



THE BUDDHIST

“*Sila Pannānato Jayam*”

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THE SOULBURY REPORT

The very comprehensive report issued by the Soulbury Commission on the constitution of Ceylon is, needless to say, a most important document. Its main recommendations are unlikely to be modified to any great extent and if as is likely, the Constitution it envisages is adopted it will determine the future government of this country for at least a decade. In a world ruled by speed and where everything is in a state of great ferment, that would be a long period of time. It is very necessary, therefore, that the people of Ceylon as a whole—not merely the journalists and the politicians, actual and potential—should acquaint themselves with the full implications of the report and it is very much to be hoped that political associations will not just fight about various aspects of the report in their own narrow coteries but will also take steps to educate the people at large with what all this means to them. Our political education is in its infancy—if even that, perhaps it would be truer to say it is yet unborn—and here is a very good opportunity to remedy the present very unsatisfactory condition.

Opinion about numerous matters in the report is bound to vary from one extreme to another; there are those who will say that the recommendations for our future Constitution do not go far enough while others will equally maintain that they are too revolutionary. Amidst all this, it would be worthwhile remembering that we are a subject people and that nothing can take the place of our lost freedom. Short of freedom all other concessions must be mere palliatives. Apart from its recommendations, which we not being a political journal are not competent to discuss, the historical background and the present position which form the context in which the future is discussed have, on the whole, been

satisfactorily stated. The charge, for instance, that the Sinhalese Buddhist majority has exploited its position to gain power to which it was not entitled and prostituted race and religion for its own ends has been fully examined and refuted.

Not all such allegations however have been equally accurately investigated. The animadversions about the workings of the Public Trustee's Department so as to secure certain advantages to the Buddhists at the expense of the general taxpayer have not been completely laid low. The Commissioners have evidently not quite appreciated the circumstances that brought the Public Trustee's Department into existence. They have perhaps forgotten that when the British took over the government of the land Buddhism was the State religion. It has been authoritatively stated that had the British not solemnly undertaken to maintain and protect the interests of Buddhism the Kandyan Convention would never have been possible. It is equally correct to say that quite soon after the British occupation this solemn pledge was violated, the Buddhist religious institutions were despoiled of their extensive possessions and Buddhists completely left at the mercy of those who sought to destroy the national faith. To give but a single instance, land from the Dalada Maligawa and situated with a few hundred yards of that sacred edifice was alienated and given for the erection of a Christian church. It is an unpleasant chapter in our history and one that we would fain see closed, but when responsible people like the Soulbury Commissioners make wrong criticisms which affect our future they needs must be challenged. We hope to return to this subject on some later occasion.

Meanwhile, we should like to draw attention to a quotation made in the

Report which should have been inscribed there in letters of gold: “*Quid leges sine moribus Vane proficiunt?*” which translated means “What do empty laws avail without character?” Here is the crux of the problem: that no measure of freedom or reform can be worked irrespective of the people who have ultimately to implement it. The present turmoil in many parts of the world is ample evidence of that fact. A war has been fought and won, numerous charters drawn up and sacred pronouncements made, but the spirit of greed and ill-will that causes war is still rampant and the world is threatened once more with sorrow and agony.

Many centuries ago Asoka realised this as we learn from his inscriptions. He instituted, therefore, a scheme of spiritual regeneration in his realm which went by the name of *dharmavijaya* (the victory of virtue) to make the people righteous and holy. His example was followed by many others, some of them kings of Ceylon, as our chronicles testify.

But in this country, spiritual values have now long been neglected; there is a catastrophic deterioration of character both in high places and in low which spells woe for the future. Dastardly crimes are on the increase, petty crimes are the order of the day everywhere so much so that in many villages life is becoming impossible to the peaceful citizen. The public services are deep-dyed with bribery and corruption; there is a bankruptcy of leadership either because those who should lead have become followers or because they do not feel they have the spiritual strength to lead. It may perhaps be said that this state of affairs is a reflection of the unsatisfactory condition of things everywhere in the world, but it would be poor consolation to feel that we are no worse than the others. The position is too appalling for complacency to be possible. The task is primarily for spiritual leadership. But who will provide such leadership and how?

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEM

By Bhikkhu Dhammapala

The problem which in psychology exceeds all other problems and which ultimately determines the school of thought is the problem of the arising of thought, the origin of knowledge. Knowledge (*nana*) is of many kinds. It may be perception (*sanna*), i.e. knowledge in so far as it is "before the eye" (*paccakkha*), perceptible to the senses, a mental reaction to the physical reception of the sense object (*arammana*) by the internal sense organ (*ajjhattika ayatana*). It is the assimilation of sense impressions. This kind of knowledge is confined to the characteristics which are consistent with the organ's own nature (*salakkhana*). This simple perception (*sanna*) does not include any interpretation of the particular, even though particulars are perceived. The interpretation of the same belongs to a higher class of knowledge in which occur mental differentiations (*sankhara*). Perception therefore cannot be properly called knowledge; "it precedes knowledge". It is more like a reflection on the sensitive plate of a photographic camera. But then the camera does not know, and its "perception" does not grow out into awareness or consciousness. To constitute knowledge (*nana*) as consciousness (*vinmana*) physical contact must be accompanied by mental contact, so that a thought requires three constituents: the external object, the internal organ and the proper bringing together in connection of object and organ. This bringing together is not a simple contact, but produces knowledge, like fire is not the outcome of simple contact of steel and flint but of the friction or striking.

