



N. B.—Friday 31st 6 p. m. "Free-will or Determinism"—Bhikkhu  
Dhammapala, at the Y. M. B. A. Hall, Borella.

# THE BUDDHIST

"Sila Pannato Jayam"

Editors :  
SIR D. B. JAYATILAKA  
S. A. WISAYATILAKE

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## Our President's Message

FRIENDS,

For obvious reasons I shall not be able to attend the anniversary meeting on the 26th instant. I send you, therefore, my cordial greetings and best wishes for a very successful meeting. I would also take this opportunity of placing before you one or two matters of importance, which I sincerely hope will receive your careful consideration.

The first matter to which I would refer on this occasion is the fact that four years hence—in 1948 the Association will complete its fiftieth anniversary. I have no doubt that you will all agree that this event should be celebrated worthily and in such a manner as to strengthen and widen the activities of the association. It may be thought that 1948 is yet far off—and that it is too early to consider how best we should celebrate our Golden Jubilee. I am however, strongly of opinion that it is not premature at all to take preliminary steps for planning in broad outline the manner in which these celebrations should be organized, and setting forth the purposes to which they will be devoted.

I would suggest the appointment at the annual meeting of a special committee consisting of about a dozen members to be called the Golden Jubilee Committee. This committee will be in permanent session till the annual meeting in 1947, to which they will submit their final recommendations.

In the meanwhile the special committee will continue to meet as often as is necessary and consider the question of the celebrations in all aspects.

One matter which should receive the special attention of the committee is the pressing necessity for extending our premises. Our meeting hall is obviously too small, the Library and the Reading Room suffer badly from lack of proper accommodation, and the back verandah and kitchen quarters need rebuilding. The special committee will consider these matters and get preliminary plans ready for extending the premises.

Another matter to which I should like to invite your attention is our programme of work. Thanks mainly to the energetic efforts of the present General Secretary, Mr. D. N. W. de Silva, our members have increased considerably during the past year. This is certainly most encouraging. We must not, however, think that enough has been done in the matter of membership. There are still, even in the city of Colombo, not to speak of outstations, thousands of young Buddhists still outside the fold. It must, therefore, be our constant endeavour to persuade those who are yet outside to join our ranks.

The point I wish to emphasize in this connection is the need for enlarging our activities. By means of our annual examination in Religious Knowledge we have fairly

systematized the teaching of the Dhamma in Buddhist schools. It is impossible to overestimate the importance of this department of our activities. In years to come, when things become normal, this work may safely be expected to expand so that it may cover every part of the Island. But, however successful this effort may be, it would be a serious mistake on our part to limit ourselves to it for all time, ignoring the fact that there are other directions in which we can render service to our country and to our faith.

I have often thought that the time has come for the Association to undertake work for the betterment of conditions of life in some backward area. I would earnestly commend this idea to the Association, being convinced that if it takes practical shape it may extend our activities in a most fruitful and beneficial direction.

I now proceed to place before you a matter of utmost importance to the cause of Buddhism in India. I have been convinced for some time that the time has come for a great effort to revivify or replant Buddhism in the land of its birth. My conviction has been strengthened by the views of men of light and leading with whom I have discussed this matter, notably by discussions I have recently held with Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council.

It is the considered opinion of Dr. Ambedkar that if suitable and adequate steps are taken, there is



every prospect of the teachings of the Blessed One being accepted by millions of Indians belonging to the depressed classes, who are now seeking a faith which will free them from the social bondage in which they are held. He further holds the view that the best means of approaching this vast community, totalling over sixty millions, is through education. Schools and colleges should be opened, he thinks, in areas where members of this community are found in large numbers.

In this connection we must gratefully remember the valuable work done by the Maha Bodhi Society for over half a century in propagating the Dhamma in India. But the Society has not undertaken field work in education on a large scale. Besides the problem is so vast that there is ample room for more than one organization co-operating in its solution.

I would therefore strongly commend this question for the consideration of the Association. If

the Association is prepared to undertake some part of this work, I would suggest that a delegation should be sent to India in the course of this year to discuss the whole question with leaders like Dr. Ambedkar, and submit recommendations to the Association so that active steps may be taken at the end of the war.

D. B. JAYATILAKA

Calcutta,  
18th February 1944.

The above message from the President, Sir D. B. Jayatilaka, K. B. E., intended for the annual general meeting on Saturday, February 26, reached the General Secretary on Monday Feb. 28.

### Kasturibai Gandhi

To praise the late Kasturibai Gandhi, patriot wife of a patriot husband, would be to paint the rose and gild the lily. It is better, in the face of the grim reality of death, to state the bare reality, and that is, in our opinion, that she followed her great husband in his pilgrimage through life with the self-effacing

devotion which enabled Ruth to tell Naomi: "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God:

"Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me"; and which, in her own motherland of India, evoked from the lips of the incomparable Sita these winged words:

*"If unstained in thought and action I have  
lived from day of birth,  
Spare a daughter's shame and anguish  
and receive her, Mother Earth!  
If in duty and devotion I have  
laboured, undefiled,  
Mother Earth! who bore this woman,  
once again receive thy child!  
If in truth unto my husband I have  
proved a faithful wife,  
Mother Earth! relieve thy Sita from  
the burden of this life!"*

India's greatness is that, even in this degenerate generation, she has produced not one but many Kasturibais.

