



THE BUDDHIST

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THE BUDDHIST

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

The Sarnath Ceremony The ordination of the Ven'ble Siri Devamitta Dhammapala last month marks a new epoch in the history of Buddhism in India and Ceylon. This important event took place at a New Sarnath brought into being by the incessant activities of the Founder of the Maha Bodhi Society during the last forty years. After the Moslem invasion of India the principal centres of Buddhism had been deserted and were at the mercy of vandals who completed the work of destruction by razing religious buildings to the ground and by murdering the members of the Sangha. Up to the last quarter of the last century Sarnath was merely a jungle utilised by the local land owners for raring domestic animals. Sarnath of today bears the essential characteristics of a Buddhist centre from which may radiate the lights of Buddha Dhamma again dispelling the darkness of *avijja* in the land of the Buddha. The life of the Anagarika Dharmapala has been one of spiritual ascendancy beginning his missionary work as an *upasaka* and crowning his career with the sereneness of a fully ordained Bhikkhu. May he long live to enjoy the fruits of his labour and the bliss of true renunciation.

* * *

And the Future of Buddhism in India Inauguration of the Mulagandhakuti Vihara, training of several Samaneras at Sarnath,

establishment of a proper *Sima* and a library, the presence of a vernacular school at Isipatana (Sarnath) and finally making a gift of lands and buildings there to the Ceylon Bhikkhu Sangha are events which will ensure the future of Buddhism in India. But as our esteemed friend Pandit Sheo Narain of Lahore once pointed out in an article appeared in *The Buddhist* there are certain civil disabilities in the way of Buddhists in India. Hypocrisy of Buddhists being joined in matrimony according to Hindu law and customs should be stopped. Such disabilities will materially hinder the progress of Buddhism in that country. We trust that the Maha Bodhi Society will take immediate steps to move the authorities to introduce legislation.

* * *

Buddhist Art in Central Asia Dr. E. Waldschmidt, Ph D., Curator of the Indian Section of the Prussian Museum of Ethnography, Berlin, has kindly consented to deliver a lecture on Buddhist Art in Central Asia with special reference to Buddhist art in India and Ceylon, on the 17th inst. at 6 p.m. at the Y. M. B. A. The lecture will be illustrated with lantern slides. We take this opportunity to accord a very hearty welcome to the learned doctor and Mrs. Waldschmidt. Dr. Waldschmidt is a philologist now engaged in research work in Ceylon. He is expected to spend a year in Ceylon and India.

MAITREYA

“Peace to all Beings”

By Nicholas Roerich.

On a piece of palm bark, with a sharp stilus, a friendly Bhikkhu is writing in Sinhalese. Does he molest anyone? Is he writing an appeal? No. With a smile he is sending a greeting to the far-off lands beyond the seas. A greeting to the good, benevolent people. And he does not expect a reply. It is simply a benevolent arrow into space.

In Kandy, in the ancient capital of Lanka—Ceylon, we are guided along the old traces of the past: The Temple of the Holy Tooth, the Temple of Pari-Nirvana, the wondrous treasury of sacred books in their hammered-silver binding-boards—“And what is there in the small closed temple?” ... “That is the temple of Maitreya the Lord of the Future.”—“May one enter?”—

The Guide smiles and shakes his head benignly “In this temple none may enter save the chief priest.”

Thus, the effulgent future should not be contaminated! We know it lives. We know its symbol is Maitreya, Metteya, Maitri,—Love, Compassion. Upon this luminous sign of all-understanding, all embracingness, the great future is being built. It is pronounced with the most reverent solemnity. It must not be defiled or blasphemed by lightmindedness, curiosity, levity and doubt. The Vishnu Puranas, and all other Puranas—that is, all the ancient covenants, speak in their highest expressions of the luminous future which humanity serves, each individual in his own way.

How beautifully India speaks of the end of the Black Age of Kali Yuga and the glorious beginning of the White Age of Satva Yuga. How majestic is the image of the Kalki Avatar upon the white steed!

With equal heartiness the far-off Oirots await the White Burkhan. Our Old Believers who heroically go in quest of the “White Waters” in the Himalayas, make this difficult journey only in the name of the future. In the very same name of the luminous future, the Lama, with tears, tells us of the treasures and the might of the great Rigden Djyepo, who will annihilate evil and re-establish justice. Towards the future, led the conquests of Gessar Khan. Each New Year the Chairman lights his candles and prays to the Lord of the future. And in Ispahan, the white steed is kept saddled for the Great Coming. If you want to contact the best cords of humanity, speak with the people of the future, of that to which the human mind aspires even in the far-off deserts. Some especial heartiness and solemnity pervades these strivings towards the transfiguration of the world.

In these darkest times, in the suffocating void of thought, with especially evocative force, resounds the encouraging voice about the Great Advent, about the New Era, about the time when humanity will be able wisely and inspiringly to utilize all its predestined possibilities. Each person interprets this Radiant Age in his own way, but in one thing all are alike—precisely, that they interpret it, with the language of the heart. This is not a casual eclecticism. On the contrary, it is just the opposite: from all directions—to the one. Because in every human heart, in the entire human kingdom, exists one and the same striving to Bliss. And all are labouring to reunite, in their substance, these scattered spherules of Mercury, if they are not too heavy with oil and not too fluffy with dust. What an

example there is in such a simple act as the outer soiling of the spherule of Mercury. One may still glimpse the trembling of the inner substance, but the surface is already besmirched. It has become grimy through outside depravity and has thus become isolated from the universal consciousness. The path to the universal body of all-unity is already intercepted. But if the surface is not yet soiled, with what impetuous striving these scattered drops fuse again with their primary source! And you can not identify them any longer, nor will you distinguish the small particle which was assimilated by the whole. But it lives: It, the entire, exists in It, the Great. The force of all-unity joined it and forged it to the universal concept. All teachings know this universal body under various names.

