chancellor, Lord Simon, replying on behalf of the Government, said: "I am rather inclined to agree with Lord Samuel when he deprecated the use of the word Dominion, in this matter. If anybody reads through the Simon report, he will not find anything about Dominion Status from the beginning to the end. I quite realise that the conception is misunderstood."

Support is given to this view by Professor Coupland in his pamphlet on the Cripps Mission. He says: "Congressmen did not want India to be described as a *Dominion*. The Dominions were 'new countries', creations of yesterday, products for the most part of British colonisation, and peopled by 30 million altogether. It was absurd, except on purely constitutional grounds, to bracket them with India, with an ancient and indigenous civilisation." Professor Coupland thinks this criticism is justified. Ceylon, too, with her "ancient and indigenous civilization", with a record of history that began more than 1000 years before an Englishman had crossed the ocean, should never be a Dominion.

Canada, Australia, New Zealand are over 90 per cent. British in the matter of racial origin. It is therefore natural that they should be satisfied with a status that retains them within the British Commonwealth of Nations. South Africa, less than half British in race, is divided in opinion regarding the suitability for her of this status. Eire is on the whole opposed to it and inclined towards an independent republic. The reason again is racial. Eire is 90 per cent. non-British in race. Ulster, on the contrary, is predominantly populated by the descendants of English and Scots settlers. And Ulster is strongly in favour of remaining within the British Commonwealth. Thus it is clearly seen that the real basis of Dominion Status, the rock on which it rests for popular support, is racial affinity. This is well illustrated from the case of Canada, where the only opposition to Dominion Status comes from the non-British element—the French Canadians of Quebec and Montreal.

'What does Dominion Status mean?' asked Mr. Lloyd George in the House of Commons in December, 1931, speaking on the motion for approval of the Article of Agreement for a Treaty between Great Britain and Ireland. In the Balfour Report occurs the famous Declaration which appears in the Preamble to the Statute of Westminster:

'The Dominions are autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations.'

This Declaration had all the advantages of flexibility and ambiguity. It could be all things to all men; as Wheare says, it embodied with admirable skill the difference of emphasis which each Dominion wished to place upon the term of its status. It is to be noted that, in this Declaration, there is no reference to the phrase Dominion Status nor is this defined anywhere in the Balfour Report.

Dominions were originally colonies inhabited mainly by people of British origin with British habit and political traditions. They form part of the British Empire. Certain sections of our national camp are now arguing that the national demand should be for Dominion Status, which, they say, is the same as National Freedom.

Those who argue thus approach the problem in a narrow, though constitutional and purely legal way. They maintain that the Statute of Westminster allows a Dominion all rights except those reserved for the Royal Prerogative. As these prerogatives are also reserved in Britain, it follows that Dominions are equal with Britain and really free countries. In any case, the Statute of Westminster allows a Dominion the right of secession, which it can exercise if it is not content with the existing state of affairs. So run the arguments of this school of thought.

The history of how Dominions came into existence and an analysis of the part they play in an imperialist economy will show how hollow and unreal are the arguments of those who demand Dominion Status for Ceylon, instead of Freedom.

As opposed to colonies proper which, like Ceylon, are exploited by the Imperialists primarily as markets for their commodities, as sources of raw material and as spheres for export of capital, Dominions have come into existence in two main ways.

Either, like Australia or Canada, they have served as colonising regions for the surplus populations of the Imperialist country and thus become a continuation of their capitalist system. In such cases, the indigenous populations of the country were for the most part exterminated, and capitalist development produced, among the white population, the class structure of the Imperial country.

Or, like South Africa, New Zealand, etc., a type of Dominion has come into existence where, alongside a numerous native population, there exists a considerable population of white colonists. The capitalist class in these countries represents a colonial extension of the metropolitan capitalist class and the interests of the two coincide to a considerable extent.

The case of Eire is often quoted by our advocates of Dominion Status. But they forget that this status has been granted on the basis of the partition of the industrialised North from the backward and agrarian South, leaving Eire at the economic mercy of Great Britain.

Nor do they remember that the reasons for the Dominions enjoying equal or nearly equal rights in law as members of the same Imperial system are due, firstly, to the fact that the capitalist class of the Imperial country is to a certain extent interested in strengthening its capitalist subsidiary in the Dominions, particularly when this subsidiary is successful in enslaving or even in completely destroying the

original native population; and, secondly, that the competition between various Imperialist systems of influence in the Dominions frequently compels the metropolitan Imperialism to reconcile itself to a certain economic and political independence of its agencies in such Dominions.

Let our advocates of Dominion Status ponder on these facts and not delude themselves with talk of legal rights without examining the political and economic factors which made them possible and necessary. They will then see that in Ceylon, where the form of Imperialist rule is different, where the economic development of the country is deliberately held back by Imperialism, it is not Dominion Status but recognition of our right to Independence and a free constitution that is the correct national demand.

Are our leaders, who are clamouring for Dominion Status, sure that the 'white' people who comprise the mother country and the Dominions want us in their congeries of nations? We are sure they do not. Just after the passing, in March, 1945, by the State Council, of Mr. Bandaranaike's Sri Lanka or Dominion Status Bill, Mr. H. J. Temple, supposed to be the wisacre of the Europeans in Ceylon, wrote to their newspaper as follows:—

"In the 9-30 p.m. news broadcast from London on the 16th instant it was announced that the State Council had unanimously passed a Bill in favour of Dominion Status for Ceylon.

"According to local Press reports, in winding up the debate on the Second Reading on the 15th instant, the Minister in charge of the Bill stated he wanted the British Government, the Soulbury Commission and the whole country to note that there was not a single member of the House, not even the European members, opposed to Dominion Status for Ceylon.

"The Soulbury Commission would be too well acquainted with Parliamentary procedure and electioneering methods to be misled by the above. The various Associations of Europeans and European interests, after much examination and consultation, sent in memoranda to the Commission based upon the Declaration of 1943 and the Ministers' Draft Constitution, and it would be impossible for the Commission to draw the conclusion from those memoranda that Europeans were in favour of Dominion Status.

"I would point out that the European community is the only community in Ceylon that was not given the opportunity of electing or even recommending for nomination men to represent it in Council. My sympathies are very much with the present European members who have worked valiantly and unselfishly in a very difficult and unsatisfactory position since

they were not permitted to be selected by the community, and I do not believe any one of them would have agreed to the Bill passing the Second Reading except for the purpose of dissecting it in the Committee stage. That does not mean they approve of Dominion Status. I am quite sure, if a plebiscite could be taken amongst all Europeans in Ceylon, the Minister would have an opportunity for another display of his fireworks against us.

"When introducing the bill he light-heartedly indicated that defence against aggression was a simple matter for Ceylon to deal with, but he carefully omitted to refer to the fate of other little countries like Holland and Belgium, while at the same time he was a party to the Ministerial statement of 8-6-43 which said: 'We appreciate that Ceylon is not yet in a position to defend herself against aggressive powers.' I wonder what would have happened to Mr. Bandaranaike and Ceylon if there had been Mr. Bandaranaike's type of Dominion Status in Ceylon in 1942?"

Surely, this is not an open-arms invitation to us to enter the so-called Commonwealth of Nations. The sooner our Leaders stop fooling the people, the better for them as well as for the people. Mr. Temple in his letter speaks of "defence against aggression" and "fate of little countries". Perhaps he is trying to impress us about what is called "Collective Security" enjoyed by the Dominions forming the British Commonwealth of Nations. This so-called "Collective Security" was supposed to exist in another world organisation, the extinct League of Nations, of which Britain was a member. Let us see what was the fate of a little 'black' country which was a member of that congeries of nations.

Ethiopia was a member of the League of Nations and had signed the Kellogg Pact, yet the Allied Nations dismissed the Emperor's call for help at Geneva as rhetoric and considered only their own immediate interests. The dignified words of the leader of small and backward people aroused no response in the minds of the representatives of the stronger and more 'cultured' nations. In his final appeal he said:

"Do the people of the world not yet realize that by fighting on until the bitter end I am not only performing my sacred duty to my people, but standing guard in the last citadel of collective security. Are they too blind to see that I have my responsibilities to the whole of humanity to face? I must still hold on until my tardy Allies appear. And if they never come, then I say prophetically and without bitterness, the West will perish."

Ethiopia waited in vain for the help which would have saved her from destruction. The wrong which she had suffered was soon conveniently forgotten and even condoned. In 1939 a British Prime Minister, accompanied by his Foreign Secretary, paid a visit to Rome and, at a banquet in his honour, included these words in replying to Mussolini's toast :

“ Assuring your Excellency that I value highly your expressions of personal friendship, and with the hope that our two nations may together co-operate in the task of securing lasting peace in Europe, I raise my glass to His Majesty the King of Italy, Emperor of Ethiopia, and to the continued welfare and prosperity of the peoples over whom he rules. ”

Thus was the new Emperor of Ethiopia acclaimed over a glass of wine by a British Prime Minister ! “ I wonder what would have happened to Mr. Bandaranaike and Ceylon if there had been Mr. Bandaranaike's type of Dominion Status in Ceylon in 1942 ”, asked Mr. Temple in his letter quoted above. Can there be any other reply except to say : “ What happened to Ethiopia in 1936 would have happened to Ceylon in 1942. ”

Some time ago, in the secret magazine of the Europeans in Ceylon, *Our Quarterly Review*, “ for private circulation only ”, Mr. F. C. Gibbs, a one time President of the European Association, asked :

“ Who's been sleeping in my bed ? Was it you, Bandaranaike ? ”

Why do our leaders want to push the nation to an uncomfortable bed ? Would not Mr. Bandaranaike, between Temple and Gibbs in the same bed, be an utterly impossible bedfellow ?

Why do our leaders want to betray the country, the people and the religion ? Is this the freedom which the leaders of old struggled for ? Is this the freedom for which the Sinhalese laid down their lives at Mulleriyawa and Gannoruwa ? Cannot they hear the war cry of the Sinhalese at the battle of Mulleriyawa, where “ blood flowed like water ” ? Cannot they hear the death rattle of the Portuguese, whose heads were “ piled up in pyramidal form ” on the field of Gannoruwa ? Cannot they hear the “ political bhikkhus ” of old rousing the nation to action ? Are our leaders' ears so deaf as not to hear the voice of the centuries ?

If their sense of hearing is defective, let them at least see with their eyes what the great national Leaders of old have struggled for throughout the centuries : “ How long, illustrious companions, shall we live as slaves to these vile Portuguese, whose harsh servitude you have borne for nearly 125 years without any liberty ? Is it possible that you should be so far removed from reason, so habituated to slavery, that being able to be free men and lords,

you exchange your freedom for slavery, letting the remembrance of what your ancestors achieved raise an honourable thought in your hearts ? ”

That was D. Cosme Mudaliyar preaching rebellion to his Sinhalese kinsmen assembled at his house. He was just one of the patriotic Sinhalese who were incensed over foreign domination. By guile and arms the Portuguese were overwhelming the Sinhalese. Valour in the field had done much. But that was not enough. Those of the calibre of Cosme Mudaliyar kindled the country to action. Finally they were overwhelmed, their rousing speeches—called “ rebel ” by the Portuguese, “ patriotic ” by the Sinhalese—at least, have been imprinted in the country's heart.

Cosme Mudaliyar's speech is worthy of remembrance. It was his historic outburst that roused the Lascareens to desert Constantine de Sa da Noronha : as a sequel to which the Sinhalese army routed the enemy forces, killed de Noronha in battle, obtained the surrender of the garrison of Menikkadavara, and concluded a victorious campaign with the signing of peace at Attapitiya in 1634.

Cosme Mudaliyar further added : “ Nor do you reflect on the unhappy fate of your children, for by our weakness and irresolution we are reduced to slavery, they will have either certain death or banishment before them.... If in spite of so many wars and so much bloodshed their number increased, what do you think it will be in peace when we are conquered ? Who does not see that our religion is fallen, our nobility extinct, our riches drained ? ”

He asked : “ Where was the Sinhalese nobility ? Where were the Sinhalese kings, in blood, in glory and in splendour, akin with and rivals of the suzerains of the East ? Where was that ancient Empire ? What could they expect from Eastern nations who knew that, forgetful of themselves, the Sinhalese became subject to a European foreigner ? Fathers took up arms against sons, brothers against brothers, to give the glory and profit to foreigners. ”

“ Now is the time, kinsmen and friends ”, he concluded, “ to seize the occasion.... They have a valiant General. Let him be a Hercules, he is but a man.... We have for us one of the most valorous kings of Kandy (Rajasinha II) who only waits for your word. We have the might of the whole island against so few men. We have experience in war, practice in arms and captains bred on the field from boyhood. What is there to hold us back ? What do we wait for ? What do we lack, save a gallant determination to die or conquer ? ”

Here is another flaming speech by another great Leader of old, Mayadunne, who delivered the following spirited address to his Council of State :—“ You know the trouble which the preservation of this city of Sitavaka gave me, the trouble of the siege

the pains I suffered when I beheld the fire
 our houses, and my Palace—erected at such
 care—and, still more to be deplored, our
 temples—the witnesses of our Religion—burnt
 down.