## Asoka from his Inscriptions

By P. E. W.

In the annals of kingship there is scarcely any record comparable to that of Asoka, both as a man and as a ruler.

In his sermons on stone we find his true self revealed and expressed, his philosophy of life, his conception of an Emperor's duties and responsibilities, and the extent to which he lived to realise the high ideals and principles he professed and preached.

Asoka's father was Bindusara and his grandfather the famous Chandragupta Maurya, who expelled the Greek invaders who had come in the wake of Alexander the Great and carved out for himself a mighty empire, comprising territories still outside the Government of India.

Chandragupta Maurya defeated the Greek invader Seleukos Nikator in 304 B. C. and concluded a matri-

monial alliance. If according to Indian custom this meant the giving of a daughter of defeated Seleukos in marriage to the victor Chandragupta Maurya or one of his sons, we have the interesting speculation whether Asoka had Greek blood in his veins.

According to the *Dipavamsa* and *Mahavamsa*, Bindusara was the husband of sixteen wives and father of one hundred and one sons, of whom only three are named, viz. Sumana, Asoka and Tissa.

The northern tradition is found in the *Asokavadana* and the *Divyavadana*.

In *Asokavadana*, the mother of Asoka is Subhadrangi, the beautiful daughter of a Brahman of Champa, who bore Bindusara another son

named Vitasoka and not Tissa of the Ceylon books.

In the southern tradition she is called Dharmā, the principal Queen or Aggamahesi. Dharmā came from the Kshatriya clan of the Moriyas.

Asoka as Prince served as Viceroy in one of the remoter provinces of the Empire— that of Avanti with headquarters at Ujjain, in the Ceylon tradition; but in the Indian legends it is the kingdom of the Svasas in Uttarapatha with headquarters at Taxila, where Asoka was temporarily sent to supersede Prince Susima and quell the revolt against his maladministration. There was a second revolt against Susima at Taxila during which Bindusara died and Asoka seized the vacant throne at Pataliputra



with the aid of his minister Radhagupta. Asoka subsequently held it deliberately against the eldest brother, who was killed in the attempt to dethrone the usurper.

The legends which say that he killed 99 of his brothers were out to emphasise the contrast between the criminal career of Asoka before his conversion and his virtuous conduct after it. They were interested in blackening his character to glorify the religion which could transmute base metal into gold, and convert Chandasoka (Asoka the Cruel) into Dharmasoka (Asoka the Pious) and make of a monster of cruelty the simplest of men!

Asoka's first wife, whom he married while Viceroy of Ujjain, was Vedisamahadevi, a merchant's daughter.

Of Devi were born the son Mahinda and the daughter Sanghamittā, who was married to Asoka's nephew Agnibrahma and gave birth to a son Sumana.

According to the *Mahāvamsa*, Devi did not follow Asoka to Pataliputra, which fact has made Dr. Vincent Smith suggest that Mahinda was an illegitimate son.

Asoka's chief Queen at Pataliputra was Asandhimittā.

Both *Mahāvamsa* and *Divyavādāna* agree in mentioning Tissarakkhā or Tishyarakshitā as the last Chief Queen of Asoka.

Both legends make Asoka a polygamist.

Asoka's coronation took place four years after his accession. The reason for this is uncertain. It may have been that internal troubles made him delay his formal coronation or that he awaited the attainment of the necessary age. An inscription of Kharavela, King of Kalinga, dated about 160 B. C., suggests that twenty-four was the right age for the imperial coronation.

But if the legends are true he was thirty-four at his coronation, which seems to have taken place about 270 B. C. His son Mahinda was born about 284 B.C. and his

daughter Sanghamittā about 282 B. C. This we know from the statement that Mahinda and Sanghamittā were ordained in the sixth year of his reign when they were respectively 20 and 18 years old.

Giving Asoka at least 20 years' seniority to his son, we have 304 B.C. as his date of birth.

On his accession Asoka took the two titles of Devanampiya (beloved of the Gods) and Piyadasi (of pleasing countenance or one who looks with kindness upon everything). The two titles have been appropriately translated by Smith as "His Sacred and Glorious Majesty."

He had the singular good fortune of being spared the difficult task of founding and organising an Empire.

Chandragupta Maurya and Bindusara bequeathed an Empire extending from Afghanistan to Mysore.

Asoka died about 232 B.C.

With this little introduction, given in order that the reader may the better appreciate the value of the Asokan inscriptions, we pass on to examine these wonderful records.

Firstly we are able to set limits to Asoka's Empire from the geographical distribution of his Edicts.