In the most unexpected manifestations we meet with these all-unifying signs. In the posthumous writings of the Elders of the desert were sometimes found unexpected indications about the Himalayas. These writings, Mandalas and other extraordinary signs arouse one's amazement and astonishment. But the Lama from the far-off mountain monastery, when asked about it, smiles and says: "Above all divisions, there exists one great unity, accessible only to a few."

Thus are merged the trends of thought of the most seemingly distant human individualities. In these highest signs are being erased denial and condemnation—most hideous aspects which obscure the light of the heart. Often in our present day, we invent special expressions for the ancient understanding. We say pensively, "He understands psychology." This means in essence that he does not deny and does not condone his ignorance. We say, "He is practical and knows life," which means in essence that he does not condemn and thus does not set obstacles

for himself. We say, "He knows the source"—which means he does not disparage because he knows how harmful is each disparagement.

In the East also they understand Metalnikoff's idea of the immortality of the cell-unit. The idea of unity, indivisibility, indestructibility, is appreciated. The one who understands *Dharma*, can also speak of immortality. With benevolence, they understand de Broglie, Millikan, Raman, and Einstein. The main thing is that there should be language of approach. For mutual understanding, one must know the inner and outer languages. One must know not only the outer hieroglyph; one must know the derivation of the sign, the evolution of the symbol, in order that an incomprehensible exterior should not become a new barrier.

Is it then so difficult to unite in Bliss? One person may consider the sacredness of the Ganges as superstition; but a true scholar will give its due to the wisdom of the people. It is truly beautiful to contact the facts and foundations of the people's wisdom. The waters of the Ganges are revered as sacred. And it is astounding that the countless multitudes of swarming people do not contaminate each other in the waters of the sacred river in Benares. But in addition to faith and to psychic protection, nature adds one more precious factor: Only recently it was discovered that special bacteria exist in the water of the Ganges which destroy other nests of contaminations. The old knowledge manifests here its firm foundation.

All signs of unity are touching. The Buddhists see the ikon of Saint Josav, the Hindu Prince and wish to have a copy of it. The lamas see a fresco of Nardo Diccione in the Pisa *Campo Santo* and begin to explain its contents and the significance of the painted symbols. And when you

read to them about Saint Josav from The Golden Legend they smile cordially. And in this smile is that same benevolence and containment which made room for Aristotle on the portals of the Cathedral of Chartres together with the Saints and Prophets. And also the images of the Greek Philosopher upon the frescoes of the churches of Bukovina. The image of the Muhammedan Akbar is in a Hindu Temple. Lao Tze and Confucius are in an aureole of Catholic saints. All the black Madonnas and Rockamadura are from Negro soil! And King Solomon is in the Greek Orthodox Church of Abyssinia. If only one does not close one's eyes intentionally, a multitude of benevolent facts will flow in. Verily, following the covenant of Origen, "We see with the eyes of the heart."

And not only do ancient Chartres and Bukovina revere the great Philosophers upon their portals. The newspapers of New York thus communicate the news about the Riverside Church: "Confucius, Buddha and Muhammed, together with Christ are modeled on the portals of the Baptist church. The new era of religious tolerance is expressively symbolized in the images, where great scientists and philosophers, many of whom in their time were condemned of heresy, occupy a place together with saints, angels and leaders of religions ... Moses is modeled shoulder to shoulder with Confucius; after Buddha and Muhammed follow Origen, St. Francis of Assisi, Dante, Pythagoras, Plato, Socrates, Aristotle, St. Thomas Aquinas, Spinoza and Archimedes ... Together with Dr. Fosdick who gave this testimony of his broad thinking, another representative of free thought, Dr. Holmes, has announced in a sermon that the temples of the future will represent the synthesis of all great religions of the world."

Why are these times of peace so necessary to mankind? Every heart knows, that an epoch of peace is necessary for cognizance and construction. Hostile periods have brought on the material and spiritual crash. This also the human heart knows. Periods of hostility have created the unrest of unemployment, through which the most worthy striving towards the betterment of quality has been lost. Periods of hostility have resulted in numerous conventionalities and in those atrocities which come from the absence of quality, in other words, in a spirit of savagery.

Very often Conferences for peace evoke a pitying smile for the hypocrisy of people gathering to do away with methods of destruction uncomfortable to them, in order to replace them with more subtle and modern ones.

But even among those who gather, there are always some to whom the creative principle of peace is close. And these, not the bestial ones, like the spheres of pure Mercury, will still strive towards luminous unification, towards the great universal body. These striving ones can always find means of accord because by day and night their hearts pray for unification. If this voice prevails, one is able also to realize that indestructible ennobling of the spirit which is imparted through the realization of culture. Because each aspiring spirit, in search of culture, knows in his heart also the great sense of union and the time of peace. He needs this sense of union, he needs this time for peace, in order to open the gates of light. "Do not stand in the way." ... "Do not obscure the sun," asked Diogenes, not because he desired to be a sluggard. He asked that light be not obscured, lest it give way to darkness.

Truly, the future does not tolerate sluggards. All has become dense. In the

pressure of energies each moment of conscious labor is significant. Each banishment of egoism is significant. And the affirmation of cooperation is luminous.

The age of Maitreya was always indicated as the age of true cooperation. Natalie Rokotoff, in her remarkable book* on Buddhism, according to the sources, thus characterizes the Age of Maitreya: "The Future Buddha-Maitreya, as His name indicates, is the Buddha of compassion and love. This Bodhisattva, according to the power of His qualities, is often named Ajita the Invincible.

"It is interesting to notice that the reverence of many Bodhisattvas was accepted and developed only in the school of Mahayana. Nevertheless the reverence of the one Bodhisattva-Maitreya, as a Successor chosen by Buddha Himself, is accepted also in Hinayana. Thus, the one Bodhisattva Maitreya embraces the complete scope, becoming the personification of all aspirations of Buddhism.