Now the problem of knowledge is, what constitutes the difference between a simple contact of subject and object, and a contact of the two which constitutes knowledge? In other words why should some contact of a sense-organ with a sense-object constitute knowledge of the same, and other contact remain mere physical. The answer will have to be found in the conception of "contact" (*phassa*), for if thought arises there are three constituents of contact (*tinnan sangati phasso*) e.g. in the case of sight, the eye organ (*cakkhu*), the form of the object (*rupa*) and eye-consciousness (*cakkhu-vinnana*).

Is it the eye which goes to the object?
Is it the object which comes to the eye?

Is it consciousness or mind which brings the two together?

Advaita-Vedanta, the Indian philosophy of non-duality, holds that the sense goes out to meet the sound-producing object; for, they say, if sound itself came to meet the sense-organ it would be impossible to distinguish the distance and direction or to locate the source. But then it may be objected that this going forth of the sense-organ to meet the sound at the place of its origination would seem to postulate the prior knowledge of that sound. Distance and direction moreover may be gauged from the intensity of the contact at the moment of perception. Without calling the movement of the mind in space absurd or impossible, there seems to be no need of the

extraordinary phenomenon of the mind going in search for the unknown which would reduce the process of thought to a pure accident. The facts of logic and science, especially deductive reasoning, prove that thinking is not accidental always. The activity of the mind does not always consist in collecting impressions at random, neither in passively receiving impressions when they happen to come.

As far as passive reception by the organs constitutes perception, some modern theories, that influences from objects reach our senses in the form of light-waves and sound-waves affecting the eye and the ear, are quite acceptable as accounts of the effects in the organs. But one should not overlook the fact that those effects in the senses are wholly disproportionate to the original objects. Even subjectivists cannot deny the fact that the small picture on the retina of the eye is quite different in size and quality from what appears to be the external object in space. If the external object is a delusion, its image on the retina still has to be explained. An external stimulus may produce a change in the physiological organs, but that does not explain the fact of knowledge, for the same stimulus might be received by dead organisms, in which case of course, no knowledge results, the effects being limited to the sense-organs.

A Sense Impression

Earlier schools of thought liked to speak of the mind as a "tabula rasa", a clean slate ready to receive impressions through the different senses. But as those impressions are physical the problem remains how the physical can become changed in the mental. If it is answered that consciousness effects the union between subject and object, it should be remembered that consciousness only arises after the perception of the object. Consciousness does not bring about the conjunction, but is the result of the conjunction. If perception would be brought about by consciousness, it would be merely a kind of reflection; while perception is admitted to be "knowledge that is not derived through the instrumentality of other knowledge" (*manakaranakan nana*). It is above all a sense impression (*patighasamphassaja*). If perception could be also internal perception, it would be equivalent to admitting that the mind could reach its object independently of the senses.

What is sometimes called internal perception is no perception (*sanna*) at all, but rather intuition which is a much higher class of knowledge (*nana*).

The greatest problem is the fact of self-reflection where the mind is said to become its own object. This almost necessitates, it would appear, the existence of some permanent entity, existing even prior to the action of reflecting, like a person must exist before his image can be reflected in a mirror.

All these problems are based on the misconception of action. If even actions like the flash of lightning can be recorded and fixed by a photographic camera, the mind and mental reflexion should not be

recorded at the same time. If the self reflexion is one of past action the problem becomes one of memory or imagination. All this does not require a mind consisting of some subtle material. The mind is rather the action of minding; the thought is the action of thinking. This does not agree with Russell who considers matter and mind as but different arrangements of the same neutral particulars, neither with Titchener who holds the psychological and the physical as two parallel aspects of the same experience.

The activity of the mind does not consist in collecting impressions from outside, neither in receiving them when they happen to come, "converting them into knowledge or experience and adjusting them to the environment." For changes in the physiological organs due to external stimuli take place even in dead organisms without producing however resultant knowledge. The psychological problem arises with the question of how the physical can end in the mental, as if the mental is the terminus of the physical process which precedes. Only when it is realised that the activity of the mind, not as thought and awareness, but as an embryonic "minding" as repulsion or attraction, is present from the very initial stages, a thought will be understood not as arising at the moment of awareness but as a culmination of a very long unconscious process. It is the dialectic process which tries to see the thought either in matter or in mind, till the problem is solved in the doctrine of *anatta*, which must be understood not as a selfless entity (for that would be *atta* again) but as a realisation that the differentiation between self and non-self is a delusion. Similarly, the differentiation between mind and matter is based on a delusion for they appear never as separate, isolate entities.

Matter is material force as experienced in the senses and mind is the experience of those material forces. Thus one depends on the other in conditioned arising. Such is the solution of the psychological problem, which is solved not by the outgoing subjective mind, not by the incoming external object, not by the mind bringing the two in contact, but by mental action arising from factors which in an undeveloped state are found already in inorganic matter. Where matter is nothing but extension (*pathavi*) which is impenetrability, solidity and isolation, a nucleus for selfishness and repulsion,—nothing but cohesion (*apo*) which is attraction, affinity, co-operation, a nucleus for craving and desire,—hence nothing but friction which generates heat, temperature, calorificity (*tejo*), a nucleus for the heat of all passions,—and an attempt to overcome the dialectic opposition of attraction and repulsion by striving to establish a law of proportion thus oscillating (*vayo*) between appearance and disappearance, a nucleus for all fickleness, we actually see there already the arising of perception in an embryonic state, maybe as a purely physical reaction, but also as a necessary condition for further development in a conscious state.

DEVAMITTA DHARMAPALA THE BUDDHIST REFORMER

By Lt.-Col. Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha D. Litt., M.L.A., Bar-at-Law, Former Vice-Chancellor, Patna University; Ex-Finance Minister, Behar, and Editor, Hindustan Review

One of the most interesting personalities I was privileged to be friendly with was Devamitta Dharmapala—a famous religious reformer, and a bhikkhu from Ceylon; but who justly regarded himself as a Beharee also, because of his long and intimate association with the province of Bihar.