His Rock Edicts have been found in Peshawar, Thana District, Kathiawar, Puri District, Ganjam District, Kalinga, Mysore, Bihar, Rajputana and Hyderabad. Pillars set up by him are found at Meerut, Kausambi, Sanchi, Sarnath and Nepal.

Thus Asoka was justified when he stated that his dominion was "great" and called it "prithivi" or the whole earth, as then known to Indians.

In Rock Edicts II and XIII he mentions the Cholas, Pandyas, Satiyaputras and Keralaputras as peoples on the borders of his Empire and under his influence.

Towards the north-west his Empire marched with that of the Syrian monarch, Antiochos, and hence extended up to Persia and Syria. This we know from Edict III. We also know that his grandfather Chandragupta Maurya had wrested from Seleukos Nikator the provinces

of Aria, Arachosia, Paropanisadae and Gedrosia on the North West of India which descended to Asoka as his inheritance.

We may even hazard the conjecture that the Empire was so large that Asoka did not live to visit all its parts and inspect the execution of his inscriptions in different localities. This is apparent from the somewhat apologetic tone in which he refers to the imperfections of the Edicts as written on the rocks, from the mere probabilities of the case, and not from direct personal knowledge. Says Asoka in Rock Edict XIV:

"These religious edicts have been caused to be inscribed by King Devanampiya Piyadasi in abridged, medium or expanded form." "Nor, again, was all executed (or suitable) everywhere. Vast is the conquered country, much that is already written and much shall I get written. There is also here something said again and again for the sweetness of the topics concerned that the people should act accordingly. There sometimes might also be writing left unfinished, taking into account the locality, or fully considering the reasons, or by the lapses of the scribe."

Asoka's only conquest, as he himself says in Rock Edict XIII, was that of Kalinga.

"By King Devanampiya Piyadasi consecrated eight years was Kalinga conquered. One hundred and fifty thousand in number were those carried off from there, a hundred thousand in number were those who were slain there, and many times as many those who were dead."

Asoka feelingly counts the suffering caused to the civilian population by "violence or slaughter or separation from their loved ones."

Henceforth Asoka became a changed man both in his private and public life. "Directly after the conquest of the Kalingas," continues Rock Edict XIII, "Devanampiya became keen in the pursuit of Dharma, love of Dharma, and inculcation of Dharma. The chiefest conquest is not that by arms but by Dharma (Dharma-Vijaya)" [To be continued]



# Reflections on The Buddha-Word

## Chapter Two

BY BHIKKHU PIYADASSI

## Moral Causation

Religion is something to be approached by reasoning and reflection. One should not believe in a religious teacher without first investigating his teaching. Parental influence and so forth should not in any way be allowed to interfere in one's choice of a religion. If, after a thorough study, a teaching appeals to one's heart and mind, let one adopt its principles in the conduct of life. It is foolish to try to follow a creed, when one is dissatisfied with it on reasonable grounds. One must be upright. One must be true to oneself and others. Self-deception leads to mental conflict and unhappiness. None has the right to tamper with the freedom of another in the choice of a religion. Freedom of thought is the birth-right of every individual. It is wrong to force one out of the way of life which accords with one's outlook and character, spiritual inclinations and tendencies. Compulsion in every form is bad. It is unpardonable when it affects a man's inner life. It is coercion of the blackest kind to make a man gulp down beliefs for which he has no relish. Such forced feeding cannot be good for anybody, anywhen. A man must be allowed to grow in that way which will bring out his best. Any regimentation of thought is direct interference with that unfolding of the spirit. A Buddhist considers such interference as intolerance of the worst kind.

Purification comes not from an external agency, and self-purification can only come to one who is free to think out his own problems

without let or hindrance. Others may help if one is ready to receive such help or seeks it. The highest happiness is accomplished only through self-knowledge, self-realisation, self-awakening to the truth. One must put forth the appropriate effort and break the shackles that have kept him long in bondage and get at freedom from sorrow by unremitting self-exertion, and not through the mediation of another.

“සුඤ්ඤි අසුඤ්ඤි පච්චන්නං  
නානෙකෙකං අකුසලං විනොධිතෙය”

“Within is what does clean and  
what does spoil;  
One can another never assoil.”

So says the Buddha, who for the first time in the world's history taught that salvation should be sought independently of a saviour.

Each living being is his own creator; no other creator do we see in the world beyond our own action. By our action we make our character, personality, individuality. We are all self-made. Therefore does the Buddha say that we are heirs of our own deeds, bearers of our own deeds, and that our deeds are the womb out of which we spring, and that through our deeds alone we must change for the better, remake ourselves and win liberation from ill. How can it be otherwise? If we through our ignorance and our passions, in the long night of samsāric wandering, had not shaped ourselves, how could there be such difference and dissimilarity between living beings as we see in the world, today? Can we conceive of a mind, a single mind, vast enough to plan out such a varied sentient world as we see around us? And if some one else by a creative act made us out of

nothing, who created that mighty brain? For nothing can escape the law of condition and cause which is patent in the world to all but those who will not see? Only a terrible blindness to the reality of life can postulate any cause other than actions born of ignorance for the existence of sentient beings.