"What qualities must Bodhisattva possess? In the Teaching of Gotama Buddha and in the Teaching of Bodhisattva Maitreya, given by Him to Asanga according to tradition in the IVth century (Mahayana-Sutra-lankara), the maximum development of energy, courage, patience, constance of striving and fearlessness was first of all underlined. Energy is the basis of everything, as it alone contains all possibilities.

"Buddhas are eternally in action: immovability is unknown to them, like the eternal motion in space, the actions of the Sons of Conquerors manifest themselves in the worlds.

"Mighty, valiant, firm in His step, not rejecting the burden of an achievement for the General Good.

"There are three joys of Bodhisattvas; the joy of giving, the joy of helping and the joy of eternal perception. Patience always, in all and everywhere. The Sons of Buddhas, the Sons of Conquerors, Bodhisattvas in their active compassion are the Mothers to the All-existing."

In giving the covenant of Shambhala, does not the East speak about the very same Light, which is heartily awaited in benevolence and unity? "The Universal Eye of Shambhala carries benevolence to mankind. The Universal Eye of Shambhala is like the light upon mankind's path. The Universal Eye of Shambhala is that Star, which has directed all seekers

"For some, Shambhala is the truth; for others Shambhala is an Utopia. For some, the Lord of Shambhala is a Sage; for others the Lord of Shambhala is the manifestation of abundance. For some, the Lord of Shambhala is an adorned idol; for others the Lord of Shambhala is the Guide of all planetary spirits. But We shall say the Lord of Shambhala is a Fiery Mover of life and of the Fire of the Mother of the World. His Breath glows with flame and His Heart burns with the fire of the Silvery Lotus. The Lord of Shambhala lives and breathes in the heart of the Sun!

"The Lord of Shambhala is the calling one and the called! The Lord of Shambhala is the transmitter of the arrow and the one who accepts all arrows! The Lord of Shambhala breathes with truth and affirms truth. The Lord of Shambhala is unvanquishable and transforms destruction into construction. The Lord of Shambhala is the peak of the banner and the summit of light.

"Accept the Lord of Shambhala as the sign of life. I shall say thrice—of life; because Shambhala is a pledge of man-

* "Foundations of Buddhism." For sale at the Y. M. B. A.

kind's strivings. Our manifestation is the pledge of mankind's perfection. Our manifestation is the affirmed path to Infinity.

"The Lord of Shambhala manifests three ordinances to humanity: The teaching manifested by Maitreya calls the human spirit into our creative world. The teaching of Maitreya points out Infinity in cosmos, in life, in achievements of the spirit! The teaching of Maitreya holds the knowledge of the cosmic fire, as the opening of the heart, which contains the manifestation of the universe.

"The ancient legend affirming that the manifestation of Maitreya will evoke a resurrection of the spirit is correct. We will add that the resurrection of the spirit can precede the manifestation of the Coming, as the conscious acceptance of the Teaching of Lord Maitreya is verily resurrection!"

Does not the East evoke the same spiritual strength, affirming the just necessity of the Hierarchy of Light?

"In the reconstruction of the world one may be sustained only by the affirmation of the New World. The establishing of a manifested decision can enter life only through the great understanding of the universal regeneration by the path of the great law of Hierarchy. Therefore those who seek the New World must strive towards the affirmation of the law of Hierarchy, which leads by the affirmed Hierarchy. Thus only may one establish balance in the world. Only a flaming, guiding Heart shall manifest salvation. Thus the world is in need of the affirmation of the law of Hierarchy.

"Therefore, according to the Law, Hierarchy is being affirmed in the shifting of countries and by the substitution by fire of everything which departs. Therefore it is so necessary to accept the law

of Hierarchy, because without the chain one cannot build the great ladder of ascent. Thus it is necessary to accept flamingly the affirmation of the grandeur of the law of Hierarchy.

"It is necessary to reiterate about Hierarchy. It is correct that the hierarchy of slavery is ended, nevertheless the manifestation of a conscious Hierarchy is accomplished by the suffering of humanity. There is too much slavery in the world and each flame of consciousness is oppressed too greatly. Slavery and conscious Hierarchy are as day and night. Therefore do not hesitate to repeat—Conscious, Hierarchy, the Hierarchy of freedom, the Hierarchy of knowledge, the Hierarchy of light. Let those who do not know the conception of the New World ridicule because each understanding of the New World is terrifying to them. Is not Infinity horrible to them? Is not Hierarchy burdensome to them? Because being themselves ignorant despots, they do not understand the creativeness of Hierarchy. Being themselves cowards, they are terrified before Hierarchy. Thus, let us place in the balance the most needed understanding of the approaching Great Age—Infinity and Hierarchy.

"One must accept Hierarchy as an evolutionary system. For those spirits who have not outlived slavery, one may repeat that Hierarchy absolutely differs from despotism.

"What path then is the most affirming one? The most real way is the self-sacrifice of heroism. The most wondrous fire is the flame of the heart, imbued with love to the Hierarchy. The heroic action of such a heart is affirmed by service to the highest Hierarchy; therefore the self-sacrifice of a subtle heart is wondrous. The spirit-creativeness and independent activity of a sensitive servant imbues the space with fire. Thus, verily harmonize

the visible and invisible; the present and the future; and the predestined shall be fulfilled. Thus the self-sacrifice of a subtle heart imbues the world with flame,

“According to the construction of strata the evolutionary spiral is being extended and the involutionary is being contracted. One may observe this same fact not only with individuals but also with ideas. It is very instructive to discover how ideas are born and accomplish their cycle; often they seem to disappear completely. But if they are evolutionary, they reappear in a broader way. One may study the spiral of the roots of ideas for evolutionary thinking. The task of gradual containment of an idea can give the progression towards highest understanding.