Born at Colombo in 1864, he died at Benares in 1933, at the fairly advanced age of sixty-nine. A member of a very respectable Sinhalese family of Colombo, son of an immensely wealthy father, who was the sole proprietor of a large and flourishing concern dealing in high-class furniture, Dharmapala, at an early age, left home to become a Buddhist bhikkhu, and spent over fifty years abroad—in India, Europe and America—in advancing the cause of Buddhism, and working for its revival in India. He came to India early in the nineties of the last century, when as a young man of 26, he had already distinguished himself, in Ceylon, by his determined efforts in the cause of Buddhism, and also as an advanced social reformer. He left at that early age all prospects of material advancement, and dedicated himself to the work of propagating Buddhism in the land of its birth. His visit to India was thus a turning point in his life. The neglected condition of the famous Buddhist temple at Buddha-Gaya—where the Master became enlightened—made him organise the Maha-Bodhi Society for the purpose, amongst others, of recovering the temple from the Hindoo Mahants' control. This attempt on his part led to a troubled, and rather tempestuous, chapter in the life of the great worker. These were civil and criminal cases between him and the Mahanth—Dharmapala figuring as complainant or accused, or as plaintiff or defendant, as the case might be; but the decisions in almost all of them went against him. The temple was not recovered; it is still in the Mahanth's custody, and under his control. Dharmapala's moral claim pitted itself against the Mahanth's long possession, if not legal title, and was defeated in the law courts. But the struggle, which was a long-drawn one, opened Dharmapala's eyes to new problems and, heroic fighter that he was, he faced them in a courageous manner, highly creditable to him.

Dharmapala sprang into international fame by his addresses, on Buddhism, at the first Parliament of Religions—held in Chicago, in September, 1893—just fifty years back. He then travelled in Europe, and everywhere his personality and persuasive eloquence evoked the highest admiration. By condemning old but unmeaning rites and practices he made many enemies. But he heeded nothing, except the goal before him. Later, he lost the favour of the Government, in this country, and was interned in Calcutta for about six years (1914—1920). But work was life to Dharmapala, and as soon as he was set free, he renewed his numerous public activities. He edited half-a-dozen papers, all of which he himself had established. He wrote articles, gave public lectures, and attended to a voluminous correspondence with his many friends in three continents. He was imbued with progressive ideas, and a knowledge of the modern sciences was regarded by him as an essential requisite for a

cultured man. He sent some young men to Japan for a training in industrial arts, and was thus a pioneer in this then neglected field, both in India and Ceylon. It is by no means surprising that his strenuous activities and advanced ideals should have provoked a fairly large section of the public into opposition. He had to fight incessantly, but he had the soldier's reward at the end. He won in the end; and today his name has passed into a legend, and Ceylon reads into it a profound significance in the annals of her national life.

Social Reformer

But while working in India Dharmapala did not sever his connection with his native land, and continued to play the role of a social reformer in Ceylon. To mention but a few of his activities: the practice of assuming European names, dress, customs and manners, and even speech, by the Sinhalese, was in vogue amongst the middle classes in Dharmapala's time. The Sinhalese language also was studiously avoided by the Ceylonese, by reason of their inferiority complex. Dharmapala himself had been named Don David, which he dropped becoming known thereafter as Dharmapala.

He was also largely responsible for the use of sari, by Sinhalese ladies, in preference to European costume, which was fashionable at that time. Apart from these, he worked systematically for the revival of the ancient culture of Ceylon, although there was much opposition to his patriotic endeavours, the more so as he was no respecter of persons, and denounced in scathing terms what he disapproved. This sometimes alienated his friends who resented his open criticism of their conduct. But gradually they not only appreciated his sincerity, and learnt to admire it, but ultimately came round, adopted his views, and acted up to them. In India also Dharmapala carried on a systematic campaign for the cultural renaissance of the country, which (in his opinion) was associated with the revival of Buddhism, a cause to which he had dedicated his life. To carry out his objects, Dharmapala founded numerous institutions. They included a college and a hospital in Colombo, besides many schools all over the island. He started a weaving institute and by awarding scholarships managed to send Sinhalese students to Japan to study industrial arts there. In 1891, he founded in Calcutta the Maha Bodhi Society, which is still subsisting, and doing good work through the medium of its highly useful journal—*The Maha Bodhi*. He admired the ancient Indian architecture, and desired that modern buildings in the country should approximate to the standard of ancient Indian ideal. The Mulagandha Kuti Vihara (at Sarnath, close to Benares) which is justly regarded as an historic Buddhist temple, on the soil of India, was thus the crystallisation of his ideals in the field of ancient Indian architecture.

In India too Dharmapala's achievements were of no small account. Sarnath, close to Benares, the historic site where the Lord Buddha, for the first time, preached the gospel of 'Enlightenment' and proclaimed ideas which have revolutionised the mind and culture of Eastern

Asia, lay in utter neglect. Dharmapala built here, in 1931, the now famous Mulagandha Kuti Vihara, and restored the place to some of its pristine glories. A generous and broad-minded Englishman, Mr. B. L. Broughton, gave the sum of Rs. 10,000 to the Maha Bodhi Society for painting the walls of this modern Buddhist temple with scenes from the life of the Buddha; but he made it a condition of the gift that a Japanese Buddhist artist should be invited to do the work. Accordingly, a few months after the death of Dharmapala, Mr. Kosetsu Nosu came over from Japan to India, to do the frescoes. His work has been very favourably commented on by connoisseurs of art, and there is little doubt that Mr. Kosetsu's frescoes are significant of the growing friendly relations between cultured circles in India and Japan, in matters relating to religious art. At Gaya, too, Dharmapala erected a rest-house for the Buddhists, and in Calcutta he created a very important centre of Buddhist activity in the shape of the fine Dharma Rajika Chaitya Vihara.