“If you remember all this, the memory of those
 painful sights, which affect all, will excite motive of
 vengeance, to do against the Portuguese what zeal
 turned to hatred will dictate ; for dissimulation can
 be prudent only so long as you obtain by it what
 without it would be lost. Hitherto the only reason
 for it was Vidiya Bandara, whom alone I feared. He
 is dead, as you know. Now it only remains to drive
 our spears into the breasts of the Portuguese, the
 authors of our ruin.”

And here are the Bhikkhus contributing their part
 to the revolt for Freedom. They were immensely
 impressed by Mayadunne's patriotism. They under-
 stood the object of Mayadunne was to preserve and
 spread the true doctrine. They promised their
 support to Mayadunne, the “Champion of our
 Religion”. Under a Bo tree a Nayaka Thera lashed
 out :—“If as Sinhalese, you are grieved to see your
 country deprived of freedom and given over to
 strangers, as observers of the law you should be still
 more afflicted to see the contempt into which it
 is fallen.”

The Maha Thera thus taunted the time-servers
 of his day : “That the robust lascarreen, the rude
 farmer and the thoughtless noble should be deluded
 is not strange, for their office or labour or self-
 interest gives them no room for reflection and their
 heedlessness or ignorance excuses them.” But how
 could the members of the audience put up with such
 patent wrongs without fear of some great punishment ?
 How could they dissimulate an evil “when our
 customs are made barbarous, our rights prevented,
 and the Buddhist religion and the Buddhist temples
 profaned ? Realize, O realize the error into
 which you have fallen ! Stir up this misguided
 Dharmapala) to drive the Portuguese out of his
 kingdom, along with the faith he has embraced and
 not to disgrace the nobility of the ancestors,.....

“Mayadunne attacks because he fears that in
 course of time this kingdom will go to strangers.”
 The Thera ended with : “Remember, that from
 small beginnings springs the downfall of great
 Empires.... It is zeal alone which makes me remind
 you of this, it is the love of country which makes
 me recount these grievances. Remember !”

These speeches are almost forgotten now. They
 are not even enunciated on platforms as set pieces
 of oratory. We would not be reading them but for
 the old records left as a legacy to us by Portuguese
 historians.

To us, Dominion Status would only mean the
 conversion of the “pearl upon the brow of India”
 into a British aircraft-carrier off the coast of India.
 Dominion Status would bring no peace to this
 unhappy country. The spirits of Vidiya Bandara,
 Mayadunne, the two Rajasinhās, Cosme Mudaliyar,
 Keppitipola and Madugalle would not rest in peace,
 they would still haunt an uneasy Lanka. “Those
 who would give up essential liberty to purchase a
 little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor
 safety,” said Benjamin Franklin, the bulwark of
 American Independence. “We must especially be-
 ware,” he added, “of that small group of selfish
 men who would clip the wings of the American
 eagle in order to feather their own nests.” How
 true to our national life today, are the words of the
 great American Leader. We, too, “must especially
 beware of that small group of selfish men” who
 would clip the mane of the Sinhalese Lion in order
 to “feather their own nests”. They, too, “deserve
 neither liberty nor safety.”

No ! Freedom has a thousand charms to show
 That slaves, how'er contented, never know...
 Religion, virtue, truth, what'er we call
 A blessing—freedom is the pledge of all.

—WILLIAM COOPER

—Reproduced from Part III of “The Revolt
 in the Temple”, a forthcoming publication



The meaning of THE GREAT RENUNCIATION

WITH the transition, from the personal presence of the founder, of any religion to a society formed to carry on his message and work, there is a loss of power and understanding ; even his wisest and most devoted disciples cannot have the fulness of his spiritual genius and insight. Some kind of organisation is necessary so that the Message shall not be forgotten, but any organised system is bound to lose something of the Teacher's freshness and originality.

A more devotional study of the Buddha and His teaching, and its application to personal and national life, would result in spiritual and moral uplift. Present-day Buddhists are very naive in some of their assertions, and in their trusting acceptance of tradition.

In the recent controversy over the question : "Should bhikkhus take part in politics ?," a Nayaka Thera made the astounding assertion, that, just as a water lily that rises from mud and stagnant water, remains thereafter without contamination with the scum from which it arose, so also a bhikkhu, after entering the Order, remains without contamination with the low order from which he arose. What a parody of the Great Renunciation!

Prince Siddhartha stepped down from his Royal Seat, left his lovely Yasodhara and new-born son, not to emerge as a 'butterfly on the lily', but to become a 'worm in the mud'. His intention was to speak to the mass of people who were leading lives of despair

and desperation, who were unhappy and yet did not know what to do about their unhappiness.

The sight of a water lily rising pure and white from mud and stagnant water or of a shrub stunted for years by the browsing of cattle, but at last bearing fruit on an interior scion, was to Siddhartha a significant sign that man, too, could rise above unfavourable circumstances if he was as persistent and cheerful as a plant. He believed in life.

He had long been distressed by the sight of man's feverish attempts to lay up treasures on earth, his frittering away of life on non-essentials at the expense of what he really was at the core of his being. So he left his home and everything else to solve the problem. Such was the meaning of the Great Renunciation.

For himself, Gautama did not want to discover, when it was time to die and much too late, that he had not lived. He wanted to prove, if possible, that life could be lived simply, honestly, deeply, if one cultivated the ability and courage to shear off the things that were not vital to life. But, on the other hand, if life was mean, not sublime, he wanted to find out that, too, and publish the fact. In his solution of the problem, in both its spiritual and economic aspects, lies the great Message of the Buddha.

—Reproduced from Part III of "The Revolt in the Temple", a forthcoming publication.

When the Sinhalese, united by bonds of blood and religion, and inspired by the burning desire to live a free life and develop their own culture, formed a new element in the political arena of Ceylon, the Britisher made a mistake for which he at least has the excuse that some minorities who should have known better shared it.

They thought that the essence of the whole movement was merely a desire for power and domination, whereas it was the love of creation, the innate ineradicable desire to build up something in one's own image. Just as in the springtime of life the same message bursts from the unconscious to the conscious self and becomes objective, so to the Sinhalese had come a reawakening, a desire to create a State which should be Sinhalese, reared by Sinhalese hands, and breathing a Sinhalese atmosphere in the land of Sinhalese tradition.



The Road Back to Peace

IN the pathway the human race has to tread, the mile-stone of peace is the longest and the most beset with obstacles; the goal may be distant, but we must press on. In the eternal quest of happiness, mankind cannot by-pass this mile-post.

There is no path to peace except as the will of peoples may open it. The way to peace is through agreement, not through force. The question, then, is not of any ambitious general scheme to prevent war, but simply of the constant effort, which is the highest task of statesmanship in relation to every possible cause of strife, to diminish among peoples the disposition to resort to force and to find a just and reasonable basis for accord.

If war is outlawed, other means of redress of injuries must be provided. Moreover, few, if any, intend to outlaw self-defence, a right still accorded to individuals under all systems of law. To meet this difficulty, the usual formula is limited to wars of aggression. But justification for war, as recently demonstrated, is ready at hand for those who desire to make war, and there is rarely a case of admitted aggression, or where on each side the cause is not believed to be just by the peoples who support the war.

There is a further difficulty that lies deeper. There is no law-giver for independent states. There is no legislature to impose its will by majority vote, no executive to give effect, even to accepted rules. Great Powers agreeing among themselves may indeed hold small Powers in check. But who will hold Great Powers in check when Great Powers disagree?

As long as people hold that might makes right, treaties will be mere scraps of paper. The Hague Peace Conference was expected to reform this state of mind, but devoted itself to revising the rules of war. The League of Nations, professing the same

purpose, had no workable machinery and was continually shaken by bellicose elements in its membership. The vital reform to overcome this defect must proceed from within. It is not to be imposed from without, certainly not by any agency like the League of Nations wielding a bludgeon which, when applied, turned out to be nothing but a slap-stick.

When our forefathers made Lanka their home it was to dwell in this land in Peace. Peace amongst themselves. Peace with other nations.

But what has been their destiny? Twenty-five centuries of almost incessant warfare. Look at Kelaniya, Anuradhapura, Sigiriya, Polonnaruwa, Yapa-huwa, Dambadeniya, Gampola, Kotte, Sitawaka. What are they? Capitals of conquering or conquered Kings. Scenes of strife and conflict, often fratricidal. Monuments to conquest and carnage, plunder and pillage.

"The Moving Finger writes; and having writ,
Moves on; nor all thy Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,
Nor all thy Tears wash out a word of it."

So says Omar Khayyam in his *Rubaiyat*. It has been our unfortunate destiny to write a part of that glorious history entrusted to us in blood. The quest was civilization and culture, prosperity and peace. The dower was conquest and carnage, plunder and pillage.

It is true that civilization painfully developed amidst the throes of warfare: there have been philosophers who preached that war has been the begetter, or at least the inseparable companion, of progress.

Even the poets have supported this fabulous theory. Byron, for example, celebrated the "Isles of Greece" as the consecrated region "where grew the arts of war and peace."

But, is it not certain that the "Arts of Peace" would have been ten thousandfold more if the "Arts of War" had not periodically wrecked and destroyed the works of peace?

The world, it is said, started with everything that was beautiful, dominating all that was ugly. Visionaries have always told us of realms beyond the physical where spirits, nature-spirits, and the like gambol with a freedom unknown to modern civilization, where everyday life is joy in its highest sense, and such things as strife and wars are unknown. If man would turn his thoughts inwards, instead of outward, then the inner happiness that is permanent would emerge, and become the key that unlocks the door to the kingdom where one sees with the eyes of a child, and where one understands the injunction to "be as little children" who know joy as their daily companion. Perhaps if man's thoughts could rest, even for a little while, at these levels, conflict and strife would become things of the past, anachronisms indeed.

Victory was never gained by strife. Success was never achieved by conflict. Happiness was never experienced through ill-feeling. Peace in the heart is conqueror of all opposing forces. It controls our life aright, guides us to the happy paths of success, prosperity and achievement of purpose. Never before in the history of the world were we in so great a need of peace from conflict, ill-feeling and strife as we are today. Peace is needed not only in the world at large, but also in the home, business house and workshop. Without peace, no life, no home, office or other place of industry can succeed. When there is no peace in the heart the life without is all turmoil. The mental and physical energy that is wasted and used up in strife and conflict, sadly deprives one's life of the necessary forces that are required to build up a successful and noble life—that is going to be of very great and important value to us.

The happy and successful life which we all yearn for cannot possibly be achieved if we wantonly waste our time and energy in conflict and strife. To have peace in our hearts we require to ban forever from our lives warfare of every description. The heart, once freed from such horrors, will immediately become the great and wise helper that it should be instead of a hindrance.

It has been said that the "blinding flash" of the first Atomic Bomb dropped in Hiroshima altered the whole course of World History. But the light that "flashed and radiated" under that historic Bo Tree 2,500 years ago was of greater moment to Human Destiny. It illuminated the way by which mankind could cross, from a world of Superstition, of Hatred and of Fear, to a new world of Light, of Love and of Happiness.

The Buddha led mankind to a new World twenty-five centuries ago. Atom Bombs are utilised today

because Man has gone astray from that world. Man, in acquiring increased control over the forces of nature without acquiring increased control over the forces of his own nature, is surely on the path to self-destruction and extinction. Those who are pondering over the havoc and holocaust caused to life and property by Atomic Bombs do not yet realise that the foundations of their own life, upon which they have built their civilizations, their great cities, their social systems, their cathedrals, palaces and homes and hovels, are cracking beneath their feet.

The horrors of the Nazi concentration camps, the burning, by the British, of the Indonesian village of Bekasi, by pouring petrol on each of the one thousand timber houses and methodically destroying them, the hanging of "war criminals" with all the ghoulisn delight and unsavoury publicity attached to the executions, all these are symptoms of a social structure decayed and rotten to the core. These things happen, are allowed to happen, and society takes a delight in these happenings because the people who constitute that society are still guided by their 'savage survivals', the primitive instincts of sadism, revenge and inferiority complex.