“Labor, create benevolence, revere the Hierarchy of Light—this, Our Covenant, one may inscribe upon the hand even of a new born child. Thus simple is the cause, which leads to Light. In order to accept it, it is necessary only to have a pure heart.

“Hierarchy is a plane-metric cooperation. If any one tries to explain it by the conventional understanding he will only prove that his brain is as yet not ready for cooperation.” Thus it is said.

Upon what, then, can we agree? On what basis may we forgive? Upon what shall we base our understanding? Upon what may we broaden ourselves? Upon what shall we avoid offence? Upon what may we move forward? Encircling all the spheres of Dante, we come to cooperation. Cooperation, compassion, are love itself. Ordained by all the hieroglyphs of the heart, love is the Mother of the World. Inexhaustible is creative love, which has conceived the Tribe of holy people, who know neither earth nor nation; who hasten upon wings of spirit to give succor, compassion, cooperation, who hasten in the name of bliss. Who carry the drops of all-understanding, all-embracing bliss.

The world is hastening towards reconstruction. Human hearts are tired of wrath. In tumultuous labors they remember again about culture and signs of Light, and they whisper to each other: “The future exists, that is why we have come here Not for defamation, not for terror, but we pass here for mutual labor, for knowledge, for enlightenment. Let us then take hold of this Universal Light; let us achieve the transfiguration of the world, the pre-ordained, the predestined.”

All people know that the site of the holy men is on the mountains, upon the peaks. From the peaks comes revelation. In caves and upon the summits lived the Rishis. There where the rivers find their sources, where the eternal ice has preserved the purity of whirlwinds, where the dust of meteorites carries a purifying armor from the distant worlds,—there is the rising glow. Thither is directed the striving of the human spirit. In their very difficulty the mountain paths attract one. There the unexpected occurs. There the people's thought moves towards the Ultimate. There each pass promises an unprecedented novelty, gives promise of the hewing of new facets of tremendous outline.

Upon the difficult paths, upon the dangerous mountain passes stand the images of Lord Maitreya of the Resplendent future. Who made the effort to place them there? Whose was the labor? But often they stand, gigantic, as if not humanly created. Every traveller adds a little stone to the growing Mendang. Does one's heart ridicule this stone offered to the steps of the future? No. The difficult and dangerous path opens one's heart. One does not ridicule; but, smiling in benevolence, one adds his stone also to the laying of the step of the all-containing Light.

Long before dawn, under the stars, the entire neighbouring mountain beyond the river is studded with tremendous roseate fires. They glide along, gathering into garlands; breaking into fragments; flash out and disappear; or they are moving back and forward or unite into one powerful flame. In the cold November air, we admire this Himalayan marvel, which is familiar to all local inhabitants. In the morning you can ask the Gur about it and he, with sparkling eyes, speaks about the fires of *Devitta*; another whispers about the resplendent legion of Maitreya.

There are fires of earth. But here is the heavenly glow Tibet knows "De-me"

the fire of the deity and "Nam-bumpa," a fiery glow.

Over the snowy peaks of the Himalayas burns a bright glow, brighter than stars and the fantastic flashes of lightning. Who has kindled those pillars of light, which march across the heavens? The polar and midnight regions are not near. The northern lights cannot glimmer in the Himalayas. Not from the Northern scintillations are these pillars of light. They come from Shambhala; from the Tower of the Great Coming One.

"*Maitreya Comes.*"

THE NEED FOR A RELIGION

By Pandit H Nandasara

In these days of growing materialism, many are doubtful whether after all religion is not a thing man could do without, whether it would not be wiser for man to concern himself with what belongs to this world, what is visible, than to seek to know what lies beyond the grave, what is invisible. The triumphs of science over Nature, the apparent prosperity of a civilisation essentially material, these are to millions a sufficient argument to prove that religion is not merely useless, but positively harmful to the society of man. Hence arises the necessity to study, in some detail, the importance of religion.

Human beings are like animals in their physical life, in hunger, thirst, sleep and carnal enjoyment, but unlike them in their moral sense. He who is devoid of morality is no better than a beast. A pure and moral life is the product of a strenuous process of self-discipline and subjugation of passions. Now this process of self-discipline is what religion supplies. The human race without religion, is like a ship without a compass. Beings without a religion are solely governed by their impulses and appetites. "Uninstruc-

ted every-day man," says the Buddha, "is like one insane." According to Rousseau man is a gentle or mild savage, but Hobbes describes man as a warlike wild savage. The ordinary man, when unguided by an enlightened religious teacher or a scientific religion, takes delight in the objective world without knowing its true nature. He is not wise enough to understand that both mental and material lives are changing in every second, and the pleasure which is created by the six sense-organs is also unstable and subject to change. As a result of his delusions created by the passions, he commits blunders by taking others' life and property, transgressing the limits of physical enjoyment and harbouring vicious thoughts towards others.

When we consider about the Great War in which ten millions of men died and many millions more were disabled and ruined, we many easily come to the conclusion that the warring nations were lacking in a good religion or were indifferent towards religious ideas. Those who were defeated are awaiting the opportunity to take the revenge on their

enemies and those who were victorious are also striving to prevent their enemy from recovering power. Turn any where we like, we see the nations entangled in quarrels and also apprehensive of war. To prevent this the only remedy is a good religion because religion is the science of right living. Right conduct can only be by the right guidance of a good religion. It is universally known that King Asoka became the victor of victors through self-conquest, being guided by a good religion. It is illustrated thus. "Asoka states in his edicts that it was the horrors of actual warfare, as brought to his notice during the conquest of Kalinga, that led him to the propagation, in those edicts, of the Dhamma—the Norm—as the only true conquest." A religion must be one that says "*Ehipassiko*," which means the good results of it must be manifest in this world. If any religion merely promise that its good results would be seen in the future world, such a religion is useless to the modern man who has an impatient contempt for it and also who needs a religion that deals with this life, perhaps more than with the problems of the other world.