One of the most important achievements of the closing period of Dharmapala's life was the establishment of a place for the ordination of Buddhist bhikkhus, at Sarnath. Although India was the home of Buddhism, yet even this simple facility for those who wanted to become Buddhists did not exist anywhere in this country, and one wishing to do so, and to enter the Buddhist sangha, had to travel all the way to Burma or Ceylon. The inauguration of this institution was, therefore, an historic occasion. It was attended by all the chief high priests from Ceylon, who mustered strong to mark the opening of an institution like this, on the soil of India, centuries after the last one had disappeared. He also established a branch of the Maha Bodhi Society in London. Only one year before his death, Dharmapala became a fully ordained Bhikkhu, and retired from active life.

Such, in brief, was the life of this great religious leader and social reformer, whom many Buddhist countries now honour and revere, for his devotion, earnestness and zeal in the cause of the revival of Buddhism, and enthusiasm for cultural renaissance in India and Ceylon.

Mrs. Mary Foster

The story of the life of Dharmapala will not be complete without a reference to Mrs. Mary Foster, of Hawaii, who in return for spiritual help received from him, most generously seconded his efforts with her money. By far the larger part of the money for carrying out Dharmapala's various schemes came not from Asiatic countries, but strangely from this generous and large-hearted American lady, whom he had met while returning from the Parliament of Religions held in Chicago, in 1893. She gave a large sum to Dharmapala, who had also a fairly large amount of money of his own. But Mrs. Foster was the benefactress of the Maha Bodhi Society to the extent of about eight lakhs of rupees. There is no doubt that the widespread knowledge of, and interest in, Buddhism, in modern India, at present, is the direct result of the assiduous efforts made by Dharmapala for its propagation and rehabilitation through the Maha Bodhi Society.

S. Witharana Rs. 2; Mr. N. P. J. Perera Rs. 2; Mr. A. D. Perera Rs. 2; Mrs. M. K. Jayawardene Rs. 4; Mr. D. H. Mahindapala Rs. 2; Mr. G. C. D. V. Gunawardene Rs. 2; Mr. G. D. Alwis Rs. 2; Mr. E. R. Samarasekera Rs. 2; Mr. M. R. Perera Rs. 2; Mr. E. Kandiah Rs. 2; Mr. H. Cabral Rs. 2; Mr. H. B. Gooneratne Rs. 2; Mr. P. M. Dabare Rs. 2.50; Mr. W. R. Dharmadasa Rs. 2; Mr. D. A. Jinoris Appuhamy Rs. 2; Mr. C. A. Wijesekera Rs. 2; Mr. D. F. Gurusinghe Rs. 2; Mr. C. W. Dharmasena Re. 1; Mr. P. Newton Perera Re. 1; Mr. A. Udugampola Re. 1; G. S. Jayaweera Re. 1; Mr. C. B. Fernando Re. 1; Mr. D. M. Gunasekera Re. 1; Mr. S. Thirunathan Re. 1; Mr. L. J. Fernando Re. 1; Mr. S. V. Fernando Re. 1; Mr. A. A. Senanayake Re. 1; Mr. L. R. Kitulgoda Re. 1; Mr. M. A. Dharmaseela Rs. 1.50; Mr. S. D. H. Dharmasena Re. 1; Mr. H. W. Perera Re. 1; Mr. A. Jayasooriya Re. 1; Mr. D. C. Karunaratne Re. 1; Mr. G. B. Munasinghe Rs. 2; Mr. D. M. Gunasekera Re. 1; Mr. M. W. Perera Re. 1; Mr. Daya Gunawardene Re. 1; Mr. K. J. A. Perera Re. 1; Mr. S. A. Piyasena Re. 1; Mr. L. S. Alwis Rs. 2; Mr. Clarence Perera Rs. 2. (Rs. 101/-).

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Proceeds of an Oriental Concert organised by the Social Activities Secretary Rs. 2,000/-

(Total Rs. 23,409.75)

OMENS AND BUDDHISM

By John M. Seneviratna

The Sinhalese—both educated and illiterate, Buddhist as well as Christian—are great believers in omens, so much so that it may be said without exaggeration that omens colour or influence to a great degree the daily lives of the bulk of the people of this country.

Some of these omens have a great antiquity behind them, and can easily be traced back to the period of the life-time of the Buddha, that is, about 2,500 years ago.

Bad Omens

First in regard to bad or evil omens. Take, for instance, the belief that **things gnawed by mice or rats were unlucky**. Tradition says that at Rajagaha dwelt a very rich Brahmin who was superstitious. A mouse gnawed a suit of clothes of his, which was lying by in a chest. One day after bathing himself all over, he called for this suit, and then was told of the mischief which the mouse had done.

"If these clothes remain in the house," thought he to himself, "they'll bring ill-luck. Such an ill-omened thing is sure to bring a curse. It is out of the ques-

tion to give them to any of my children or servants; for whosoever has them will bring misfortune on all around him. I must have them thrown away in a charnel-ground, but how? I cannot hand them to servants, for they might covet and keep them, to the ruin of my house. My son must take them."

So he called his son, and telling him the whole matter bade him take his charge on a stick, without touching the clothes with his hand, and fling them in a charnel-ground. It is in this connection that the Buddha was led to narrate the *Mangala Jataka* (No. 87).