It was "inferiority complex", the repressed feeling of resentment, anger and shame, for the humiliation inflicted on the White Races, that led to the hanging of Yamashita, the conqueror of Singapore. Inferiority feeling is a perverted emotional distress in the centre of the personality. When an individual sets up a certain standard of attainment or influence which he privately considers to be the sum and substance of his life and purpose, and when that individual feels his dream shattered or sees his influence failing, the sense of humiliation and defeat creates an emotional conflict, and, unless he is guided by a religion of very high moral principles, savage instincts still lurking in the human race manifest themselves and become the motivating phantasy.

Unprecedented means of destruction are now in the hands of beings who have not risen spiritually overmuch since the dawn of recorded history. The only way of escape for these "warring tribes", is to "strike camp" and get ready for a trail to that world pointed out by the Buddha. Lasting peace will be found only in that world of Universal Love (*Maitri*) pointed out by the Buddha. Professor Rhys Davids, in his Hibbert Lectures, declared: "The distinguishing characteristic of Buddhism was that it started a new line, that it looked upon the deepest questions men have to solve from an entirely different stand-point. It swept away from the field of its vision the whole of the great soul-theory which had hitherto so completely filled and dominated the minds of the superstitious and the thoughtful alike. For the first time in the history of the world, it proclaimed

and by himself, in this world, during this life, without even the least reference to God, or to gods, either great or small. Like the Upanishads, it placed the first importance on knowledge but it was no longer a knowledge of God, it was a clear perception of the real nature, as they supposed it to be, of men and things. And it added to the necessity of knowledge the necessity of purity, of courtesy, of uprightness, of peace, and of a universal love far-reaching, grown great and beyond measure”.

Morality, therefore, underlines all problems of lasting peace. The problem of lasting peace is not conquest through Atomic Bombs, but conquest through self-conquest. “Not even a God can change into defeat the victory of a man who has vanquished himself”, says the Buddha. .

—Reproduced from Part II of “The Revolt in the Temple”, a forthcoming publication.

Has life Purpose What, or where, or when?
Out of Space came Universe, came Sun,
Came Earth, came Life, came Man, and more
must come,
But as to Purpose ; Whose or Whence ? Why?
NONE.

The Greeks had a story of a Phrygian king who sought for long to capture the satyr Silenus, wise, it was said, with supernatural knowledge. At length in the king's gardens in Macedonia, where grew the most fragrant roses in all the world, the satyr was taken, and brought before the monarch, who put to him the question of questions : What is best and most desirable for men ? For long Silenus was silent. At last, to obtain his release, with bitter laughter he replied : Oh wretched race of a day, children of chance and misery, why do ye compel me to say to you what it were most expedient for you not to hear ? What is best for all is for ever beyond your reach : not to be born, not to be, to be nothing. The second best for you, however, is soon to die.’ *Optimum non nasci aut cito mori.*

A New Technique of Revolution

IN their journey through life, mankind, throughout the ages, have looked to certain ideals as their guiding lights. The highest ethical concepts of the Aryan people are the twin abstractions, Truth and Right. The greatest of the Aryans brought them to the concrete sphere when he declared :

*Sabba pāpassa akaranan
Kusalassa upasampadā.*

In other words, to do good to others is virtue and to do evil to others is sin. And he also added a third tone :

Sa citta pariyodapanan

that is, the greatest service to one's own self is to live with a clean heart.

Here, in these three short lines, we have the cream of the teachings of the Buddha. And it is a very simple teaching, too. It touches life at all points and covers the whole sphere of human conduct and moral progress. It involves no dogmas, no sacraments, no rights and ceremonies, which in the history of religions have been so fruitful a cause of dissension among men. In these three lines we have a whole religion ; a religion which requires neither gods, priests nor temples, since these are you and within you.

The unique character of Buddha's teaching lies in the last line—*Sa citta pariyodapanan*. All other religious teaching emphasises man's obligation to others, but says little about his obligation to himself. One of the great discoveries of modern psychology is that our attitudes toward ourselves are even more complicated than our attitude toward others. The great commandment of Christ, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself", might now be better interpreted, in the light of Buddha's teaching, to mean, "Thou shalt love thyself properly, and then thou wilt love thy neighbour well."

"The elders of our race have left us proverbs, maxims and precepts by which to regulate our steps in the journey of life", says the Rt. Hon. Dr. V. S. Sirinivasa Sastri. "Each man has a selection of these to which he turns by habit. Faith, Hope and Charity, appeal to a certain class of people. Others, philosophically disposed, look upon Truth, Beauty and Goodness as the values which remain in the ultimate analysis."

"In spite of the modern education that I have received," adds Dr. Sastri, "instinct draws me to our own categories. Truth, Justice and Benevolence, form my triad. Benevolence, as I understand it, includes kindness to all life and what in our code is called *Kshama*, one word for the negative virtue of forbearance and the positive virtue of forgiveness together."

Dr. Einstein's ideals are Truth, Goodness and Beauty. In the essay entitled "The Meaning of Life" in his *The World as I see it*, he says : "The ideals which have lighted me on my way, and time after time given me new courage to face life cheerfully, have been Truth, Goodness, and Beauty. Everybody has certain ideals which determine the direction of his endeavours and his judgments. I have never looked upon ease and happiness as ends in themselves—such an ethical basis I call more proper for a herd of swine."

Einstein thus rejects ease and happiness as 'ends' fit only for swine. Happiness, according to him, is not an end to pursue.

"What is happiness ? the gleam
of a dream within a dream
While you know it not, 'tis with you,
Grasp the vision and 'twill leave you,
And your empty arms confess
Its counterfeit, forgetfulness."

It is a sign, perhaps, that something worth while is being pursued, a characteristic of a state in which a human being's capacities are being fulfilled. Happiness, according to Einstein, is not an end*to be chosen instead of Truth, Beauty and Goodness ; which are forms of experiences of knowing something to be true, contemplating something beautiful, fulfilling one's duty.

During many ages and particularly in our own times, Physical Force has been looked upon by some creeds as well as by some nations as essential for human progress. The creed of Physical Force in the creation of a new social order is based on the religious persecutions of Europe. Almost every European country has, at this moment, the religion which was that of its government in the late sixteenth century, and this must be attributed to the control of persecution and propaganda by means of the armed forces in the several countries.

A creed never has force at its command to begin with. The first steps in the production of a widespread opinion must be taken by means of persuasion alone—The Buddha adopted this course and was quite successful—Pure persuasion leading to the conversion of a minority; then expose the rest of the community to the right propaganda; when, finally, there emerges genuine belief on the part of the great majority, which makes the use of force unnecessary.

The choice of the means determines the nature of the ends. A society which looks towards force as its main instrument cannot be a peaceful society, however sincere for the time being its profession of peace may be. Structure depends far more on means than on ends. History is filled with evidences that leadership by force cannot endure. The downfall and disappearance of "Dictators" is significant. It means that people will not follow forced leadership indefinitely.

The world has just entered a new era of relationship between leaders and followers, which very clearly calls for new leaders, and a new brand of leadership in politics, in business and in industry. Those who belong to the old school of leadership-by-force, must acquire an understanding of the new brand of leadership (co-operation), or be relegated to the rank and file of the followers. There is no other way out for them.

To many minds the idea of Revolution is almost inseparable from "Struggle", "Violence" and "Brute Force." But this is only one type of revolution. In North America the people of the United States appealed to the "sacred right of rebellion" when they found themselves precluded from any share in the passing of the laws imposed upon them by the British Parliament and decided "to dissolve the political bands which connect them with another." A Revolution need not be a spontaneous storm of indignation against "abuses and usurpations" or indignities and deprivations. It can take quite other forms.

As a second type of Revolution which is in sharp contrast to the "indignation-revolt", we may take what we may call the "revolution conspiracy", in which a number of people set about organizing the forces of discomfort and resentment and loosening the grip of the government's forces, in order to bring about a fundamental change of system. The ideal of this type is the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. Reduced to a working theory by its advocates, it is conceived as a systematic cultivation of a public state of mind favourable to a Revolution, together with an inner circle of preparation for a "seizure of power."

But a Revolution need not be an explosion or a *coup d'etat*, and the Revolution that lies before us now and the only hopeful alternative to chaos, is to be attained, if it is to be attained at all, by neither of these methods. The first is too rhetorical and

chaotic, and simply leads to a champion and a tyranny; the second is too conspiratorial and leads through an obscure struggle of masterful personalities to a similar end.

An altogether different type of Revolution is now possible. It depends for its success upon whether a sufficient number of minds can be brought to realize that the choice before us now is not a choice between further revolution or more or less reactionary conservatism, but a choice between us carrying on and so organising the process of change in our affairs as to produce a new social order, or suffering an entire and perhaps irreparable social collapse.

The reconstruction of society has at first to be mainly the work of a "movement" or a party or a religion or a cult, whatever we choose to call it. It need not be a close-knit organization, toeing the party line and so forth. It may be very loose-knit and many-faceted, but if a sufficient number of minds in the country, irrespective of race, religion, political party and social habituations, can be brought to the free and candid recognition of the essentials of the problem, then their effective collaboration in a conscious, explicit and open effort to reconstruct society will ensue.

The opening phase of this new type of Revolution must, therefore, be a "PRESENTATION OF PROGRAMME." To accomplish anything you need an interest, a motive, a centre for your thought. You need a star to steer by, a cause, a creed, an idea, a passionate attachment. Men have followed many guiding lights. They have been inspired by love of fame and love of country. They have pursued power, wealth, holiness. They have followed Buddha, Krishna, Christ, Mohammed, Alexander, Asoka, Dutugemunu, Jenghis Khan, Washington, Napoleon. Something must beckon you or nothing is done, something about which you ask no questions. Thought needs a fulcrum for its lever, effort demands an incentive or an aim.

Has anyone yet studied the infective power of ideas, their modes of transmission or magnetic fields? Does anyone understand the psychology of religious revivals, of mass suggestion, of tidal waves of emotion? Yet these have sent armies of crusaders to Jerusalem; driven the Buddhists of Ceylon to the banners of Migettuwatte Thera and of Anagarika Dharmapala; induced 200 million Russians to follow Lenin, the prophet of Karl Marx; and 300 million Indians to fall down before the man whom Winston Churchill chose to describe as the "half-naked fakir."

Ideas are the most mysterious things in a mysterious world. Thomas Paine, branded by bigots and fanatics as an Atheist, and a blasphemer, writes a pamphlet entitled *Common Sense*, and Britain loses America. A fallen journalist named Rousseau", said

Friedell, "writes a couple of bizarre pamphlets, and for six years a highly gifted people tears itself to pieces. A stay-at-home scholar, named Marx, indifferent to and ignored by society, writes a few fat volumes of unintelligible philosophy, and a gigantic empire alters its whole condition of life from the base upward." A 'little lady' writes *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, it brews a big war and influences the abolition of slavery. An ex-house painter writes a single volume and brings the whole world crashing down.

Thomas Paine was the architect of American freedom, he was the prime mover in the establishment of the great American Republic. Had it not been for his great efforts in liberty's behalf, it is quite as likely as not that to this very day America would have remained under British rule.

Paine wrote and published his pamphlet entitled *Common Sense* in January, 1776, the earliest plea for American Independence. Previous to the appearance of Paine's masterly argument urging immediate separation and resistance, the American Colonists had thought only of supplications and petitions to George III, for relief. Despite the British monarch's long-continued obduracy and the fact that each new oppression was followed by another, and that he turned a deaf ear to all appeals, the Colonists still hoped on, with never a thought of rebellion. Even Washington, at this time, expressed loyalty to the King.

Like a thunderbolt from the sky came Paine's magnificent argument for liberty. It electrified the people, and its stirring words swept like wildfire through the country. No pamphlet ever written sold in such vast numbers, nor did any ever before or since produce such marvellous results. Washington, now converted, wrote to his friends in praise of *Common Sense*, asserting that Paine's words were "sound doctrine and unanswerable reasoning." Jefferson, John Adams, Franklin, Madison, all the great statesmen of the time, wrote praisefully of Paine's "flaming arguments."

In July, six months after *Common Sense* had awakened the people, the Declaration of Independence, embracing the chief arguments of Paine's pamphlet, and much of its actual wording, was signed by the committee of patriots in Philadelphia, and the great Revolt, which ended in American freedom, commenced.

Fortunately for us, the instrument for achieving our beloved country's freedom and social uplift lies ready at hand, namely Universal Suffrage. Here we, of Lanka, possess this priceless boon of democracy for which the torch-bearers of liberty and social justice died. It is a gift for which the people must thank the Donoughmore Commissioners and is the *Magna Charta* of the citizen. It is the greatest boon conferred on the people of Ceylon since the inception of British rule.