The teaching of moral causation (*Kamma*) which is the one and only reasonable explanation for the mass of suffering called the world cannot be overthrown. All explanations of sentient existence, excepting moral causation, are fully unsatisfactory, for they do not take into account the real function of the intangible but nevertheless deciding factor of mentality (*Nāma*) in the process of becoming (*Bhava*). But when one sees sentient life as the working, principally, of causality in its hidden aspect of conscious process, then one comes to know and grasp the fount of life as ignorance; and the countless forms of sentience as expressions of the drive of many-coloured passion which urges all from life to life, arising and bursting asunder as bubbles in the vast sea of sentience. Then one comes to cognize the meaning of moral causation through the phenomenon of rebirth.

“Who toiled a slave may come anew a Prince  
For gentle worthiness and merit won ;  
Who ruled a King may wander earth in rags  
For things done and undone.”

**SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING.**

A special general meeting of the members of the Colombo Young Men's Buddhist Association (Incorporated) will be held at 6 p. m. on Monday, April 3, 1944, at the Association headquarters to discuss the subject of the proposed film of the Life of the Buddha.

The President's message, which arrived too late for the annual general meeting, will be read at this meeting.

D. N. W. de SILVA  
March 7, 1944. Hy. G. Secretary



# The Buddha's Way

A Poem by James Arther

## BOOK II: CANTO V.\* (Contd.)

"Great king, hear our conclusion, gravely weighed,  
the Gods have verily most propitious proved 150  
in an abundance of most favoured signs,  
by us examined with the utmost care;  
they, mighty monarch, show a double fate  
confronting our young prince, a twofold way,  
as does the wandering ascetic face  
on his itinerant through unknown lands  
from fane to holy fane; doubtful he stands  
at the forked road, each to a famous shrine,  
followed, him leading, but a gaping chasm  
impassable dividing both; even so 160  
the prince, arrived at manhood's prime, the choice  
must meet, or worldly state and power achieve,  
or this vain world spurn for a homeless life,  
of worldly power, wealth, sheltered comfort short,  
searching a good more durable than these.  
So far our knowledge reaches, there beyond  
is darkness to our eyes impenetrable,  
although of one thing certain: whichever path  
the prince elect--whether a king's career,  
the mighty Ruler of a world-empire— 170  
or Teacher of both worlds, of Gods and men,  
a humble guide pointing the way to bliss  
rock-fast and firm, unchanging, without end—  
in either path our prince, accomplishing  
his purpose, will attain pre-eminence  
supreme, unrivalled; therefore be his name  
Siddhartha, who accomplished has his aim."

The speaker's voice was silent, silent stayed  
the king with chin in cupped hand, the other down  
his side hangs listless, while his sombre eyes 180  
in space stare far out over the people's heads  
unseeing, his doubts unsolved, misgivings still  
his royal breast oppressing for his throne  
and race, his land and people and his queen,  
his most beloved, aye, would she survive  
this illness singular, without just cause  
(since the deliverance all they had hoped for  
and more) dragging her to an untimely grave,  
and if she died (oh, unkind cruel fate!)  
and this their child would choose the homeless life, 190  
no issue of her blood and his, with his  
mixed indissoluble, her beauteous form  
recast and gentle mind revived, would then  
sit in his throne, their mingled line extinct.  
What though the second queen bare him a son,  
he is not queen Maya's life and blood, always  
him to remind of her, his one lone love!  
Thus was the king tormented in his thoughts,  
when sudden recollection dawned of one  
sole finger pointed upwards like a ray 200  
of hope? Or relentless fate? Which might it be?  
The king's gaze lost its fixity and dwelt,  
slowly descending on Kondannya's face,  
troubled, seeking for comfort, none to find,  
but a sad kind glance of pity meeting his,  
then spake the king abrupt: "And thou,  
who from thy elders mak'st bold to dissent,  
boldly speak thou the truth by thee perceived,

although thy look portends unwelcome news.  
But danger known is so much less of fear, 210  
and manhood's pride a rival to fate's fiat,  
his stars will rule who in himself hath faith.  
Speak then, whatever the purport of thy speech!"

Spake the young Sage in words of meek reply:  
"Renowned king, yet little do I know,  
my years so few, of our wise lore, more hope  
to learn with time's advance, therefore in all  
declared here by my seniors concur,  
myself knowing not better" (how well-pleased 220  
the Seven looked and approval nodded grave)  
"except, dread king, the uncertainty involved  
in the young prince's choice of a career:  
power secular sought, or else this world renounced  
for greater good. The latter course the prince  
is sure to take; no doubt on this behalf  
rests in my mind, though not on knowledge based,  
this certitude, of outer token, fact,  
or cipher, intuition its sole ground,  
eluding reason or strict calculus; 230  
an inner contact made revealed a being,  
a nature all averse to force, constraint  
and hurtful violence, such as a king  
constant need threaten, betimes exercise,  
so to maintain his awful temporal power;  
a nature merciful, compassionate,  
forgiving, helpful, kind, benevolent,  
in brief a Buddha-nature perfect made,  
the aim of evolution realized, or nigh.  
Then call his name as by my elders told."