As for the unlucky or inauspicious persons, animals or things a person sees or meets, especially when first starting upon a journey or enterprise; it is recorded in the *Kurunga-Miga-Jataka* (No. 206) that a hunter, on starting, at dawn, sees a bird flapping its wings, and he desists from going forth immediately, owing to the bad omen.

In the *Satapatta Jataka* (No. 279) a man meets a jackal and regards the occurrence as of evil omen.

In the *Vessantara Jataka* (No. 547) Maddi thinks to herself: "Last night I saw a bad dream. I will collect my fruits and roots and get me betimes to the hermitage." Trembling, she searches for the roots and fruits. But the spade falls from her hand, the basket falls from her shoulder, her right eye goes a-throbbing, and she is greatly perturbed by the evil omens.

The sight of a Chandala [man of the lowest caste] at morn is held to forebode ill-luck for the rest of the day. Vide the *Matanga Jataka* (No. 497) as well as the *Citta-Sambhuta Jataka* (No. 498).

In the *Sarabhanga Jataka* (No. 522) the sight of an ascetic is likewise held to be of evil omen.

Good Omens

Note the purport of verse 15 in the *Setalihini Sandesaya*:—

නල මුදු සුවද පිරි කුඹු මිසුරු අඹ මෙ	සි
සල මෙල කුසුම ලිය පිය තෙපල රත් කෙ	සි
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Macready's translation of the verse reads:—

“Look at thine outset for auspicious signs
E'en better than the *nekata*, white fans
Waving, umbrellas white, king elephants,
White flowers in fullest bloom, and sweet-voiced maids,
Gold pitchers, gentle breezes perfumed,
O'erflowing jars, peacocks and mango fruits.”

One of the oldest superstitions amongst the Sinhalese, which has persisted down through the centuries for over 2,000 years, is that anyone entering a house should place his right foot first inside the threshold, the contrary being held to be an unlucky omen;

The importance attached to this requirement in the olden days will be apparent from the circumstance that King Kavan Tissa, father of Dutugemunu, in inviting the brotherhood of the bhikkhus for the Namogiving festival of his son, stipulates *inter alia* that “they shall put the right foot first inside the threshold” (*Mahavamsa*, Ch. 22, verse 68).

References in the *Jatakas* to good omens are fairly numerous.

In the *Satapatta Jataka* (No. 279) the sight of a crane induces a man to cry out: “Good luck! Here's a lucky bird! Now there is a good omen for me!”

In the *Sarabhanga Jataka* (No. 522) a jar of water is held to be a good omen. And in the *Kunala Jataka* (No. 536), a newly-wed bride meets a pregnant woman and it is declared: “It will be a happy omen for the girl. She will be blest with numerous sons and daughters.”

The Buddha's Condemnation

What was the Buddha's attitude towards these superstitions and superstitious practices?

There is direct evidence in the *Jatakas* themselves showing conclusively that the Buddha, not merely did *not* believe in omens, but also that he did not fail, whenever the opportunity presented itself, to condemn the superstitious practice in others and to dissuade them from the error of their ways.

Reference has been made above to the superstition that **things gnawed by mice or rats were unlucky**, and to the story of the young man who had been directed by his father to fling away in a charnel-ground a mice-eaten suit of clothes of his. The sequel to the story is interesting as illustrating the Buddha's uncompromising views in regard to the belief in omens.

The young man, it would appear, carefully carrying the clothes as his father had bidden him, on the end of his stick—just as though he had a house-snake to carry—came into the charnel-ground, at the entrance to which the Buddha happened to be seated.

“What are you doing, young Brahmin?” asked the Buddha.

“This suit of clothes,” was the reply, “having been gnawed by mice, is like ill-luck personified, and as deadly as though steeped in venom. Wherefore my father, fearing that a servant might covet and retain the clothes, has sent me with them. I promised that I would throw them away and bathe afterwards. And that's the errand that has brought me here.”

“Throw the suit away, then,” said the Buddha, and the young Brahmin did so.

“They will just suit me,” said the Buddha, as he picked up the fate-fraught clothes before the young man's very eyes, regardless of the latter's earnest warnings and repeated entreaties to him not to take them. And the Buddha departed in the direction of the bamboo grove.

Home in all haste ran the young Brahmin, to tell his father how the Sage

Gotama had declared that the clothes would just suit him, and had persisted, in spite of all warnings to the contrary, in taking the suit away with him to the bamboo grove.

“Those clothes,” thought the Brahmin to himself, “are bewitched and accursed. Even the Sage Gotama cannot wear them without destruction befalling him. And that would bring me into disrepute. I will give the Sage abundance of other garments and get him to throw that suit away.”

So with a large number of robes he started in company of his son for the bamboo grove. When he came upon the Buddha, he stood respectfully on one side and spoke thus:

“Is it indeed true, as I hear, that you picked up a suit of clothes in the charnel-ground?”

“Quite true, Brahmin.”

“That suit is accursed. If you make use of them, they will destroy you. If you stand in need of clothes, take these and throw away that suit.”

The Buddha's reply was the narration of the *Mangala Jataka* (No. 87), which he concluded by adding:

“Good enough for us are the rags that are flung away in charnel-grounds. We have no belief in superstitions about luck, which are not approved by Buddhas, Pacceka Buddhas, or Bodhisattas. And, therefore, no wise man ought to be a believer in luck.”

And the Buddha further declared:

“Whoso renounces omens, dreams and signs,
That man, from superstition's errors freed,
Shall triumph over the paired Depravities
And o'er attachments to the end of time.”