Even in the days of prehistoric barbarism and savagery there were faiths which regulated the conduct of wandering tribes. We have read in historical records, of men who went to many a refuge of mountain, forest and grove, vainly hoping that towering mountains and mysterious woods would take compassion on them and aid them in their search for happiness. Perhaps Nature helped them to be good and satisfied their longing for perfection.

In this civilized and enlightened age one has to exercise the greatest care and caution in choosing a religion and a religious teacher for with the help of these one proposes to win not only this life but also the lives yet to come. That

every man has to go through a series of births and deaths, is a belief sanctioned by the irrefutable logic and philosophy of the Enlightened one. If we encourage the spread of a religion which has never been, and cannot be, for the peace of humanity, then we commit a wrong for which we shall have to suffer again and again. We desire rebirth in a world of peace and harmony. If the world in which we anticipate to be born, by chance happen to be a world full of hatred, envy and war, it would be a very sad thing indeed.

Let us think for a moment, of the prevalent religion in Europe, namely, Christianity. It has never been a religion of peace. It has led to more wars than any other single factor or circumstance. The history of Christianity in Europe is stained with the blood of martyrs, pious men known for the uprightness of their conduct, gentle spirits like Sir Thomas More and Bishop Gardner whom neither their age nor their wisdom could shield! The horrors of the Bartholomew Massacre are even to-day vivid to the imagination of men. And who can honestly say that Christianity has helped the West to be noble hearted? When Ceylon came under the rule of the Portugese, the Christian soldiers tossed young children on pikes so as to compel the mothers to renounce their faith and embrace Christianity. Buddhists were thrown to crocodiles, monks were burnt, and temples and manuscripts destroyed. By following such a religion we can expect neither peace and happiness, nor development in moral and spiritual qualities, neither escape the evils of this world, nor enjoy the blessings of the next.

What the modern man requires is a rational and scientific religion. Buddhism is the only religion that leads man to a higher stage than that of the so called

gods, that teaches the Middle Path which avoids the evils of extremes, that teaches the Law of Causation, the irrefutable train of reasoning which Science only confirms, that steers clear through the Scylla of theism and the Charybdis of materialism which ignore the Laws of Causation and Mutation. Therefore Buddhism is the only religion which exactly answers the needs of the Modern Man and the demands of this enlightened age. "Live the good life for the destruction of suffering" is a better ground for morality than the will of a god. Buddha has for all time pointed out the right path to those who search after the Truth. He has taught that we are what we have made ourselves, that our lives are regulated by our own Karma, actions, good or bad. He never compelled people to accept His teaching. He asked people never to repose blind faith in any creed. He proclaimed "O monks do not believe a thing simply because it has come down from ancient times, or because it is alleged to be divine inspiration, or because it has appeared in the books; but believe a thing if it agrees with your own reason, investigation and experience." Buddhism has never been the cause of disturbance or harm to any creature. It has always worked for the happiness and peace of all beings.

Those who are familiar with Buddha's discourses, know how the Buddha has taught every branch of knowledge and how He has touched every conceivable subject. Sigalovada Sutta shows His marvellous wisdom in relation to the problems of the family life, social life, civil life, political life and religious life. In Buddha's teachings we find the means and ways of training the will, so as to make it perfect instrument of reason and the moral sense. In Kalama Sutta, Buddha points out the good results of right conduct apart from any idea of future life:—

"That holy follower with a kind, happy, pure and clean mind, attains four states of consolation in this world. If there is a future world, and there are results of merit and demerit, I shall after death be born in heaven. This is the first consolation. If there is no future world and there are no results of merit and demerit, I conduct myself without hatred and suffering, happy and unimpeded in this world. This is his second consolation. If suffering be the result of sin, I who think ill of none and commit no sin, how could I suffer? This is his third consolation. To him who commits no sin there will be no results of sin; perceiving this the mind becomes assured of absence of suffering here and happiness hereafter. This is his fourth consolation."

The more one studies Buddha's teachings, the deeper His profound knowledge appears to one. None can sufficiently admire the Buddha. It is Buddha's teaching and not the mythic religion, the grotesque fairy tales—that must spread over the world so that the people may be enlightened. It is Buddha that taught the Noble Eight-fold Path to the world over 2500 years ago for the purpose of attaining the highest end of life, the everlasting happiness of Nibbana. It cannot be said that the world yet knows of a better means for the attainment of supreme happiness.

It is a pity that the majority of modern Indians have forgotten the best and the wisest Master this world has ever produced. Truly, their present degraded condition is the result of their negligence of the teaching of the Buddha. To be free and happy, we must embrace Buddhism which once prevailed throughout the length and breadth of India and gave peace and plenty to those that came under its sway.

NOT TO THE FORM, BUT TO THE SPIRIT

To a Buddhist the Poya-day is the most spiritual day in the month. In Ceylon the Poya-day presents the most beautiful and gorgeous spectacle. I believe it has no parallel in any other country—whether Buddhist or otherwise.

As the full-moon rises in the Eastern sky casting her silvery rays upon the white Dagebas, the picturesqueness of temples increases. It is indeed a pleasure to behold the sight of thousands of Buddhists—both young and old—clad as a rule in white, wending their way to the neighbouring temples with flowers and various other offerings in their hands. As soon as they enter the temple premises they become completely transformed, for they know that they are within the sacred precincts. Even the most hideous criminal is a saint within the temple. He is permeated with the peaceful and serene atmosphere of the sacred spot.

The devotees at first wash their hands and feet, take some flowers and go to the shrine room or Cetiya and offer them with great reverence. Their minds are temporarily cleansed and they aspire to attain Nibbāna.