By its means, without violent change, power has passed from one class to another—from the landed interest to the workers—from the "haves" to the "have nots"—government, once the monopoly of a few, has been extended to the many.

With this instrument we can "progress to higher social forms without collapse of existing forms, entailing widespread suffering", provided that we continue in this country to respect the will of the majority, the rights of the minorities, and to practise the principles of democracy.

"For a Socialist movement to develop into a constitutional political party there must be a democratic constitution, with a franchise sufficiently wide to make possible the achievement of political power by the masses", says C.R. Attlee, Premier of Britain, in his *The Labour Party in Perspective*. Sure, we have that franchise. But, of course, we have no "democratic constitution" in Ceylon, and there can be no democracy in Lanka so long as a "Christian Governor", the shadow of an alien "Dominating Overlordship" wielding a bludgeon politely called "reserved powers" and empowered to say, "Obey, or.....!" is astride the Lion Throne of Lanka.

Human happiness and progress can only flourish in an atmosphere of justice. This atmosphere is more likely to be found in a democratic community than anywhere else. The reason is not far to seek. The essence of democracy—government by discussion and consent—is that principle which proclaims the right of citizens to participate in the government of their country and, if they think fit, to change the government by peaceful methods. In other words, they must have recourse to reason and discussion. Trial by battle is ruled out. The citizens are precluded from employing the bullet and the bayonet so long as they have it in their power to achieve their ends by the use of the ballot-box.

In these circumstances they have forfeited the "sacred right of rebellion". This ancient doctrine, cherished by the revolutionaries in every age, cannot be recognised. It is treason to the community. Such a right finds no place in a society which is governed by reason and discussion, and in which every member is entitled to play a part in framing the laws and determining the policy of his country. No longer does the citizen possess the moral right to invoke the aid of physical violence to attain his objectives. The fundamental doctrine of the Buddha is the sacredness of all life. The fundamental characteristic of the man is reverence for law.

Ours is the obligation to remind our countrymen that the keystone of the political system which we believe remains as the most hopeful plan of government yet evolved for human progress is the ballot. Through the system of parliamentary representation

the Anglo-Saxon contribution to the development of democratic government—every citizen is able, by registering his vote, to exert his influence upon the affairs of the nation. He is thus able to assume an indirect share in the government of his country and in the framing of its laws.

The form of government which Anglo-Saxon democracies have adopted is representative institutions. England built it up by some eight centuries of trial and error. America created it in one act, though of course that act was itself a part of history. While the economic and social aspects of democracy are highly important, they are not enough to constitute the thing itself. Democracy, like Buddhism, is a philosophy or a "way of life", and both have to be given practical shape as a social structure or a form of government, in other words a political system.

It is man's privilege to assume the responsibilities of citizenship. And it is his responsibility to ensure the privileges of his fellow citizens. Two things are vital to democracy; that every man grant every other the rights he claims for himself, and that every man accept the obligations he expects the other to exercise. The good citizen concerns himself with the privileges of others and the responsibilities of himself.

And yours is not the privilege of refusing or failing to vote. Here the right enjoins the duty. Every voter is bound to go to the polls and vote without any other direction than that coming from his or her own individual conscience. William Jennings Bryan once described America as "a republic in which all men are sovereign but in which

no man cares to wear a crown." The crown of Lanka's sovereignty is the ballot, and the citizen who abuses the vote not only endangers the State and denies his Kingship, but also drops to the path to "hell", because the Buddha has said CONSCIOUS PURSUIT OF TRUTH AND RIGHT is the first step in one's path to Happiness.

A man cannot ever be a true Buddhist without doing his level best to be a true citizen. There are some who profess to believe, and indeed who do believe, that religion has no place in what is ordinarily known as Government. Without religion in government every government is *ipso facto* insecure. If Buddhism is not thus practical, the Master's injunction, *Dhammajivin*—BY RIGHTEOUSNESS OF ACTION AND LIVING, is not a practicable proposition.

The Buddha was no mere theorist. By every test of what he said, and of what he did and of what he was, he demonstrated himself to be the world's pre-eminent man of affairs. Always he declared a faith of service, a ministry of sacrifice and achievement and a social redemption that moved the living dead towards an abundance in living, a ministry that spoke not only in the past and future tenses but also in the present. The Buddha had no less to do with the home right here than with the home over there. How perfectly he related the "worlds elsewhere" to the humdrum responsibilities of our existence in the "here and now."

—Reproduced from the chapter entitled "Is Violence Essential?", in Part II of "The Revolt in the Temple", a forthcoming publication.

LEGENDS OF KELANIYA

by N A N D A

THE crickets chirped their incessant song as I went on my way to my grandfather's home on the banks of the Kelani River. Before me the Kelani looked like a shimmering silver ribbon as the soft moonlight played upon her waters; willowy bamboos, swaying to and fro in the night wind, kissed the silver waters. Overhead, the bright full-moon ran her hourly race, leaving her twinkling hand-maidens behind.

I found my grandfather taking off his slippers before entering the house. He was dressed in a white banian and a white cloth; immediately, I was ready for a sharp sermon on modern youth, for I knew that he had just returned from a pilgrimage to his beloved Kelaniya Temple.

"Where have you been, Seeya?" I asked him.

"To the temple, and where else do you expect me to go on Poya days?" was the curt reply.

I did not tax him further but took a low seat in front of his favourite arm-chair. As I sat on the cane seat, the ancient smiled into his silvery beard, for here was one godless modern youth who at least respected old age.

I waited till he was comfortably settled in his arm-chair and asked him to relate some stories about his favourite temple, Kelaniya. "Oh! so you are interested in the doings of your grandfather," he said, as he crammed a carefully prepared wad of betel into his mouth. Nevertheless, despite his scornful tone, his kindly eyes lit with pleasure. He ejected a stream of betel juice into the heart of a brass spittoon, cleared his throat and thus began:

"About 600 years before the Christian era there lived in Ceylon a race of people called the Nagas. They occupied the north and south sea-boards of the island. The land of the Talipot and the 'well-sweep-Jaffna' was then known as Maninaga Divayina, (the isle of the jewelled Nagas). The Nagas dwelt underground. Their large and spacious halls were lit with a thousand gems which shed their soft radiance around.

"The land of the 'well-sweep' was ruled by Mahodara, a son of the sister of the mighty Maniakki, the king of the Nagas. Maniakki (the jewel-eyed),

the Naga king, dwelt at Kelaniya. Behind Kelaniya in the rolling blue hills was Vandunnagala, another Naga settlement. Here reigned Culodara, the son of the king of Kannavaddhana Mountain and the nephew of Mahodara.

"These great Naga principalities were not only bound together by ties of blood, but also the rulers had a great affection for each other. Alas! this was not to be for ever, for the hand of destiny sowed a seed of discord in the shape of a gem-studded throne into their midst.

"This throne, one of the treasures of the Naga kings, was in the possession of Mahodara's mother. Before the death of the old Queen, she gave it to her daughter and not to her son. The daughter, whose mother-love was evidently greater than her sisterly affection, bequeathed the throne to her son, Culodara. This gift enraged Mahodara who began to make preparations to attack the kingdom of Vandunnagala.

"When Maniakki heard of this impending battle his heart was full of sorrow. His great kingdom, over which he ruled justly and well, was to be torn asunder by civil strife. He tried in vain to restrain his kinsmen. At last, in desperation, he decided to seek the aid of the Buddha whose preachings were then filtering into Ceylon. Throwing himself at the feet of the Buddha, Maniakki implored him to visit Ceylon and save his country from civil war.

"The Compassionate One listened to the pleadings of the great king, consoled him and bade him return to his country, saying that he would follow.

"Days passed but there was no sign of the Enlightened One, Maniakki began to despair, but on the very day on which the rival armies were all ready to set upon each other, Buddha appeared in their midst.

"Hovering over the would-be battle-field with serenity and piety radiating from Him, the Buddha preached to the Nagas a sermon on greed and selfishness. As he preached, the lowering looks left the faces of the Nagas and once more kinsmen mingled with kinsmen. A thousand throats sent up a cry of thanks as the Buddha finished the sermon.

"The Nagas offered the Buddha the gem-set throne, which was the bone of contention, as a token of their gratitude.

"Maniakki was so impressed by Buddha's preaching, that, three years after he had averted the civil war, he invited the Buddha once again to Lanka. In the eighth year of his Buddhahood, the Buddha came to Kelaniya with five hundred followers. Again he preached to Maniakki and his subjects and converted them to Buddhism. It is on this spot where Buddha preached that the milk-white Kelaniya Cetiya is built.

"Even now", said the ancient, "when the great temple doors are closed, when the halls no longer echo the cries of Sadhu, when the throbbing drums are still, the Nagas, dressed in shimmering white, come to worship the great Master."

In the distance I heard the sound of the drums as drummers offered *sabdha pooja* to the Buddha. On the night wind the throbbing cadences of the *magul bera* rose, now high, now low.

"I expect you to know the story of King Kelanitissa" said my grandfather.

"No, Seeya," I shamefully replied.

"What!" said my grandfather as he sat up choking and spluttering, "*cha, dan hadene lamai*" (Good gracious! how ignorant our children are today). "Do you not know of your great warrior king?" In his anger he spat into the spittoon, missed the centre, and sprayed its brass sides with betel juice. "Now, listen" he said.

About 200 years before the Christian era there lived in Kelaniya a king named Uttiya. He had two sons, Kelanitissa and Uttiya. On the death of the old king, Kelanitissa, the elder of the brothers, was crowned king. Kelanitissa had a consort who was more beautiful than virtuous. Prince Uttiya fell in love with the queen and she returned his affection. Kelanitissa, sensing this intrigue, banished his brother from the court.

"Prince Uttiya, who now had no means of communicating with his lady-love, hit upon an ingenious plan. Hearing that there was to be an alms-giving at the palace, he summoned one of his trusted followers, shaved his head, dressed him in yellow robes, and, giving him a letter, instructed him to mingle with the priests invited to the alms-giving.

"The messenger took up a position immediately behind the Maha Thera, the High Priest of Kelaniya. As the long line of priests entered the alms-giving hall, the king and queen saluted the High Priest and were bending down to greet the next in the line, when the messenger dropped the letter near the Queen. The rustle of the ola leaf striking the marble floor came to the king's ears, he looked down, saw the letter, and snatched it up. Breaking the beautiful chord which bound the letter, the king

rolled up the leaves. Suddenly his face clouded with anger, he whipped round and ordered his guards to seize the Maha Thera, for, the writing which spoke in amorous terms to his wife was written in the hand of the Maha Thera. In his all-consuming anger the king forgot that Prince Uttiya had been pupil of the Maha Thera and could write in the same hand.

"The king sent for the state executioners and ordered them to place a cauldron of oil on the fire. The Saint stood serenely between the guards, his face was calm, never for a moment did he question the king's action but stood quietly watching the preparations being made for his execution.

"When the oil was bubbling and hissing, the king ordered the Arahat to be placed on the cauldron, but he did not sink into the oil. Resting cross-legged on the heated oil, the Saint, looking steadfastly at the faces of the angry king and his horrified courtiers, began to preach a sermon on *Maitri*, universal love. As the end came, the Saint saw a vision:

"A herdsman was boiling a chatty of milk in which a fly was struggling, but he paid no heed. The wheel of Karma had turned; he, who had been the herdsman in one of his previous births, was now in the place of the fly. Then the future of Lanka passed before his eyes. The Gods of the sea, angered at that rash act, would bring devastation to the land, a maid of Kelaniya would sacrifice herself to save her kinsmen and her beloved country. Lanka would fall into the hands of the Damilas, and a son of that maiden would liberate the country and bring peace and prosperity to all. But, once again, enemies would bring fire and destruction upon the land, and again as before, a noble son of Lanka would free the Island. Thereafter, a capital of Lanka would be established at a place not far away from Kelaniya, and there would arise a king who would bring glory and renown to the Island, poetry and literature would flourish. Then there would come a race of cruel men, white of skin and cats-eyed, who would destroy the temples and attempt the destruction of the religion. When these men had departed there would come yet more white men, but this time they would be red-eyed. These people would attempt to propagate an alien doctrine. Lastly, there would arrive another race with the same white skin but these would be a smoke-eyed nation. This nation would enslave the whole country and carry away its wealth. None of these three nations, however, would be able to hold sway in the island for more than 150 years. Eventually, this world would be peopled by the wicked, and one nation would destroy another by means of thunderbolts dropped from the heavens. In Lanka itself there would rise men who would yearn for freedom, and yet others who would wish to remain in shackles for the sake of that very selfishness against which the Buddha had preached. And when those who wished to be free men and those who preferred

to be slaves were preparing for a great conflict, an image of the Buddha would appear over Kelaniya. Then all the people of Lanka would unite, and resolve to be free men and there would be happiness and prosperity in the Island.