THE BEE AND THE LOTUS

By Bhikku Piyadassi

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භා! භනත! භනත! නලිකිං ගජ උජජභාර—

“Night will pass, the fair dawn will come,
The sun will rise, the lotuses will laugh—
Thus mused the bee caught in the calyx of a lotus:
Oh! doom! doom! an elephant tore up the lotus plant!”

It was evening. The sun was setting slowly in the west. The birds were hastening to their nests while beasts were prowling for prey. Now a bee,—a little

busy bee—was buzzing this way and that, seeking a little honey to still its hunger. At last it saw a pond full of glowing lotuses, and with great joy did the bee rest on the calyx of a tender little lotus to feast on a trifle of its hidden nectar. The bee did not harm the beauty of the lotus; it only drank the honey. But, alas! with the setting of the sun the lotus closed its silky petals, thus trapping its hungry visitor. Yet, the little bee was not without hope. These were the thoughts that flashed through its heart as the poor creature lay snared in the dainty lotus-prison.

“The night will pass away, yielding place to the fair dawn, the sun will rise, and this lotus will expand, and so shall

I quit this prison house to join my companions.”

But, lo! the unexpected happens. The lordly elephant, king of the forest, wends his way along the path that leads to the pond. He drinks his fill and splashes the cool water over his massive flanks. The questing sensitive trunk scents the luscious lotus, the very lotus in which, our little errant bee, lay captive! Instantly the mighty beast tears up the lotus plant. And, crunch,—leaves, flower and bee disappear into that vast maw! And the little bee, quite contrary to its wishful optimism, thus went to its death.

Such is life! one moment here then lost for ever. Who can say with certainty

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that one will live to see the morrow? All is fleeting.

The flower's beauty, the bird's music and the bee's hum. All meetings end in separation, while life ends in death. And we, in this mysterious universe, live, love, and laugh; and 'it is easy enough to be pleasant when life flows along like a song'. But when sorrow comes it comes not in single spies but in battalions; and then the whole world appears to be but one picture of pain. Still the man who views life with a detached outlook, who sees things in their proper perspective,

whose cultural training urges him to be calm and unperturbed under all life's vicissitudes, who can smile when everything goes dead wrong,—he, indeed is man worthwhile.

The world in which we have taken our temporary abode is like unto a large lotus out of which we all, men and women,—gather honey with strenuous struggle. We build up wishful hopes, and plan for the morrow. But one day, sudden perhaps, and unexpected, there comes the inevitable hour when Death the elephant,—*Maccu Mara*—tears up our lives, and

brings our hopes to naught.

Therefore said the sages of yore:
 "The eight great mountains and the seven seas,
 The sun, the gods, who sit and rule o'er these;
 Thou, I, the universe, must pass away,
 Time conquers all: why dote on Maya's play?"

*This is the eighth and the last verse of the *Bramarastaka* by the Indian poet Sri Samkara, believed to be a contemporary of Kalidasa, the most renowned poet of India.

INDIA PAYS HOMAGE TO THE VEN. SRI DEVAMITTA DHARMAPALA AND MRS. MARY FOSTER

The birthday anniversaries of the late Ven. Sri Devamitta Dharmapala, the founder of the Maha Bodhi Society, and of the late Mahopasika Mary E. Foster, the benefactress of the society, were celebrated this year in Calcutta on September 17th.

The Sri Dharmarajika Vihara in College Square was beautifully decorated for the occasion and the religious part of the ceremony consisted of mangalacharan, offering of flowers, incense and lights at the shrine, a dana to the bhikkhus and the feeding of the poor, and the offering of merit to the departed.

In the evening, there was a public meeting at the Buddhist Hall at 4-A, Bankim Chatterjee Street which was largely attended. At the request of the Ven. Neluwe Jinaratana, the bhikkhu-in-charge of the Society in Calcutta, the Mayor of Calcutta, Mr. Debendra Nath Mookerjee, presided, and among those present were Mr. Hem Chandra Nasker, an ex-Mayor of Calcutta, and several aldermen and councillors of the Corporation of Calcutta.

Among those who spoke on the life of the Ven. Dharmapala and his services to the country were Dr. B. M. Barua, Mr. Kashab Chandra Gupta, Mr. P. K. Das, Mr. G. K. Narendra, Mr. Jyotish Chandra Ghosh and others.

A proposal was made by the Ven'ble Neluwe Jinaratana, to perpetuate the memory of the Ven. Dharmapala by giving his name to a road in Calcutta and the following resolution was unanimously passed:—

"It is resolved that this meeting of the citizens of Calcutta appreciates the immense services rendered by the late Venerable Sri Devamitta Dharmapala (better known as Venerable Anagarika Dharmapala) to the cause of social welfare and to the moral uplift and cultural advancement of the people of Calcutta in particular, and of India as a whole, by founding schools, hospitals, orphanages, ashrams, libraries and cultural centres and that in recognition of his services the Corporation of Calcutta be requested to name a public thoroughfare of this city as "Dharmapala Road" so that the same may remain as a lasting mark of honour to the memory of this great man, who made Calcutta the headquarters of his activities and worked there for well over forty years."

The president, in supporting the resolution, said that it was the duty of them all to honour a great man who had done so much for the country and the

people. The Ven. Dharmapala spent the greater part of his life in Calcutta, and it was but meet and proper that, in keeping with conventional customs, the name of this great social reformer should be given to a road or street of this city. It would really be an honour to this city to have a road named after Dharmapala and the sooner it was done the better, but the mere naming of a road after that great man was not sufficient to perpetuate his memory. The work that he had done and the numerous institutions that he had founded would remain as fitting memorials to his great name for a long time. But as a token of admiration of the services he had rendered to the country and in appreciation of his greatness, he hoped that before long Calcutta would possess a road bearing the revered name of Dharmapala.