They light some lamps and hope thereby to banish the darkness of ignorance—Avijjā.

They go to the Cetiya, circumambulate it three times, reciting some Gāthās in Pali—at times not knowing even the meaning, and pay the highest homage to the invisible relics enshrined therein. Finally they offer their salutations to the majestic Bo-tree, the symbol of Enlightenment, and if circumstances permit, sit in the preaching hall and listen to the Dhamma with rapt attention.

The Poya-day was observed, the rituals and ceremonies were gone through, and they leave for their homes with contented hearts, having acquired "lot of merit."

Is this Buddhism? Are these rituals and ceremonies necessary?

Well, they are essential, though not absolutely necessary. They are the preliminary stages of any religion.

The ordinary, for instance, cannot concentrate their attention without an image before them. The mere sight of His august personality instils Saddhā into their hearts. They offer flowers—the symbol of purity and simplicity, as a token of gratitude to their Master and meditate on His virtues. They feel that they are in the presence of the Buddha—the embodiment of everything that is good.

Lamps they light, sometimes to the extent of 84,000. Sheer wastage! Isn't it?

Nay, be more considerate. Take not the materialistic or the utilitarian point of view. The devotees are really altruistic in this respect. The Pahan Pujā is a great sacrifice on their part, and they really enjoy the innocent display of their innate Saddhā.

After all, are not these mere external formalities? Yes, they are. Yet the observances of such outward forms do not tend to any demoralisation. They are a Blessing in one way, at least to a certain section. Attachment even to the Form is far better than mere criticism and becoming irreligious.

We must not at the same time forget that they are *Amisa Pājā*. We should pay more attention to the spirit of Buddha's Teaching than to the form.

What is the use of all these *Pājās* if you do not at least observe the Five Precepts? How many of you could boldly say that you are ideal Buddhists who adhere to these five rules of regulated behaviour? How many of you would not violate them if your interests are at stake? You recite the Pañca Sīla? Do you really think of

their meaning when you do so? You can answer the question to yourselves.

The writer was once travelling by train and he heard a respectable gentleman say "I really enjoyed the place. At night I go to the forest with rifle in my hand. Well, that's sport, although I am a Buddhist."

Is this the type of Buddhists we should like to create? We should be Buddhists not in name but in spirit.

Dear sisters and brothers, Do you really act according to your good judgment when you unwillingly say that there is no harm in breaking eggs? "If really there is any evil in eating eggs which we relish so much, then certainly it is an evil to eat Jak seeds (Kos-eta කොස්ගැට)" you will remonstrate. Poor souls! what an amount of evil Kamma these helpless chicks have accumulated in the past! Oh, what an amount of evil Kamma these kind hearted Buddhists accumulate for the sake of their stomach! Are they to be blamed? Nay, they are to be sympathised. they are still groping in the dark. They will one day or the other see the light.

My dear happy bride-grooms! May I be allowed to put a question to you—impertinent though it be—through the columns of this valuable journal.

Do you sincerely act the part of good Buddhists when on your wedding day you cause thousands of innocent creatures who are still in their embryonic stage,

to be killed and magnificent wedding cakes to be made out of these corpses? What a wholesale slaughter on this auspicious day of yours! Is this *Mangala* or *Avamangala*?

Buddhists are reputed to be kind-hearted. But just think of the number of animals slaughtered for our sake! Perhaps you do not know that not less than 260,000 cattle were killed in Ceylon last year to satisfy our rapacious stomachs despite the fact that 61% of the population are Buddhists.

Once a non-Buddhist vegetarian questioned a Buddhist whether he ate flesh. Promptly he answered "Well, we never eat *beef*, but we eat only mutton." Evidently he was under the impression that mutton does not come under the category of flesh, or that there is less sin in getting poor goats killed.

Please do not misunderstand the writer. The Buddha does not prohibit flesh-eating, if it is obtained under three conditions. Nor does the Buddha object to abstinence from flesh-eating.

Let us seek ourselves. Let us be true to the spirit, then we will be true to the form as well. Let us leave the gross aside and take the subtle. Day by day let us think. 'We are good, we are pure, we are holy.' Then that happy day will come when you will be the embodiment of everything that is good, pure and holy.

N.

DEVOTION IS GREAT, BUT LOVE IS GREATER

By Binoyendra Narayan Sinha, B. A.

Narada roamed the worlds with his vina and sang of the greatness of Vishnu. The great Lord looked at him from the corner of his left eye and smiled. Courage made the sage bold and he asked Hari who it was that had found the greatest favour in his eyes.

Narayana smiled. Narada's heart beat faster and faster. He hoped to hear his own name from the lips divine. "The Gopis of Brindabana are dearest to me" said Vishnu. Narada hung his head in shame and went away.

Narada was sorely grieved. Had he not given up his all for the Lord's sake? Did he not roam the worlds with Hari's name on his lips? Why then this injustice? The Gopis—the world knew them to be wanton; how was it that they had found favour in the eyes of the Master while he hung his head in shame? Narada wept with shame and Narayana knew all.

A few days after—Narada went to pay his respects to the Lord. Vishnu looked very pale and said that he was ill. The sage was at a loss; he knew not what to do. The Lord of the three worlds—if He should be ill, who was there that could cure him?

Narayana spoke again, "I am afflicted with a terrible disease, incurable by even Siva himself. There is no balsam but one in the three worlds that can be of any avail. Narada thought that it must be Hari's Maya or how could the Master himself be ill? But still he was afraid and with a trembling voice asked as to what the remedy might be.

"A speck of dust from thy feet" was the Lord's reply.

Narada bit his tongue in shame and touched his ears. "O Lord Almighty," said he, "my life, my all is but for thee, but how can I dare to give you the dust from my feet?"