"The Arahats' eyes then closed and his head fell forward and he sank into the hissing cauldron of oil. He had expiated his Karma and had attained Nirvana."

As grandfather was concluding this story a slight cough was heard, and there came into view a well-built figure dressed in a white cloth with a silver 'hawadiya' wrapped in many folds round the waist. The upper part of the body was bare and the swelling muscles gleamed in the moonlight. The rounded face was lit up by a pair of smiling eyes. "Ayu bovan, Kapu Mahatmaya" said my grandfather. The lay-priest of Vibhishana saluted Seeya and sat down on the creaking trestle bed. Sensing that here was another rich field for old legends, I asked the Kapu Mahatmaya for a story about god Vibhishana.

"Vibhishana was the brother of Ravana, King of Lanka. Ravana abducted the lovely Sita, wife of Rama, a prince of India. Rama with his brother Lashman set out to search for Sita. On their way they found Jayantu, the king of the eagles, lying mortally wounded, struck down by one of Ravana's arrows. Jayantu had gone to Sita's aid, but Ravana had cruelly injured the great falcon. From the eagle king, Rama gathered the information that Sita had been taken to Lanka. Gathering an army of valiant foresters of whom Sugriva was the chief, and aided by divisions of fighting monkey-faced men commanded by Hanuman, Rama made preparations to attack Lanka.

"Ravana, through his spies, heard of this impending attack and summoned his advisers to confer on a plan of battle. Into this tension-charged atmosphere came Vibhishana the Just. King Ravana was in a frenzy of rage. "O king", said Vibhishana, "you have acted rashly, release Sita and make peace with Rama". "O coward", said the angry Ravana, "you are jealous of my power and want to humble me". To add insult to injury out spoke Indrajit, the Invincible, the son of Ravana, "O cowardly uncle, can'st not thou handle the weapons of war? Art thou a woman to speak thus to a gathering of mighty warriors?" To these scornful speeches Vibhishana thus replied, "I cannot fight a cause which is unjust, O Ravana. Repent and release Sita". So saying he jumped into his chariot and left the court. Ravana had lost one of his trusted warriors, but in his passionate rage he cared not.

"Vibhishana, as soon as he left the Council, sought Rama's armies which had then landed in Lanka. As he approached the camp perimeter he was seized by the guards and brought before Rama. Vibhishana explained his presence there and begged to be enrolled in Rama's armies. Sugriva, the foresters

chief, wanted to slay him at once, saying he was a spy, but the wiser counsels of Rama and Lakshman prevailed. Vibhishana was of immense help to Rama, for not only was he a mighty warrior, but also he disclosed the wiles and stratagems of Ravana and his Rakshasas. Once the morale of Rama's armies was at its lowest ebb and Rama himself was stricken with grief at seeing Indrajith beheading Sita, it was Vibhishana who explained to them that it was not Sita but a dummy which the wily Indrajit had beheaded.

The victorious Rama crowned Vibhishana and his consort Ammani as King and Queen of Lanka. To this very day the spirit of Vibhishana the Just, from his palace at Vibhishana Devala, Kelaniya, watches over his beloved Island."

Suddenly Seeya gripped my hand. "Look", he said, as a great ball of fire had risen from the temple and was coming towards us, its blue light for a moment outshining the moon. The Kapu Mahatmaya was the calmest of us all. "God Vibhishana on his way to attend a Council of the Gods," he said—"Meteor" said I—"Listen", said Seeya again—as the celestial light passed over our heads, a faint tinkling of bells was heard.

"Tell me some of your experiences, Kapu Mahatmaya" I begged.

"Some nights," he said, "when all is still, I hear the sound of horses' hoofs. A lithe figure springs from the back of a milk-white steed and swings into the devala. That is Sapu Mal Kumaraya on his way to conquer the great Ariya Chakravarti of Jaffna. He comes to ask god Vibhishana to bless his enterprise.

"Again on poya nights, when the cries of Sadhu, Sadhu, no longer fill the air, chanting of pirit is heard from the great temple. This is Pindapatiya the Great, reciting the *Brahmajala Sutta*, at which the earth trembled."

Far in the distance came the sweet notes of a reed pipe played by a herds-boy as he drove his buffaloes home from the pasture. "I thought that was the lilting tune of Sri Rahula as he invoked the great Vibhishana to bless Ulakudaya Devi, the daughter of Parakrama Bahu the Sixth, with a son", said Seeya.

The great cetiya was bathed in soft moonlight as I went homewards through the temple. The floral offerings of Sal and Jasmines were blown here and there by the night wind. The lights on the 'paan gahas' burnt in fitful gasps. The throbbing drums were still. The Queen of the Night appeared through a cloud veil and played her cool white light on the soft outlines of the new Vihara. A dancing moon-beam played upon the face of a sculptured *Doratu-palaya* standing guard over his precious ward. The kingdom of Maniakki was again regaining her beauty disfigured by the Damila and Portuguese vandals.

THE SCULPTURED PAGEANTRY OF KELANIYA VIHARA

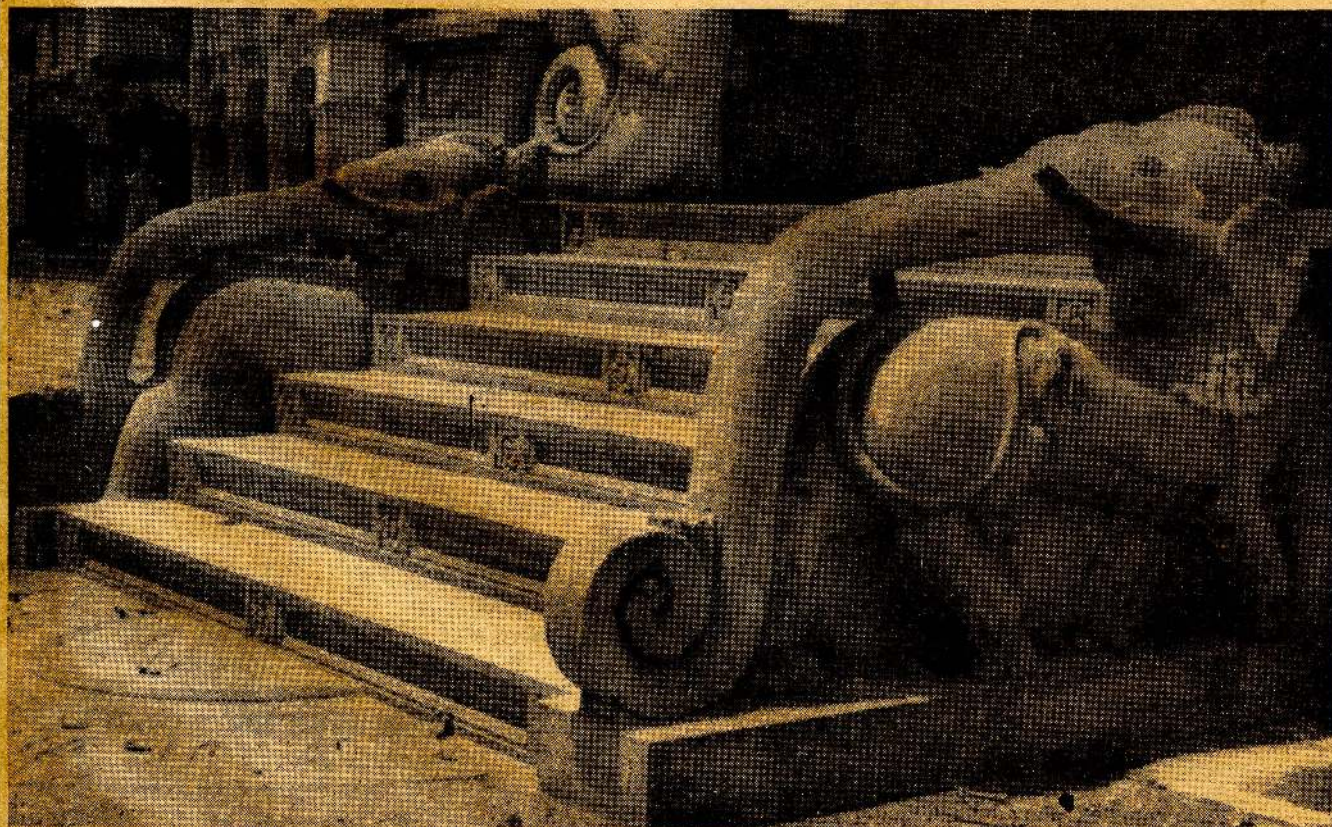
by D. C. WIJEWARDENE

“SO the old vicious circle—war, fever, famine, and a dwindling population—gave place to a new era of peace, planting, roads, wealth and prosperity. No wonder the population increased rapidly. The nineteenth century brought to Ceylon material well-being she had not known for at least 700 years. But where foreign rule is imposed, however benevolent it may be, something is lacking to life. We who are so proud of our own independence should be quick to appreciate patriotism. In capturing Ceylon, it was not the Sinhalese whom we defeated, but the Dutch ; and nineteen years later, when the Kingdom of Kandy was joined to the domain won from the Dutch, the independent highland Sinhalese came into the British Empire by their own choice. That is an historical fact they never lost sight of.

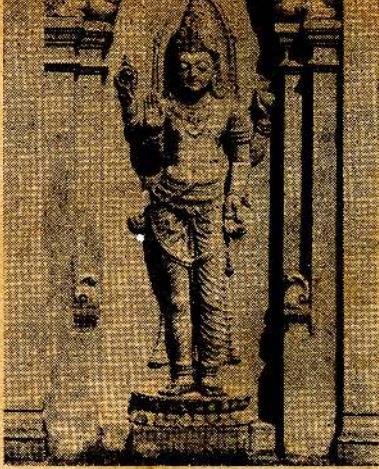
“ The Sinhalese are a proud race. They are lighter brown than their Indian neighbours, more like northern Indians, and they proudly claim to be Aryans—a title not popularly known in Europe until recent events in Germany. In Ceylon, the claim is very ancient, for in old stone-cut inscriptions, Sinhalese Kings style themselves “ Ariya Chakravarti ”, or, “ Aryan Emperor.” The Sinhalese are a likeable people. They have charming manners, are dignified, though often gay, rather irresponsible, witty, sporting ; they play cricket like English schoolboys, keenly and fairly, and that means a lot. The chief weaknesses of the peasantry are intrigue, and a happy-go-lucky tendency to fling to the wind things that really matter in order to follow some illusion or to pursue revenge.....

“ Another thing to weigh against material prosperity is the decay of art in Ceylon ; art in its widest meaning. There were famous Sinhalese poets in the past. There are none now ; they read English instead. Their sculpture is dead, too. In the ruined cities one finds solemn stone images of Buddha and godlike forms with cobra hoods encircling their heads ; figures of animals, elephants, horses, lions and bulls. More charming still are the bands of merry little dwarfs who play and dance round the capitals of the stone pillars. Now all this art is dead, or nearly dead. The motive has gone. Buddhist Kings have been succeeded by Christian Governors. Mass-produced commodities have ousted the artist, and even the village craftsman, from all his markets. One may say that this is less our fault than our joint misfortune, but it was we who introduced into Ceylon the machine-made goods that ruined the artists.”

—JOHN STILL (late of the Ceylon Civil Service) in a broadcast talk on January 26, 1934, from the B. B. C. Studio in London.