Muse, Power Sublime, sing thou Kondannya's 240  
sing loud the wise young prophet who alone [praise,  
of that sage company of five score eight  
the mystery pierced of the incongruent ways  
of King and Saint divided by a gulf  
unbridged, and of time's passage either road  
man leading, one the world for goal, rebirth  
its prize, freedom from ill the other's aim.  
As when a sudden gust of wind has swept  
with mighty sound the earth, chasing before  
dust, rubble, broken branches, leaves, 250  
and from the sky driven shadows, mists and clouds,  
until the sun again shines clear, serene,  
and a deep tranquil calm settle over all,  
so, when Kondannya's voice ceased to be heard,  
reigned silence. Human or sublime, a Power  
had spoken, and with no uncertainty  
of utterance met the king's gruelling doubts,  
dispelling unbelief, and for the time  
commanding resignation at the least  
to fate, if not submission for alway, 230  
and quiet restoring in his mutinous breast.

Thus was the prince Siddhartha called by name,  
his ancient Sakyan clan-name Gautama,  
Siddhartha Gautama then his full style.

\* Note by Edd:— We have to thank those correspondents who wrote to us enquiring why the February instalment of this poem had ended in the middle of a sentence. We are entirely innocent. For reasons of policy we find it difficult to give further details as to how the mutilation came to be



# The Westerner & Buddhism

A Comment on Q Answer to Zen's February Article

BY "ONE OF THE SIXTY," BEING EX-SALGALA UPALI SAMANERA

"Zen's" article is provocative, raising certain points which I have fully gone into elsewhere recently. So these following may be taken as telegraphic comments only and in the same order as printed.

(1) Surely there is nothing odd that Buddha Dhamma does not yet appeal to the nationals (England? U. S. A.?) of the West. Quite apart from the fact that such *Suttas* as the *Sigalovāda* were hardly if ever mentioned in the West, there is also the fact that Buddha Dhamma is for those to whom a religion and way of life is one, for weekdays even more than Sundays. Jesus taught 2,000 years ago and modern Europe has been Christian since 1066 approximately. But whereas the Buddha came to cultured people with a tradition of not less than a 1000 years of culture and true learning and good breeding, the West has not yet got to that stage, mentally. So, except for a few people in advance of their times, Waldenses, Quakers, Cotswold members or such groups as shewn in the film "49th Parallel" and considered odd by their neighbours, the great heart of the West is still in football, cricket, money, even wars and fox-hunting but not in life and living. [Read Gerald Heard's "Man the Master" on this point and see how only perhaps a dozen or so in millions may be approaching the adult stage yet, at the present moment, despite some recent real upward trends.]

(2) & (3) Lines 13 to 59 seem to need no comment. Lines 60 to 65 may be true, though as to the normality or rational aspect of quite a percentage of Western Buddhists, that is a matter of opinion and we sometimes may be forgiven for wondering!

(4) Lines 75 to 85 are of psychological interest and shew a picture of the writer but in themselves give no basis for a criticism of

Ceylon Buddhists. One is always apt to be a little suspicious of the bona fides of a person who, admitting disappointment, speaks of himself as one "who sacrificed all." One does not doubt the sacrifice, but one does doubt its depth unless, like the Buddha or a later follower Milarepa, and others such as he, it is one who is a happy winner. Such a one may talk of sacrifice and be listened to with respect, interest and pleasure. But 'also-rans' may not. This is blunt talk and comment. But Zen's unkind, unmerited, Heber-like criticism is like that unpleasant and un-English-like kick which was given by a high dignitary of a Christian church to the ex-King, the present Duke of Windsor, at a time when he was officially barred from giving any answer any more than now can the Sinhalese, against whose hospitality this article is a thoroughly unmerited and possibly ungrateful hit. If my guess as to the writer's identity is correct, then I would suggest that he, having entirely missed the spirit of the East, is probably QUITE *unware* of the hurt his article is sure to cause many here, and the new resentment he will cause against those of whom my body is and among whom I was born—the Anglo-Saxon race.

(5) As regards the educated and cultured Westerner—if the culture of such a one is greater than that of the Sinhalese, why come here to live, even if a 'Buddhist'? If, as I believe, the writer has only lived in towns, then, without disrespect to the townsmen personally, I say, in any country, *do* the most cultured live or are found in cities? Town crowds, in the West at any rate, are often to be found a crude and ill-bred lot—it is not their fault—divorce any human being or animal from woods and nature—the result is seldom pleasing or happy. It does not seem to me obvious that because one cannot take part in cer-

tain customs which please the people that one should 'remain a Christian or renounce religion altogether.' The only obvious things are that such a one is himself obviously bound and also obvious is it that such a one would do better possibly in other surroundings—these do not seem to be his scene and setting. Perhaps his own country would have been better, following Buddha Dhamma there as best his and his Nation's Karma would allow.