Vishnu smiled. "There is no other remedy, Narada" was his reply. "If you cannot save me, see if others can."

Narada rushed to Brahma and told him all about Vishnu's illness. Prajapati smiled, "It is only Hari's Maya, Narada," he spoke benignly. But when Narada begged of him a speck of dust from his feet, he covered his mouth with his hands and violently shaking his head, said, "How dare you speak thus, Narada?"

Narada then went to Siva. And he also refused to give a speck of dust from his feet to Vishnu. Narada roamed the three worlds. Some hung their heads in shame, some shut their ears and others began to abuse him—but none gave the dust from their feet.

Narada came back with a heavy heart. Hari lay paler still and Narada could not hold his tears back. Vishnu looked at him and said, "I know that thou hast failed, Narada, but try once more. Go to Brindabana and tell the Gopis that I lie stricken with a disease that knows no cure. See if they give the dust from their feet."

Narada went. The Gopis rose as the sage approached. The sage's grave face made their hearts sink and with untold fear in their eyes they asked if all was well with their beloved Krishna.

Narada told them all that had happened. "He is dying" said he, "and nothing can save him but the dust from thy feet."

O wonder, all the Gopis with one voice offered the dust from under their feet. Why—O why, had he not come to them earlier?

Narada went back with the balsam. Vishnu greeted him with a smile; he was already cured. Narada turned his enquiring eyes on to Hari and he spoke, "Devotion is great Narada, but Love is greater. None of the immortals—not even you dared to give me the dust from under the feet lest woe would befall. But the Gopis forgot all. Their love for me swept away all other thoughts and they did not hesitate to give me the dust from under their feet although they knew me to be the Lord of the three worlds. Their love is great Narada; all love that is forgetful of consequences is great indeed."

HENRY STEELE OLCOTT

Some Personal Reminiscences by Count Axel Raoul Wachtmeister.

(Celebration of Olcott Day is an annual event with the Buddhists of Ceylon. This year's celebration was of unusual importance because it was coupled with the centenary of the birth (in 1832) of this great man who may be rightly called the father of Buddhist education in Ceylon. It will be recalled that Olcott and H. P. Blavatsky declared themselves Buddhists by taking Pansil at Galle on 25th May, 1880. We reproduce very interesting articles written for "Buddhism in England" by one who knew both Olcott and H. P. B.)

Having been asked to write my recollections of Col. H. S. Olcott I am somewhat at a loss, as my first meeting with him happened such a long time ago. I remember better my first meeting with H. P. Blavatsky, in December, 1886, at Lansdowne Road, London. I came from the University of Lund, Sweden, to spend the holidays with my mother, who was then living with her. The Blavatsky Lodge meetings were then held at Lansdowne Road, but H. P. B. did not often attend; she was in her room nearly all the day revising the "Secret Doctrine."

I remember Annie Besant's first visit to H. P. B. when she was accompanied by Herbert Burrows. After Mrs. Besant joined the T. S. things became different. The Headquarters were moved to Avenue Road, where there was a lecture hall, and there I first saw Olcott at the end of August, 1888. He was then busy with the affairs of the T. S., and had been lecturing on the Continent. The next time I met him was in Melbourne, Australia, in March, 1891. I met him at the Grand Hotel, where we were both staying. There was a young lady cashier in the dining room with a bad toothache. Olcott said in his abrupt, American way: "Come up to my room and I'll take that away." Next morning we again met at breakfast, and the young lady was quite well. Olcott had cured her with magnetic passes. He certainly had a wonderful gift of magnetism, and in India was quite famous for his cures.

I met him again in Colombo in November of the same year. He had recently

founded a Buddhist school in Colombo, and was distressed at the death of Miss Pickett, the teacher, who, as a somnambulist, had walked into the courtyard of the school one night and fallen down the well. After her death her place was taken by her mother, Mrs. Pickett, who later surrendered it to Mrs. Higgins. Although Mrs. Higgins was of a different temperament and often disagreed with Peter de Abrew and Mrs. Werakon, the Singhalese trustees, the school prospered highly under her leadership.

From Colombo I went to Tuticorin, having a most interesting meeting with Rudyard Kipling on the steamer. I saw the temples of Southern India, and arrived at Adyar in time for the T. S. Convention (December, 1891). Here was Olcott "in all his glory," welcoming people from all over the world. There were Hindus, a Tibetan lama from Lhasa, some Americans, Dr. Ryder, a lady doctor who was studying the condition of Hindu women, Miss Etta Muller, strong for women's rights, Sydney Edge, and Richard Harte from London, and Buddhist priests from Ceylon, where I forgot to mention that I had been introduced to the high priest, Sumangala. Olcott made an ideal President at the Convention, keeping everyone in good humour.

The next time I met him was at the Convention in December, 1894. Mrs. Besant lectured in Madras to 7,000 people on "What Politics can do and what they cannot do," and I remember that I sat under the Chairman's table, as there was no room anywhere else. These were

troublesome times in the T. S., when Mr. Judge and nearly the whole American section seceded from the parent Society. Olcott had a great admiration for Mrs. Besant, but also a great affection for Judge. He looked worried, and did all he could to prevent the split, but it was no use, as it had to be.

Later I met Olcott in Amsterdam, always genial and enthusiastic, and again in 1901, in San Diego, California. In spite of its being close to the headquarters of Mrs. Tingley, we had a very good meeting at the Opera House. I played the March from Tannhauser, Mrs. Richards sang some songs, and then Olcott gave a magnificent address on the rise and spread of the Theosophical Society.