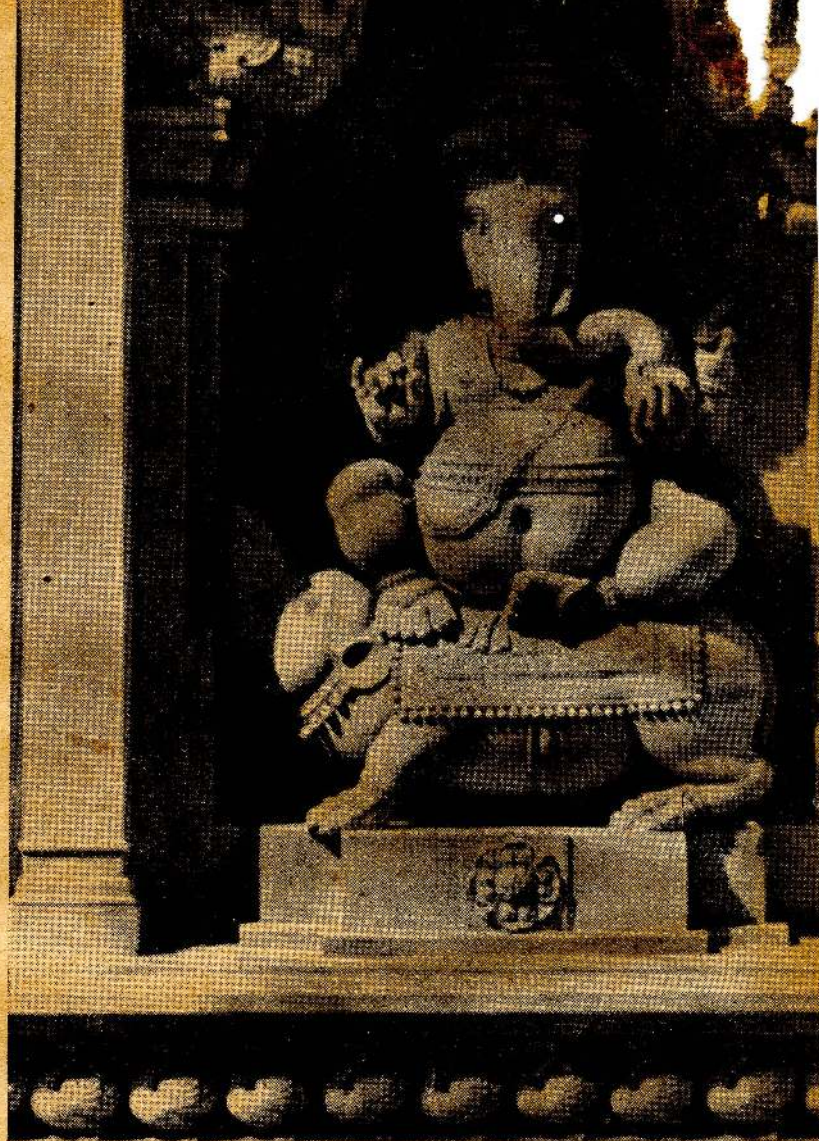
Digitized by Noolaham Foundation.
“Gaja-Singha” sculpture at the entrance to the Vihara



4

The next *vimāna* houses Vishnu, the second person of the mythological Hindu triad, and now the most celebrated and popular of all the gods of India. Vishnu is honoured by the Buddhists of Lanka as the guardian of their religion and the patron deity of Lanka. His image is found in every Buddhist temple. He is the "St. George" of Ceylon to whom Sakra, the Lord of Gods, entrusted the welfare of Lanka and its national religion.

We next come to the *vimāna* of Vibhishana, the patron deity of Kelaniya, and at one time King of Lanka. He is shown enthroned with his consort Amman, and being crowned King of Lanka by Rama. In a recent contribution to a journal a writer dubbed Vibhishana a "Quisling". This is not correct. It is true that Vibhishana helped the invader of the country and also received its sovereignty at the hands of the invader, but he took the side of righteousness against unrighteousness. The very fact that he has been deified and honoured throughout the centuries would confirm that he was held to be a righteous man. Vibhishana was the brother of the great Ravana, King of Lanka. When he and his brothers had practised rigid austerities for a long series of years, Brahma appeared to offer them boons; Vibhishana asked that he might never meditate any unrighteousness. When his elder brother Vaisravana (Kuvera) was expelled from Lanka, Vibhishana followed him to Gandhamadana where he is said to have dwelt with a white umbrella and white garlands, on the Svedaparvata or white mountain, attended by his four counsellors, and apart from his disreputable brothers like Kumbha-



5

1. King Maniakkhika
2. Establishment of "Sri Pada"
3. God Sumana Saman
4. God Vishnu, Guardian of Ceylon
5. God Gana
6. Enthronement of Vibhishana



6

karana who, naked, with dishevelled hair and red garlands, used to frequent the south.

When Hanuman was taken before Ravana, and announced himself as the ambassador of Rama, warning

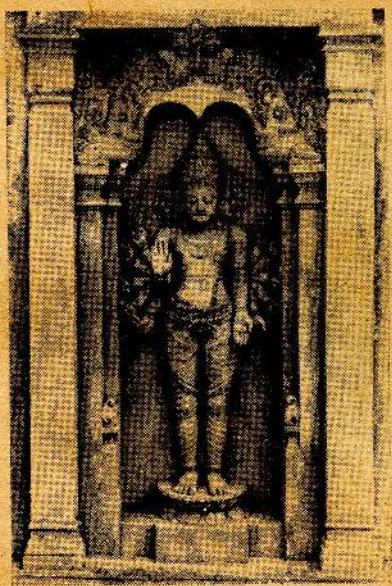
the wisher of Sita that nothing could save him from the vengeance of Rama, Ravana, infuriated, ordered him to be put to death; but Vibhishana reminded his brother that the life of ambassadors was sacred. On another occasion, after a long altercation, Ravana was so enraged with Vibhishana for persisting in urging the restoration of Sita, that he rose in a fury and kicked him from his seat. Smarting under this outrage, Vibhishana left Lanka and went to Kailasa, to the court of his brother, Kuvera, where Siva also at that time happened to be present. The latter made known to Vibhishana the divine character of Rama, and directed him to desert Ravana and join Rama's standard, which Vibhishana accordingly did. He was at first taken for a spy, but afterwards Rama accepted him as an ally and embraced him. On the death of Ravana, Vibhishana was installed as King of Lanka at Kelaniya.

The next three *vimānas*, in order, are those of Maitri Bodhisatva, or the Buddha to be; Maniakkhika, the Naga King of Kelaniya; and Skanda of Kataragama, the god of enslaved people. Kataragama is the holy of holies to the Hindus of Ceylon and South India. The *Skanda-purana* gives the story of Skanda or Kartikeya. Once there was a great war between the Suras (gods) and Asuras (demons) which ended in a victory for the Asuras. The King of the Asuras, Sura Padma, captured all the dominions of the gods, and, as is the practice even today, began to exploit the conquered Suras. Smarting under the heavy load of an alien yoke, the gods appealed to Brahma first, and then to Vishnu, for help to overthrow the invader. Both of them pleaded inability to help the gods and counselled them to approach the mighty Siva.

Siva acceded to the prayer of the gods, but, since he considered it was *infra dignitatem* for so great a person to stoop so low as to fight with a demon, he sent his son Kartikeya as the commander-in-chief of the army of the gods. Before he set out to the field of battle Kartikeya was presented with a lance or *Vel* by his mother, Parvati. At the very first encounter, Kartikeya struck the Asura King dead with his *Vel*. Which thereafter became famous as the invincible *Vel*.

The Puranic gods had all the failings of us ordinary human beings. Soon after his famous victory over the Asuras, Kartikeya himself was shot by a more powerful weapon, the arrow of Cupid. For he fell in violent love with a Vedda princess, Valli by name, whom he met at the place now called Kataragama. He married her and settled down at this place which became known as *Kartikeya-grama*, the village of Kartikeya. He is now venerated as the god of war, and upholder of the cause of enslaved people.

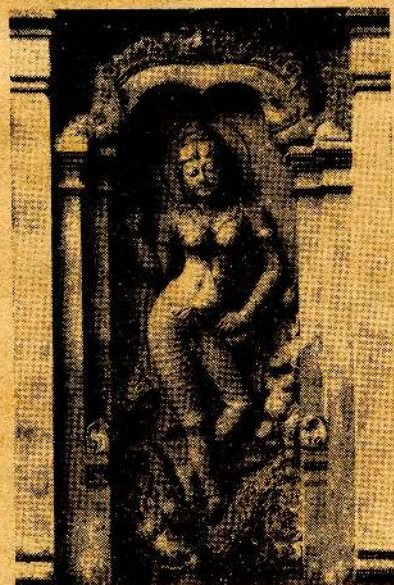
It is stated that Dutugemunu, the son of Devi, the Princess of Kelaniya, sought the help of Skanda to free the Sinhalese from the yoke of the Tamil invader, Elara. Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam in an interesting



Kataragama God



Maitri Bodhisatva



Ganga Devi

IN the sculptured Pageantry of the new Kelaniya Vihara, there has come to life all that art which John Still, one of the few Englishmen who ever understood the Sinhalese, their culture, their art and their aspirations, bemoaned as "dead or nearly dead."

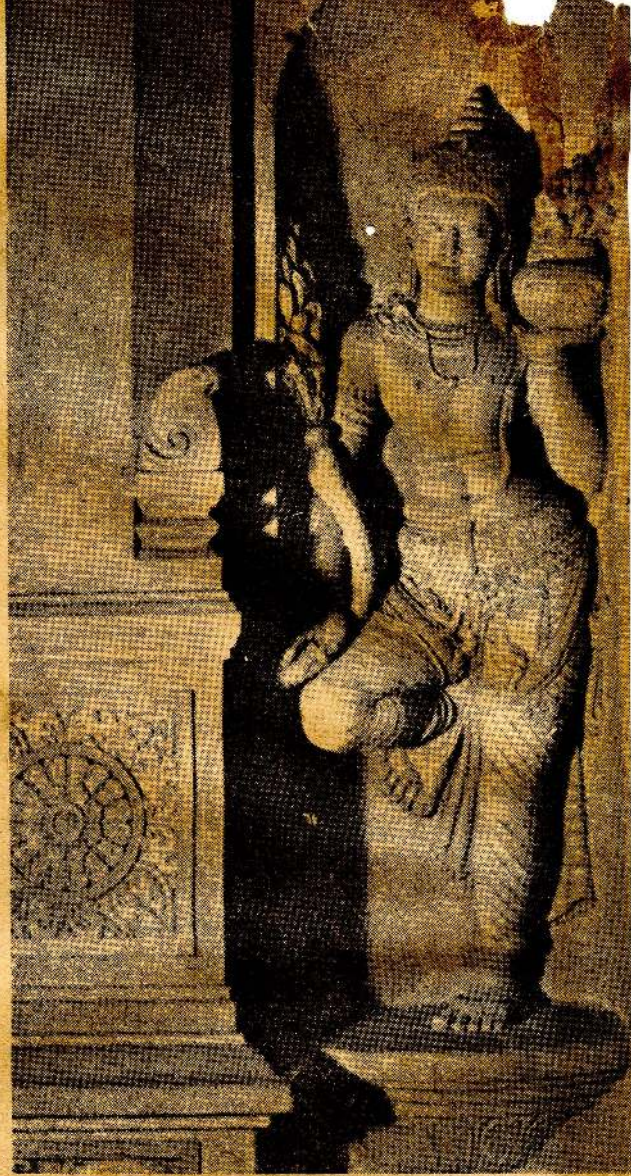
Among the many Buddhist temples of Ceylon, the restored Kelaniya Vihara stands out as the most exquisite example of the Sculptor's art. Built in that superb Sinhalese style of architecture, it exhibits the essence of all that is best in those marvellous buildings of a bygone Lanka.

Kelaniya Vihara now consists of two shrines, the old and the new, in one building but under two roofs. The appearance of the temple from a distance is most imposing; and on a nearer approach, one is struck by the marvellous and almost inimitable artistic ability of those who built it. The fertility of design and the perfection of finish of the sculptures, display a high elegance of taste, and one's admiration is immediately bestowed upon the masters who are capable of producing such things.

Standing on a plinth 3 feet in height, the temple is 150 feet long and 90 feet broad. The plinth and steps, leading to the front Verandah and the doorways which serve as exits, are built of stone, the different pieces being ingeniously fitted together. There is an octagonal tower at the furthest end, over the new shrine room, roofed in the traditional Kandyan style of roofing.

The outer walls of the Vihara, from one end to another, represent one procession of sculptured beauty, and what arrests attention at first sight are the friezes that run round the walls. There are three friezes, each row containing a cavalcade of delicately sculptured figures. Beginning from the top, the first frieze is a row of geese popularly known as "Sacred Geese." The next frieze is what John Still describes as "merry little dwarfs who play and dance." These dwarfs or "*butayos*" are indeed "charming", and the various antics which the sculptors have made them perform are a source of merriment to the young as well as the grown-ups, who see these friezes. The third frieze is a row of elephants with mahouts and finely carved trappings; more than 500 elephants are represented in this frieze.