The president also commended the Ven. Jinaratana for bringing forward the proposal.

AT BENARES

The birthday anniversaries of the great pioneer of Buddhist revival in the present age and founder of the Maha Bodhi Society, Anagarika Dharmapala, and of Mrs. Mary Foster, of Honolulu, the benefactress of the Maha Bodhi Society, were celebrated at the Mulagandhakuti Vihara, Sarnath, Benares, under the presidency of Sjt. Babu Sampurnanandaji, ex-Education Minister, U.P.

Bhikkhu J. Kashyapa, Lecturer in Pali, Benares Hindu University, spoke on the importance of the cultural and spiritual relationship established between India and Ceylon by the illustrious son of Asoka, the great Prince Mahinda, who went to Ceylon as a Buddhist missionary monk and established the noble doctrine in the island; and on the greatness of Anagarika Dharmapala, who, born in Ceylon, dedicated his life for the regeneration of Buddhism in India.

Pandit Bhikkhu Hammalawa Saddhassana, Messrs. K. S. Sundaram, Girish Chandra Barua and Sharda Misra, a student of the Maha Bodhi High School, and others spoke on the life of Anagarika Dharmapala.

The meeting ended with a short and impressive address by the president, who stressed upon the necessity of the revival and growth of a centre like Sarnath, and appealed to the people of Benares to afford the best cooperation in this noble mission of Anagarika Dharmapala.

A tea party was given to the distinguished guests at the Mulagandhakuti Vihara Library.

AT BOMBAY

Under the auspices of the Maha Bodhi Society the birthday anniversaries of the Ven. Devamitta Dharmapala and of Mrs. Mary Foster were celebrated at Bahujana Vihara, Bombay.

Mr. B. R. Barua, B. Sc., A. M. E. C. E. (Lond.) presided over the meeting. It was an international gathering composed of Hindus and Buddhists representing different nationalities. Among the speakers were D. Sasanasi Thera, Messrs. C. Tiranagama, H. G. Halgamuwa, K. G. Dinorishamy, Kashinath Hari Khoth, and K.A. James de Silva.

In his presidential remarks Mr. Barua said that he had the great privilege of knowing the Ven. Dharmapala for a very long time. "He was loved and respected by the Buddhists throughout the world. The twentieth century did not see a better Buddhist leader whose sole aim was to win humanity for Buddhism".

The Sinhalese Association of Bombay was responsible for arranging this successful meeting.

COLOMBO'S TRIBUTE

A public meeting under the auspices of the Maha Bodhi Society was held on September 17, at the Central Y.M.B.A. hall, Borella, to commemorate the birthday of Sri Devamitta Dhammapala and that of Mary Foster Robinson.

Sir Waitilingam Duraiswamy, the Speaker of the State Council, presided and besides the large numbers of bhikkhus present, accommodated on the platform and occupying the chairs of honour were Kiriwattudewe Pannasara Nayake Thera and Dr. P. Vajiragnana Thera.

There were several speakers including Mr. George E. de Silva, Minister of Health, Mr. N. Nadarajah, K.C., Sir Waitilingam Duraiswamy, Dr. A. Ratnapala and Dr. C. W. W. Kannangara, Minister of Education.

All the speakers paid tributes to the life and work of Sri Devamitta Dhammapala, and said that he was a great national hero, who had laid the foundation of national regeneration. He was also the one man who took the message of Buddha to all parts of the world and devoted his life to the revival of Buddhism in India.

COLOMBO Y. M. B. A. NEWS

New Members.—2.10.45

Mr. K. A. Peiris, C.G.R. Transporta-
tion Dept., Maradana; Mr. H. R. H.
Ahamat, Govt. Live Stock Inspector,
Quarantine Dept., Slave Island; Mr. P.
G. Piyadasa, New Southern Drapery
Stores, Ward Place, Colombo; Mr. W.
Dixon de Silva, Office of the Commis-
sioner of Motor Transport, Colombo; and
Mr. H. H. Abeysena, No. 7, Vauxhall
Lane, Slave Island.

9.10.45

Mr. P. Raymond Perera, Supervisor of
Buildings, P.W.D., Colombo; Mr. K. H.
Perera, The United Planters Co. of
Ceylon Ltd, Contract Dept., 288, Union
Place, Colombo; Mr. D. M. W. S. P.
Yapa, No. 203, Messenger Street, Col-
ombo; Mr. D. P. Levangama, 118,
Armour Street, Colombo; Mr. M. G.
Mendis, Ayurvedic Practitioner, D.I.M.S.
Ceylon, 161, Ferry Street, Hulftsdorp,
Colombo; Mr. K. Gomis Fernando, 110
Armour Street, Colombo; Mr. M. D.
Munidasa, 116, Armour Street, Colombo;
Mr. S. G. Munasinha, 15, Dematagoda
Place, Colombo; Mr. T. M. Cassim, 6,
Dissanayake, Wesley College, Colombo;
Mr. A. L. B. K. Perera, Quarantine
Cotta Terrace, Borella; Mr. P. H.
Office, Borella; and Mr. J. C. F. de Silva,
Bacteriological Institute, Baseline Road,
Borella.

16.10.45

Mr. K. C. Perera, Education Office,
Colombo; Mr. H. E. R. Perera, "Siri-
pela", Welikada, Rajagiriya; and Mr.
A. H. T. Dharmadasa, 264, 266, Vauxhall
Street, Colombo.

23.10.45

Mr. A. Pathmanathan, 42, Cotta Road,
Borella.

Personal

Our congratulations to the following
members who figured in the list of candi-
dates successful at the recent Law Col-
lege examinations:—

Advocates' Preliminary—Mr. N. T. D.
Kanakaratne.