(6) That the meditative Pratipatti Sāsana is completely dead here as regards Gurus, even if not quite destitute of contemplative students, is an accepted and regretted fact. But that being so, it must be accepted and either contemplative Westerner must go to the Himalayas or *anywhere* almost in India (towns of course excepted), where not only is meditation practiced precisely as it was 2,500 years ago but even an Anglo-Saxon can sit in meditation on a main road or in a railway station or elsewhere where he finds himself, and neither crowd collects nor comment occurs. I know, for I have done it. I don't think even a Bhikkhu would care to try the experiment here! One must learn how to meditate in ways which do not cause comment. It restricts one, but it can be done—for this also I have done.

(7) But that a Westerner is not wanted, is neglected—well, the ordinary Westerner can only blame his own ancestors if this is so. But the special Westerner, one who comes for Buddhism or Buddhism's sake, that *he* is neglected or not wanted or else is too much bothered and interfered with, then I, who have been in the Orient some decade now and without pointing out anything so obvious as difference in customs, can only say, as one who has studied Vedanta, Taoism, Mahayana Buddhism and its great grandchild



of a third country, Zen—and in the same brusque way—as any quoted Zen Master (Zen, the writer, will understand my meaning even if Theravadists are puzzled, even shocked)—I hit myself you—you I hope it hurts—hits—hurts Humpty Dumpty—“You?! WHO are you?” (with a sneer) or “why in the name of all miracles should any Oriental trouble to inquire regarding any particular Westerner? As for Westerners coming at great sacrifice?—Who of the East asked him or her to come and for what?”

Speaking not after the style of a Zen Master or its modern exponent but as myself, I admit that a Westerner when he comes is too apt to be overwhelmed and ‘bothered’ at every turn at first—and even I did not entirely escape at one period. But is it not quite natural? Here—of that race, those races who number millions and some, Portuguese, Dutch, Italian, English and American, and of whose members quite a few have spent lakhs and others actively done their best for three whole centuries in such a small space as occupied Ceylon to upset, sneer at, crush out, that religion which is the birth-right

and backbone of the people—to this place comes a single one, a single solitary one but presumably a normal man, not disrespected by his nation—he comes, not merely to visit and enquire, not merely to settle down to make money or as an artist to browse and paint but actually to become an ordained member of a religion not so long ago despised. To ask not to be hustled is as if a person combining the personalities of Douglas Fairbanks Senior, Jim Mollison and “Pussyfoot” Johnson and a whole host of celebrities rolled into one should visit London or New York and expect to pass as an ordinary clerk at lunch at Lyons’ or any restaurant! Also I admit that such a trial comes at a time most difficult for one and when one is least mentally fit to bear any extra difficulty, any last straw, and this a whole timber or beam! But such frenzied ebullitions should soon die down, even such a unique Westerner can hardly expect to be more than a 20-day wonder, unless, of course, he does something which would cause comment and wonder even if done by a Sinhalese himself—I mean meditating in caves and forests, etc. This can still be done

in India without comment, but not in Ceylon—it has not been done for at least 1000 years, so I believe!

(8) As for the “some sixty Westerners”, myself included, I have dealt with them fully and also some deep issues involved in this matter in an article sent to the Editors of a London magazine by whose permission, no doubt, the copy sent to the Editors of *The Buddhist* could be reprinted if some good friend of the Dhamma would undertake the charge and cost thereof. It forms part of a series of Essays to be printed and published in a few years’ time. A preface by perhaps the Rev. Narada Thera or Bhikkhu Soma would be a welcome addition and make it quite an attractive and useful booklet. In conclusion, one wonders how many readers noticed the top of column four of p. 80 of the same issue and after Zen’s article—It was (is) an accidental and interesting study in contrasts!

\* Dealing as it does with some deep and fundamental issues pertaining to the Rules of Vinaya and their observance or otherwise, a point which too many Western Bhikkhus have seemed to consider of little account with few exceptions, such as the late Allen Bennett (Ananda Motteyya).

## Letters to the Editor

### The Proposed Buddha Film

The Editors,  
“The Buddhist”

Dear Sirs,

Although I, like many other members of the Y. M. B. A. and the Buddhist public, would most certainly prefer that the Life should not be filmed—which is a personal matter—we should not overlook some points of far wider importance. Because we can prevent such a film being shown in Ceylon, we have not the power to prevent such a film being made in or U. S. A. or elsewhere. Such a film will be shown not only in Ceylon or even India, but without doubt in London and New York and other cities. I saw such a film in London 15 years ago; it was not a good one.

Let us not miss this opportunity—one which if we lose by a hasty move we may never get again. Let us express our disapproval as individuals, not as the Y. M. B. A., but having done this, let us accept the opportunity given us to advise and help the production to be a great “poetical” triumph so that foreigners may get a true view and not a distorted view of the life of one for whom some of us have reverence as deep as life itself.