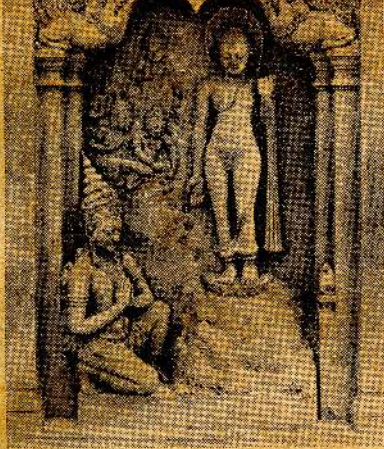
Above all these ornamental frieze sculptures are *vimānas* or "houses of gods." There are nine of these niches 'housing' a god or a goddess. Kelaniya is a place where religions mingle with each other. It was a stronghold of Hinduism until the Naga king Maniakkhika became a convert to Buddhism, on the occasion of the Enlightened One's first visit to Ceylon. The old traditions and allegiances still continue, and on the Hindu New Year, (April 13), and other festival days the "Haroharas" of the



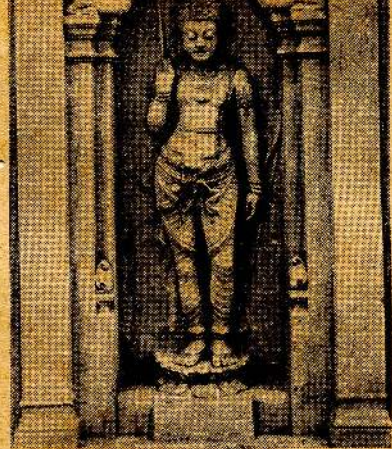
(Top) 'Guardians of the gate' at the main doorway
(Bottom) Figures of Elephants at the main doorway



1



2



3

Hindus are intermingled with the "sadhus" of the Buddhists. Thus it is that we find Hindu gods vying with each other, as it were, round the building to guard this most hallowed shrine of the Buddhists.

These *vimānas* are one of the most important features of the new Vihara; and the only other place in Ceylon where these are found, is Polonnaruwa where they are similarly featured in the principal Viharas. These niches decorate three sides of the new building, and, to view them, one must walk right around the Vihara. Here we use the word "right" in more than one sense. When one perambulates round a temple or a shrine, it is the traditional custom of the Aryans to keep the object of veneration on his right—this is the *Mangala* or the auspicious way. This convention of the Aryan's is not generally observed. To walk with your object of veneration on your left is *Ava-mangala* or inauspicious. It is only when one goes round a funeral pyre that one walks in this way.

The first *vimāna* is that of the Hindu god of wisdom, Ganesa, the son of Siva and Parvati, invoked at the commencement of all material undertakings. He is the patron of learning. He is called Ganesa, as presiding over the troop of deities attendant on Siva—the *ganas*, or companies of celestials in Siva's paradise. Ganesa is represented by an outrageous figure, half-man and half-elephant, in a sitting posture with a large belly. His head is that of an elephant, and on it he wears a crown, while his ears are adorned with jewels; of his four arms he elevates two, holding in the left hand a rope and in the right an elephant goad. In his other two hands, in the right, a piece of his own elephant's tooth which he himself once broke in a rage, and in the left, a pancake; he is said to be fond of pancakes. His image stands in almost every Hindu house, and is worshipped by men and women, with offerings and all the prescribed ceremonies, especially when they are about to begin something important.

This eminent position was assigned him as compensation for the strange head he wears, which was put upon his shoulders when he lost his own, in infancy, by a look of the celestial Sani—the Hindu Saturn. The goddess, seeing her child headless, was overwhelmed with grief, and would have destroyed Sani, but Brahma prevented her, telling Sani to bring the head of the first being he should find lying with its head northwards, forgetting, however, to specify that it was a *human* head he meant. He found an elephant in this position, cut off its head, and fixed it on Ganesa, who then assumed the shape he at present wears. Parvati was but little soothed when she saw her son with an elephant's head; but, to pacify her, Brahma said that, amongst the worship of all the gods, that of Ganesa should for ever have the preference. He is worshipped especially at the commencement of a wedding as well as when the bride is presented to the bridegroom.

The next *vimāna* is that of *Ganga Devi*, or River Goddess. Ganga was the daughter of Himavat, the king of mountains, and given by him to the gods. The honouring of the river goddess with a *vimāna* at Kelaniya, which is situated on the banks of a river, is therefore not surprising. Here we recall a recent incident. In 1942, Admiral Layton, on whose broad shoulders rested the destiny of this country in those dark days of World War II, visited Kelaniya, to receive an address from the Sangha, and was perambulating round the Vihara. When he came to the *vimāna* of Ganga Devi, he kept his eyes fixed for an inordinate length of time on the figure of this gay goddess, to the discomfiture of the galaxy of Allied press correspondents, cine operators, political and military aides-de-camp and secretaries who composed his retinue. Those surrounding him began to wonder what was the mesmerism in this 'lady of the water' to the 'man of the water', whether it was her "elongated eyes", "bulbous breasts", "willowy waists" or "lissom limbs" that kept him spell-bound. But the tension was relieved when the old "Seadog" turned round to his companions and said, "Isn't she cute?"

The Sri Kalyani Raja Maha Vihara Dayaka Sabha

by D. W. NISSANKA

ON January 10, 1927, Helena Wijewardene, Lama Etani, laid the foundation stone for the restoration of Kelani Vihara. In the same year her son, the late Mr. Walter Wijewardene, inaugurated the Perahera which is now the principal feature of the annual "Duruthu" celebrations at Kelaniya. The late Mr. Wijewardene was one who cherished our ancient customs and ceremonies, and the revival of the Perahera which existed at Kelaniya in the ancient days was entirely his happy idea.

The conducting of a Perahera is no easy matter. What it involves may be appreciated when it is known that over 1,000 well-disciplined men and over at least 50 well-behaved elephants are required, in addition to a large quantity of paraphernalia which give colour and glamour to the pageant. In the days of our Kings, these pageants were conducted under their patronage; and they not only provided all the trappings required, but saw to it that all those who took part in those Peraheras were provided with land for their maintenance. And in the ancient times Kelaniya Vihara was similarly provided for.

To their lasting dishonour, it was left to the Portuguese, first to confiscate the lands attached to the Vihara and its service tenants, and later to destroy ruthlessly this one of Ceylon's choicest Temples, hoary in its old-world fame. In 1575 the Captain of Colombo, Diogo de Melo, after capturing Wattala, one of the villages attached to the Vihara, succeeded in destroying the great Temple, after the massacre of the villagers who rallied in defence of the sacred shrine. Thereafter the Temple lands, situated on both sides of the river, were transferred to the Franciscan Monks, and on this soil, sacred to the Buddhists and rich with Sinhalese blood, were to rise two churches to the glory of God, St. Anna at Wattala, and St. Bartholomew on the site of the Palace where Bhuyanaika Bahu VII was murdered at the instigation of a Portuguese Viceroy.

To inaugurate the Perahera, Mr. Wijewardene supplied all the required paraphernalia, and the principal Dayakayas (lay devotees) of the Temple supplied the necessary men and also provided their wants such as food, dress, etc., and there were others who contributed in money which went to remunerate



Mr. D. W. Wijewardene

brochure, entitled *The Worship of Muruka or Skanda, the Kataragama God*, narrates this story, of two thousand years ago, as follows :—" King Dutugemunu in the first century B.C., according to ancient tradition, rebuilt and richly endowed the Temple at Kataragama as a thank-offering for the favour of the God, which enabled him to march from this district against the Tamil King Elara and, after killing him in battle, recover the ancestral throne of Anuradhapura. Dutugemunu's great grandfather Mahanaga, younger brother of Devanampriya Tissa, had taken refuge in Mahagama in the southern Province and founded a dynasty there, and Anuradhapura was for 78 years (with a short break) ruled by Tamil Kings, of whom Elara (205—16 B.C.) was the greatest. Dutugemunu conceived the idea of liberating the country from Elara. While his thoughts were intent on this design day and night, he was warned in a dream not to embark on an enterprise against his father's positive injunctions unless he first secured the aid of the Kataragama God. He therefore made a pilgrimage thither and underwent severe penances on the banks of the river, imploring divine intervention. While thus engaged in prayer and meditation, an ascetic suddenly appeared before him and inspired such awe that the prince fainted. On receiving consciousness he saw before him the Great God of War, who presented him with weapons and assured him of victory. The prince made a vow that he would rebuild and endow the Temple on his return and started on his expedition, which ended in the defeat and death of Elara and the recovery of the throne.

"The incidents associating the Kataragama God with Dutugemunu's victory naturally find no place in the Buddhist chronicle, 'the Mahavamsa', which glorifies him as a zealous champion of Buddhism. The tradition is confirmed by a Sinhalese poem called 'Kauda Upata' (Birth of Kauda), for a MS. copy of which I am indebted to Mudaliyar A. Mendis Gunasekhara; Stanzas 41 and 46 show that King Dutugemunu invoked the aid of the god and received his help and built and endowed the temple at Kataragama in fulfilment of his vow. The royal endowment was continued and enlarged by his successors and by the offerings of generations of the people and princes of Ceylon."

The eighth *vimāna* is a composition showing the Buddha setting his footstep on the summit of Samantakuta or Adam's Peak, at the invitation of Sumana, popularly known as Saman, the patron deity of Sabaragamuwa. In the ninth *vimāna* we see Sumana himself with his face towards the Sri Padasthana, the holy spot of which he is the guardian deity.

We now come to the main entrance to the Vihara, the stone steps of which leading to the verandah are flanked on either side with *Gajasinhas* or elephants with bodies of lions. These are in stone and are sculptured in great detail. In the verandah is the

main doorway leading to the Vihara. On either side of this central door are two figures of *dvarapalas* or 'guardians of the gate' in imposing majesty of attitude.

No description of any feature of the new Kelaniya Vihara is complete without a tribute to Soliyas, the Sinhalese painter and sculptor, who, without any previous training whatsoever, created all these masterpieces in colour and stone. This is evidence that Sinhalese art, which John Still bemoaned as dead is not really dead, but only lying dormant, the ember glowing beneath the ashes and ever crackling for the opportunity to burst forth into flame.

The destruction of Kelaniya Vihara four centuries ago by the Portuguese together with the massacre of the Buddhists, who rallied to the protection of a nation's heritage, was a deliberate and planned act to root out, from its very soil, the religion, culture, art, and the freedom of an ancient people. Those acts of barbarism, vandalism and cruelty have always preceded the imposition of what John Still calls "foreign rule". The Sinhalese have gone through many vicissitudes throughout the centuries, but what they have suffered at the hands of three Christian Powers stands out in bold relief over all others.

For four and a half centuries the Sinhalese have been subjected to persecution, proselytism, and exploitation, and the result of this intolerance, bigotry and greed has been a poverty-stricken, disease-ridden, ignorant and de-nationalised mass of people. But the Sinhalese are a nation of philosophers. They know how to face misfortune, and whatsoever adversity overtakes them, the Sinhalese will ever treasure, what that great Englishman, John Still, calls: "Patriotism".

The first visit of the Buddha to Lanka was to lay the foundations of a civilization that was to endure for 5,000 years. And on the very day the Master died, the Sinhalese nation was born as heirs to that civilization. The Sinhalese, it will be seen, were a reincarnation, as it were, of all those ideals for which the Buddha had lived and worked for. A primary necessity for a nation to pursue that nation's ideals in that nation's own way, is full Independence, or in the language of Mahatma Gandhi, *Purna Swaraj*. With the desecration of the figure of the Buddha at Kelaniya four centuries ago, started a course of events which ended in our losing, to quote John Still again, "our own independence". On the 28th December next the Buddha will again "open his eyes" at Kelaniya. May it be that that event will synchronise with the "opening of the eyes" of the nation to a free and united Lanka.

the drummers, dancers, etc. The Perahera was an immediate success and all of us realised that some sort of permanent organisation was necessary if it was to be repeated every year. Thus came into existence the Sri Kalyani Raja Maha Vihara Dayaka Sabha (Lay administrative organisation of the Kelaniya Temple).

The late Mr. Walter Wijewardene was elected the first President of the Sabha, and continued to hold that office until his untimely death in 1939, at the early age of 43. His name will ever be cherished by all the Buddhists of Lanka, and there can be no greater or more appropriate commemoration of him than the annual Duruthu Perahera of Kelaniya.

After Mr. Walter Wijewardene's death, his brother, Mr. D. C. Wijewardene, was elected as President and has guided the Sabha up to this day. After the Japanese entered the world war, we were not able to conduct the Peraheras owing to lighting restrictions. But the Sabha was not entirely inactive during this dark period of world history, for it was called upon to play a very important part in the late tragic world drama.