The last time I met him was in Paris, some years later. My mother had an

apartment there, and he came up to see her. He was then looking ill and worn out, and his great beard was growing white. But for many years he had done nothing but travel all over the world, lecturing and organizing Lodges of the T. S. He was a splendid organizer, a ready orator, and a fluent writer, for which he had had an excellent training as a journalist. He was very popular among the so-called higher classes, and was entertained by English Governors in India when Theosophy was more or less tabooed. He was also adored by the women, for his personality emanated kindness and healthful magnetism. Besides his Theosophical activities, he was very much interested in Buddhism, and never failed to work for that faith whenever he had a chance. For this reason Buddhists all over the world revere his memory.

THE CONGRESS OF BUDDHIST ASSOCIATIONS

14th ANNUAL SESSION

The All Ceylon Congress of Buddhist Associations was held on 28 January at the Olcott Memorial Hall, Ananda College.

Mr. H. Sri Nissanka, Barrister-at-Law, the President, occupied the chair, and a large gathering of delegates from various associations were present.

Proceedings commenced with the administering of "Pansil" by Bhikkhu Narada, who said that the time had come, not to preach, but practice. It was essential that a Sabha composed of 15 Nayaka Theras representing the three sects, should administer Buddhism in the country. Congress should take steps to obtain a permit from the Government for allowing Buddhist Bhikkhus to travel free on trains. It was a great pity that none of the "Tripitakas" were translated into Sinhalese.

Mr. L. H. Mettananda, Chairman of the Reception Committee, then addressed the gathering. He said that three things were essential for our progress as a nation. First, our leaders must be persons who would never subordinate their principles to material advantage. Second, our women who are the mothers of our nation must be accorded their due place of honour in society. Third, we must create public opinion in our country strong enough to check the growth of crime, immorality and vice.

To bring these things about it was most essential to educate our children in a religious atmosphere. At the present time Buddhist education suffered very much from lack of suitable text books which were based on psychological principles.

Another service Congress could render in connection with religious education was the creation of public opinion in order to persuade the Government to pass legislation compelling the Trustees of Buddhist Temporalities to set apart a portion of their income for religious education. There was a precedent for such action by the State. For example, in England, during the latter part of the last century laws were passed transferring the income of certain charities to education.

A second activity which the Congress could take in hand was in the sphere of religious celebrations. Certain religious celebrations, particularly the *peraher* as were to say the least, not a credit to the religion.

A third activity which the Congress could take in hand was to help the Sangha to establish itself on a sound footing, making it impossible for imposters to sully its good name.

After a band of young girls sang a welcome song specially composed for the occasion, Mr. H. Sri Nissanka, delivered his presidential address. He

said: 'I am no believer in revolutionary reforms. I consider that reforms should be gradually introduced and that success lies before him who plods surely and steadily towards a given goal. You, therefore, must not be disappointed, if, in the coming year, you do not witness startling changes. Within the brief space of twelve months one can but do little and that little can be a great deal if you, my brethren, will rally round me and the Congress and give it the entire weight of your influence and support.

"Disunity will render nought our honest endeavour. We will stand together in our united demands, a few of which are outlined in the programme of which due notice has been given. I wish you to remember this when the resolutions are discussed, for these are not the results of hasty conclusions, but are born of much thought and careful deliberations. If these resolutions are passed by this assembly, we may then witness, in the near future, one step taken towards the long road to a Buddhist Renaissance.

"It is not our purpose this year to reform the Sangha although it is a dream of the future. It will be a happy day for those of our Faith if we are able to visualize in the distant horizon a united and well controlled Sangha, under the sway of a Sangha Raja elected by the entire fraternity of the united three Nikayas.

"I hope that some successor of mine in this high office will place this in the forefront of his programme and that the Buddhist Congress of some succeeding year will bind together with the common bond of the Dharma the various fraternities of the Priesthood. Then and not till then can the laity be free from censure. If the shepherds of the faithful are disunited, how can it be that all is well with the flock?

"We propose, if we are permitted, to submit a programme of legislation to amend the Buddhist Temporalities Ordinance through the proper Government channels, but we fear that in attempting to do so we would incur the displeasure of individuals. We hate to court displeasure even to that trifling extent, but we are afraid that in the interests of the cause we have espoused such considerations will not be permitted to weigh with us.

"In the forefront of this programme will be placed an appeal to His Excellency the Governor to reconsider the personnel of the Advisory Board recently appointed to control the reconstruction and preservation of ancient Buddhist ruins in this country. We shall endeavour to take such steps as would be necessary for the suppression of bogus Buddhist charitable institutions, and the collection of public subscriptions by irresponsible people without rendering an account to the people.

"'Principles, Not Personalities' will be our slogan. 'Awake' shall be our cry! And so let us work, and work incessantly to achieve all or a part of what we have set out to achieve.

"The dread hydra of the depression is seizing us in its inexorable grasp. Poverty, distress and pestilence are torturing us from every side. But the path of duty is clear. In the face of these calamities the greater must be our exertions to grapple with the issues before us."

After the report and the Balance Sheet were adopted the following resolutions were passed.

"That this Congress is of the opinion that the recommendations of the Retrenchment Commission in regard to the future of the Archaeological Department should not be accepted by Government, and that the activities of that Department should be continued with greater enthusiasm than ever before"

"That steps should be taken to secure control of ancient Buddhist shrines in India which are not in occupation or possession of others."

"This Congress urges the introduction without delay of an ordinance authorising the Public Trustee to hand over to the Archaeological Department a portion of the income derived from the Buddhist Temporalities for the purpose of restoring Buddhist shrines in Ceylon which require immediate restoration for purposes of worship."

"The Standing Committee of the All-Ceylon Congress of Buddhist Associations shall consist of one representative from every affiliated Society and 75 others from various Districts of Ceylon elected at the annual general meeting."

THE NEXT ISSUE

will include:—

THE HEART OF CULTURE

BY NICHOLAS ROERICH

THE WESAK NUMBER

Contributors are kindly
requested to send
articles for this issue

BEFORE THE END OF MARCH