I know something of film technique and I can say that it is quite unnecessary for a human actor to act as the Master; it can be done by

reflection of any Buddha Rupa such as may be found in Buddhist Viharas in Ceylon, Burma, or wherever such exist, or by means of lighting and suggestion alone. If we may not be able to stop an overwhelming act, let us keep control. Mr. Yajnik seems to come as a friend: let us accept his offer as such, and let us not lose for ever THAT OPPORTUNITY NEVER TO BE REGAINED—the opportunity of control.

Yours, etc.,  
U. E. RAMAGE.

Boralessgamuwa,  
26th February 1944.

## COLOMBO Y. M. B. A. NEWS

### 45th Annual General Meeting

Sir Baron Jayatilaka was elected president of the Colombo Y. M. B. A., for the 45th time in succession, at the annual general meeting held on Feb. 26.

Before the proceedings began, Narada Thera delivered a short address in the course of which he suggested that the Association

should inaugurate a religious examination in English for the benefit of students attending English schools: elocution contests on religious subjects; a Buddhist students’ congress; and the formation of an advisory board, consisting of monks and laymen, to which matters in dispute could be referred.

Mr. D. S. Senanayake, a vice-president, who presided, paid a tribute to the Committee of Management for the efficient manner in which they had conducted the activities during the year and on the spirit of co-operation displayed by the members. He wished the gathering to remember with gratitude the services rendered to the association by the old members, including their president, who though far away still reserved a niche in his heart for the association of which he had been president from the inception.



The following office-bearers were elected:—

**President:**—Sir D. B. Jayatilaka, K.B.E.  
**Vice-Presidents:**—Mr. A. E. de Silva, Mr. D. S. Senanayake, Mr. R. L. Pereira, Mr. H. W. Amarasinghe, Dr. E. A. Blok.  
**Hon. General Secretary:**—Mr. D. N. W. de Silva.

**Hon. Treasurer:**—Mr. L. Piyasena.

**Committee of Management:**—Messrs. V. S. Nanayakkara, H. S. Gunasekera, Padikara Muhandiram G. J. S. Kulatilake, E. de S. Wijayarathne, S. R. Wijayatillake, E. S. Amerasinghe, N. U. Jayawardene, A. Jayasinghe, D. R. Wijegunawardene, S. S. Kulatilake, P. A. Ediriweera, M. A. Thabrew, N. J. V. Cooray, C. B. Kumarsinghe, D. S. Samarasinghe.

**Auditor:**—Mr. Lawrie Muthu Krishna.

#### Departmental Committees

**Religious Activities:**—Mudaliyar P. D. Ratnatunga, Mr. A. Jayasinghe, Mr. D. N. Hapugalle, Mr. M. A. Thabrew.

**Religious Activities:**—Messrs. E. de S. Wijayarathne, D. N. Hapugalle, Mudaliyar R. Malalgoda, Mudaliyar P. D. Ratnatunga.

**Literary:**—Messrs. T. B. Dissanayake, T. U. de Silva, Ranjit Hewagama, J. D. de Lanerolle.

**Sports:**—Messrs. L. Piyasena, K. C. de Silva, R. Batuwantudawe, T. B. Dissanayake.

**Social Activities:**—Dr. E. A. Blok, Mr. B. L. F. Jayaratne, Mr. E. Upasena, Mr. E. S. Amerasinghe.

#### Committee of Management

An omission at the election of office bearers at the annual general meeting was detected, and it was put to right at the first meeting of the Committee of management by an invitation to Mr. Daya Hewavitarene, and Mr. D. N. Hapugalle to serve on the Committee.

The following branch secretaries were elected at the same meeting. **Religious Activities:** Messrs. M. A. Thabrew; **Religious Examinations:** A. Jayasinghe; **Sports:** E. S. Amerasinghe; **English Literary:** S. R. Wijayatillake; **Sinhalese Literary:** P. A. Ediriweera; **Social Activities:** V. S. Nanayakkara; **Physical Culture:** D. S. Samarasinghe; **Librarian:** S. R. Wijayatillake.

#### Fort Branch Building.

The Committee of Management has formed itself into an advisory Committee to assist Mr. Oliver Weerasinghe, Government Planner, (one of our members) in the preparation of plans for our Fort Build-

ing, and has co-opted the following, with power to add:—

Prof. G. P. Malalasekera, Dr. S. Paranavitane, Messrs. P. de S. Kularatne, H. L. de S. Kulatilake, E. Upasena, C. R. Weerasinghe, S. L. B. Kapukotuwa, E. P. A. Fernando (members) and Dr. Andreas Nell.

**Resignation.** Mr. S. B. Tennekoon has resigned his membership. He hopes to come back to us later.

#### Lecture on 'Fugitive Verses.'

Mr. Julius D. de Lanerolle delivered an entertaining lecture in Sinhalese to a small but interested audience on Tuesday Feb. 22 on Fugitive Verses. He illustrated his talk by reciting several "forgotten" verses of both ancient and modern poets. Prof. G. P. Malalasekera presided.