One of the 'top secrets' of World War II may now be revealed. After the fall of Singapore, the civil Governor of Ceylon, Sir Andrew Caldecott, was superseded by a Military Governor, Admiral Sir Geoffrey Layton, but Sir Andrew continued in office, looking after the civil administration of this country. The instructions to Admiral Layton were, to hold Ceylon at any cost. After the fall of Burma, Admiral Layton was informed by the authorities in London of certain happenings in that country, and was instructed to see to it that the same happenings were not repeated in Ceylon. Admiral Layton decided to take certain steps in the event of a Japanese invasion of Ceylon, and informed Sir Andrew of what he proposed to do. Sir Andrew was profoundly perturbed by this decision of the Military Governor, and he did the only thing left to him to do. He invited certain Buddhists to Queen's House and conveyed to them the decision of Admiral Layton. The Buddhists thanked Sir Andrew and left Queen's House.

These Buddhists held a hurried conference at which was present the then Buddhist Leader, Sir Baron Jayatilaka. Sir Baron, the Karmic-theory man as he was, took an entirely fatalistic view of the matter, and the only advice he gave to his companions was to instruct the Sangha of Ceylon to get ready laymen's clothing, and, in the event of an invasion of Ceylon by the Japanese, to discard their robes and get mixed up in the general crowd.

But there were others who thought a gesture by the Sangha would allay the misgivings in the minds of the Military Authorities. These approached our Dayaka Sabha and asked whether we would help. We readily consented. Then those who were in the

move requested Admiral Layton to visit Kelaniya Vihara to receive an address from the Sangha.

The Admiral also readily consented, and told the inviters he was very glad of the opportunity offered because he himself had had an intention of visiting the Temple.

For by this time Kelaniya Vihara had become a place of pilgrimage, with the R.A.F. stationed in Ceylon owing to an heroic act of a young bhikkhu of the Temple. During the Japanese Air Raid of April 5, an R.A.F. pilot saved himself, after his plane was hit by parachuting to a coconut grove adjacent to the Temple. The moment the R.A.F. pilot emerged from the grove, one of the Japanese airmen, hovering over the place, observed him and, swooping down, began to machine-gun him. Thereupon a young bhikkhu of the temple, Sangharakkhita Thera, mindful of the imminent danger he was running, rushed to the aid of the airman, and, covering him with his yellow robe, conducted the airman safely away from the danger spot.

Admiral Layton visited the Vihara on June 20, 1942, and he was accompanied by General Sir Henry Pownall, General Officer Commanding, the Civil Defence Commissioner, Mr. O. E. Goonetilleke, Mr. D. S. Senanayake and a retinue of press correspondents and cine-operators, etc. Our President received the visitors under a Pandal erected some distance away from the Temple, and conducted them in a procession of caparisoned elephants, Kandyan dancers and standard bearers, to the Vihara, where over 500 members of the Sangha had gathered and the above-mentioned young heroic bhikkhu read an address. The Admiral then replied, the speech being interpreted into Sinhalese by Mr. D. S. Senanayake. The Admiral said :

"I am most grateful to you, Venerable Sir, for the opportunity of paying my homage at this ancient place of worship and of being able to meet this gathering of Buddhist monks, and also take this opportunity of expressing to you my personal thanks for your gallant conduct on the morning of Easter Sunday.

"This temple of yours is over 2,000 years old, and I can fully appreciate that those in charge of it, both Priests and Laymen, have viewed this present emergency with deep anxiety. As your Commander-in-Chief, I can assure you that the means of protecting the people of Ceylon and their institutions are daily being improved and developed.

"We have a long way to go yet, however, and the protection of a country can only be ensured when its people fight alongside the armed forces. When I say fight, I mean not necessarily with actual weapons of war, but by displaying courage, loyalty, and confidence in their cause.

"I have no doubt whatever about the loyalty of the people of Ceylon, of whom Buddhists form such a large proportion. You, Reverend Sirs, can do a great deal to help to secure that quiet and resolute courage which is so absolutely essential in an emergency. I know how fully the Civil Defence Commissioner realises this. If he can be certain, as I know he can be, of the fullest co-operation and the leadership of the Buddhist Clergy, the task, for instance, of preventing post-raid panic and of stopping wild and baseless rumours will be much easier. I myself am confident, after meeting you, that your co-operation and leadership will be increasingly forthcoming.

"I thank you most sincerely, the clergy and the lay officers of the Kelani Temple, for the welcome they have given me today. This address, so beautifully mounted, I shall always treasure,—

"I thank you, Venerable Sir."

Admiral Layton, Sir Henry Pownall and the others of the party accompanying him were then shown round the Vihare, Dr. Andreas Nell explaining to them the significance of the exquisite frescoes of the Jataka stories and other representations painted on the walls, and of the architectural features of the building.

The propaganda section attached to the Military saw to it that the happenings at Kelaniya were broadcasted to the whole world, especially to the Japanese. And on the day after these events, Ceylon, for the first time in its history, received front-page honour throughout the British Empire and America. For newspapers in those countries, on June 22, 1942 devoted their frontpages to full accounts, with banner headlines, to the Kelaniya Vihara proceedings.

Various theories have been advanced as to the reason why the Japanese did not invade Ceylon. According to a confession made recently by Mr. Churchill, had the Japanese invaded Ceylon in 1942, the Island would have fallen to them. Perhaps it was this gesture by the Sangha for which our Sabha was responsible, that made the Japanese alter their plans.

In 1944 we resumed our Perahera, and again our help was sought by the leaders of the country. We had fixed the Perahera for December 26, 27 and 28, 1944. The Reforms Commission (presided over by the Right Hon'ble Lord Soulbury and including Sir Frederick Rees and Mr. F. J. Burrows with Mr. Trafford Smith as Secretary) arrived in Ceylon on December 25. We were told that the first public appearance in Ceylon of the Commissioners would be at our Vihara. On December 26, 1944, the Commissioners came over to Kelaniya and we received them in a manner befitting the occasion.



Venerable Dhammananda Nayaka Thero

Lord Soulbury and his colleagues of the Reforms Commission were deeply impressed by what they saw at the Kelaniya Temple on the first night of the Duruthu Perahera.

Before the procession started they studied with keen interest the mural paintings, ancient and modern, and the architectural attractions of the historic Vihare. Before the relic was taken from the shrine—and this was the first occasion on which the new inner shrine under the dome was used—the Venerable Dhammananda, High Priest, and Principal of Vidyalankara Pirivena, tendered to Lord Soulbury and the other members of the Commission a hearty welcome to Lanka, and expressed the fervent hope that their deliberations would result in the greater happiness, contentment and well-being of all the people of this land.

Lord Soulbury, in reply, said how pleased he was at having seen that beautiful temple. He greatly appreciated the welcome offered to the Commission, and re-echoed the High Priest's wish that the result of its deliberations would bring greater happiness to the people of Ceylon.

This great national service rendered by our Sabha in Ceylon's march to freedom was emphasised by the Leader of the Ceylon State Council. The Hon'ble Mr. D. S. Senanayake, addressing a meeting of the Dayaka Sabha on Monday the 19th November, 1945, said that the foundation of a better understanding of the Sinhalese people—their traditions, culture and spirit of goodwill—was laid in the minds of the Reforms Commission on the occasion of the visit of the Commissioners to the Raja Maha Vihara on December 26th, 1944. He, therefore, availed himself of the opportunity offered by that meeting to thank the Venerable Mapitigama Dhammarakkhita Thero, Incumbent of the Temple, and our Sabha, for the important and extremely helpful contribution to that event on the occasion of the Commission's first public appearance in Ceylon.

He recalled the words uttered on that occasion by the late Venerable Dhammananda Nayaka Thero whose scholarly and inspiring speech had made, as he knew, a profound impression on the Commissioners. The Commissioners had also conveyed to him their admiration of the manner in which the traditional Perahera had been conducted, a circumstance which had revealed a spirit of ecstatic devotion, goodwill and peace among that vast and orderly crowd. These were some of the things which had impressed them, and if they had had any doubts or misgivings about the Sinhalese people, these were dispelled by the true Sinhalese spirit that had marked the occasion.

Mr. Senanayake referred to the various stages of the evolution of the Soulbury Award and said that the Commissioners had arrived to test the Sinhalese people and to investigate such charges as Sinhalese "domination" which had been made against them. They had gone away, however, with a high appreciation of the Sinhalese people and a great regard for their qualities. In this connection the Dayaka Sabha had, he said, rendered a national service. With the acceptance of the White Paper they would be taking the last step to the goal of freedom. He hoped that in the working of this new Constitution they would receive the support of all sections of the people.

Mr. D. C. Wijewardene, our President, then addressed the Sabha and said that, as members of the Sabha were aware, when the Soulbury Commissioners arrived, their first public appearance was at the Raja Maha Vihara. They had been received in a

manner befitting the occasion, and the stirring words with which the Venerable Lunupokane Dhammananda Nayaka Thero had addressed the Commissioners on that day were still ringing in our ears.

With the acceptance, said our President, by the State Council of the Soulbury Commission's proposals the peoples of Lanka had entered the path leading to that goal of greater happiness and well-being which both those eminent men had visualised here, on this hallowed spot, on 26th December last.

Anyone, carefully studying the history of Ceylon continued our President, would note that, whenever the country went under an alien yoke, the struggle for freedom originated at a Vihara. Those were the days when the Sangha gave their thoughts not only to things spiritual but also to the material well-being of the people among whom they lived. And in those days, when success crowned their temporal efforts, the event was usually recorded on a stone in an important Vihara.

With the acceptance of the Soulbury Constitution, Lanka enters on what may be described as the last lap of her age-long struggle for freedom, a struggle which was fiercely renewed over four centuries ago against Western domination by such national leaders as Mayadunne, Vidiya Bandara and the Raja Sinhas. The goal of national freedom is not far distant now, and if and when we attain that goal, we shall have achieved it not with a constitution imported from Westminster, but with one made in Lanka. And in that glorious event let us all hope that this blessed spot will be the one chosen for recording that achievement imperishably for the benefit of posterity, concluded our President.

Our Dayaka Sabha has now attained to a pre-eminent position in the country. We have given to the people something that was lacking to life, something that was deliberately destroyed by the bigoted foreign invaders. Millions of the Buddhists of Ceylon have confidence in us and we have the good-will of the Sangha also. We are fully conscious of these facts. That leadership which we have gained we shall always endeavour to maintain for the good of the people of our beloved land and for the glory and renown of our cherished Religion.

THE SRI KALYANI RAJA MAHA VIHARA DAYAKA SABHA

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 THE HON'BLE MR. D. S. SENANAYAKE MR. D. R. WIJEWARDENE

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Some of the members of the Dayaka Sabha

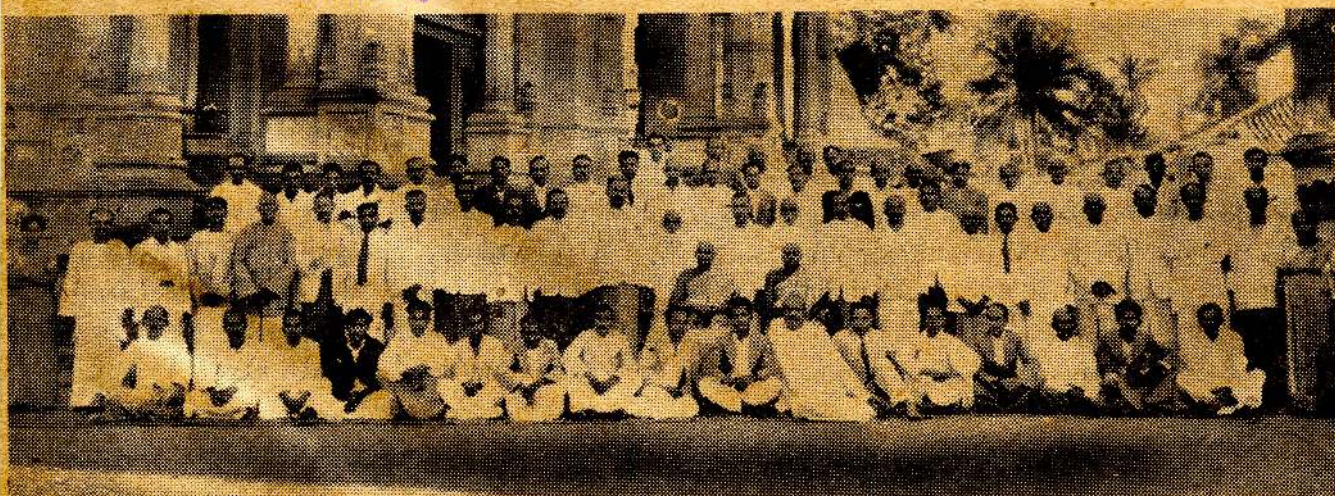


Photo taken on the occasion of the 1946 anniversary celebrations

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