#### The Abeyratne Scholar.

Master N. B. S. Balalle, our Abeyratne Scholar, who is at Dharmaraja College, Kandy, was successful in the S. S. C. (Matric, Syllabus) Examination held in December 1943.

#### Wrestling & Ju Jutsu

The Wrestling & Ju Jutsu sections have now been expanded and new recruits are welcome. These classes are being held regularly on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays with Mr. R. D. Lankathilaka in charge.

It is proposed to organise a Saturday Class for members' sons who find it inconvenient to come on week days and members desirous of sending their children please communicate with the Secretary as only a limited number will be taken.

#### Personal.

Mr. M. Rafeek was successful at the Advocates' Intermediate Examination.

Mr. E. S. Amerasinghe (Sports Secretary), and Mr. K. C. de Silva were successful at the Advocates' Preliminary Examination with honours.

Mr. H. M. L. de Silva, Mr. C. S. Wijayarathne and Mr. W. W. Wimalachandra have also passed the Advocates' Preliminary Examination.

Mr. Milton Samarakkody was successful at the Proctors' Final Examination.

Mr. M. W. Gunawardene was successful at the Proctors' Intermediate Examination.

Mr. H. V. Ambewatte was successful at the Proctors' Preliminary Examination.

Mr. S. P. Jayasinghe, Asst. Station Master, C. G. R., Colombo Fort, has gone on transfer to Nanu-Oya as Station Master—a Special Class post of the Railway Clerical Service. Mr. E. Vandebona, of the Education Dept., Colombo, has been transferred to the Education Office, Galle.

Mr. O. K. de Silva, who was temporarily attached to the Information Dept., has joined the staff of the Elpitiya Branch of Ananda College.

Mrs. J. H. Perera, wife of Mr. J. H. Perera, of the C. P. R. C. Office, has given birth to triplets.

#### Marriages

1. Mr. I. W. W. Mabarana with Miss Caroline Maria.

2. Mr. P. Donald H. de Silva with Miss Sumana de Silva.

3. Mr. C. T. F. Fernando.

#### Obituary

Mr. Solomon de Silva, of Dunsinane, Pundaluoya, brother of the Hon. Mr. Geo E. de Silva, Minister of Health.

#### Lecture by Prof. Larua

Prof. B. M. Barua, of Calcutta University, delivered a lecture on "A bird's eye view of the history & civilization of Ceylon" at the Association headquarters at 5-30 p. m. on Sunday, March 19, 1944.

## NEW MEMBERS

7. 2. 44:—Messrs. H. Weerawickrama, C. G. R., Maradana. K. W. Fernando, Radio Technician, Slave Island. V. A. Jayasinghe, Health Visitor, C. M.C., Public Health Dept. Town Hall, Colombo. P. A. Victor de Silva, Revenue Inspector, Town Hall, Colombo. D. A. Wijayasingha (Jr.), S. F. O. Fire Services, Magazine Rd., Borella. Ivan Samarawickrama, Internal Purchase Officer, 56, Castle St., Borella. D. P. D. M. de Silva, Law Student, Ceylon Law College, Colombo. C. M. Dias, Rohini, Panadura. S. Jinarajadasa, 83 & 85, Maliban St., Colombo. Cyril A. Gunawardana, Govt. Electrical Dept., Colombo. Q. P. S. Dassanayake, St. Joseph's College, Colombo. R. Wilson Hegoda, Police Station, Colpetty. W. D. Fernando, Sri Pathmasiri, Havelock Town, Colombo. P. R. de Silva, Bottling Inspector of Excise, City Excise Station, Colpetty. Wijayapala Gunasekara, Proctor, Kosgoda.

14. 2. 44:—Messrs. L. Wijeyesekera, 20, Baillie St., Colombo. Peter P. Abeysekera, D. R. O., Kachcheri, Matara. Richard Dias, St. Joseph's College, Colombo. Peter Jayawardana, The Govt. Factory, Kolonnawa. J. P. Wickramatilake, Notary Public, Weliveriya, Gampaha. D. R. Perera, Overseer, C. M. C., Town Hall, Colombo. D. H. Weeratunga, G. P. O., Colombo. B. F. Perera, C. C. S., A. G. A., Kegalle. E. H. de Alwis, Chief Examiner, Education Dept., Colombo.

21. 2. 44:—Messrs. M. S. Fernando, Dept. of Govt. Electrical Undertakings, Colombo. Solomon de Silva, Dunsinane, Pundaluoya.

25-2-44:—Messrs. N. T. D. Kanakarathne, University of Ceylon, Colombo. W. E. Alwis Senarathne, 442, Dematageda, Colombo. P. Samarawickrama, No. 4, 4th Cross Street, Colombo. M. Chandrasoma, C. C. S., A.G.A. (E) Gampaha. Newton Peiris, of Peiris & Co., Armour Street, Colombo.

(Total Membership 852)