Advocates' Intermediate—Mr. W. W.
Wimalachandra.

Advocates' Final—Mr. E. S. Amara-
singhe (Sports Secretary), Mr. K. C. de
Silva, Mr. D. D. Eralis, Mr. Wilnot
Gunasekera, Mr. J. Pathirane, Mr. L.
B. T. Premaratne (Scholarship), Mr. R.
Sri Pathmanathan.

Proctors' Preliminary—Mr. S. D. J.
Jayawardene.

Mr. G. S. Peiris, Deputy Controller of
Prices (Miscellaneous Articles) has been
appointed an additional Deputy Control-
ler of Labour.

Mr. S. L. de Silva, Emergency A.G.A.,
Urugula, has reverted to his substantive
post in the Land Settlement Dept.

Mr. K. R. Perera, Inspector of the Co-
operative Department has passed the
Associate Examination of the Institute
of Book-keepers, London.

Weddings

We offer our congratulations to Dr. N.
J. A. Cooray, D.M.O., Karawanella, who
was recently married to Miss Edith
Valerie Illangakoon Ekanayake.

Resignations:

Mr. S. Amarasinghe, of Pettah.

Obituary

We record with regret the death of
Mudaliyar Thomas Rodrigo, of Siri

Wimana Walauwa, Panadura, which
occurred in Colombo on Sunday, October
7th. Mudaliyar Rodrigo was a founde-
r-member of our association in which he
took a keen interest at all times. He
was at the time of his death one of our
vice-presidents.

Muhandiram H. M. G. Herat Guna-
ratne, of Galmuruwa, father of Mr. L.
D. Herat Gunaratne, Engineering Stu-
dent, Ceylon Technical College.

Mrs. Justina Soysa, mother of Mr. W.
A. B. Soysa, M.S.C.

Mrs. Sesinis Jayasinghe, wife of Mr.
A. Jayasinghe, Secretary of the Religious
Examinations Branch.

Mrs. S. Dona Isabella Seneviratne
Hamine, mother of Mr. D. B. Jaya-
singhe.

We offer our sympathy to the members
of the bereaved families.

Committee of Management

The Committee of Management unani-
mously elected Mr. Rajah Hewavitarnne
as a Vice-President in place of the late
Mr. Thomas Rodrigo.

Mr. D. L. Dissanayake was unani-
mously elected to the Committee of Manage-
ment in his place.

Sinhalese Elocution Contest :—The
Sinhalese elocution contest for students
conducted by the Association has earned
the recognition and approbation of the
whole Island, as proved by the keen enthu-
siasm displayed both by students and the
general public. (Unfortunately however,
our own members have been slow to parti-
cipate in it actively—not by any means
by not providing us with the necessary
monetary help, which they give readily,
but by not showing due keenness in
encouraging their children to take part
in it).

Sports Tournaments

The following are the results of matches
played in the Tournaments now in pro-
gress:—

Badminton

Men's Open Doubles:—1st Round—S.
Gnanasekaram and T. B. Dissanayake
beat L. B. T. Premaratne and H. V.
Ambawatta; 21/11, 12/21, 21/4.

P. H. J. Wijesekera and E. S. Amara-
singhe beat R. Batuwantudawe and R.
D. Senanayake.

Men's Singles Open:—1st Round—T.
B. Dissanayake beat P. H. J. Wijes-
ekera; 15/9, 15/4; D. A. S. Perera beat
R. D. Senanayake; 15/8, 7/15, 15/13;
H. V. Ambawatta beat V. C. Fernando;
15/4, 15/5; K. Wijayasinghe beat D. R.
Wickramaratne; 15/3, 15/4; S. Gnanase-
karam beat E. S. Amarasinghe; 15/11,
15/2; K. C. de Silva beat P. W. Sena-
nayake; 13/7, 15/0; S. Kethisparan beat
L. B. T. Premaratne; 15/6, 15/2.

Quarter-finals—D. A. S. Perera beat
T. B. Dissanayake; 9/15, 15/10, 15/12.

Billiards

Handicap Billiards:—1st Round—G.
N. Karunaratne (—80) beat D. D. Koda-
goda (—25) 200/189; S. M. H. Mashoor
(—135) beat E. V. Perera (—90) 200/186;
J. Silva (—75) beat R. Batuwantudawe
(—120) 200/195; S. B. Fonseka (—80)
beat U. K. Percy Silva (—175) 200/80.

Diary of Events

Nov. 4 (Sunday): 9 a.m. Bana—
Pitakotte Somananda Thera.

Nov. 8 (Thursday): Lecture by Mr. N.
Nadaraja, K.C. on "Free Edu-
cation or State Tyranny".

Nov. 9 (Friday): 5.30 p.m.—Lecture
by Dr. G. S. W. de Saram on
The Application of Physical
Culture to Ceylon.

Nov. 11 (Sunday): 9 a.m. Bana—
Heenatiyana Dhammaloka
Thera.

Nov. 18 (Sunday): 9 a.m. Bana—
Narada Thera.

Nov. 24 (Saturday): 6 p.m.—Music Re-
cital followed by sound film
demonstration.

Nov. 25 (Sunday): 9 a.m. Bana—Kota-
hene Sarada Thera.

Dec. 2 (Sunday): 9 a.m. Bana—
Pitakotte Somananda Thera.

Dec. 9 (Sunday): 9 a.m. Bana—
Heenatiyana Dhammaloka
Thera.

Dec. 16 (Sunday): 9 a.m. Bana—
Narada Thera.

Dec. 23 (Sunday): 9 a.m. Bana—Kota-
hene Sarada Thera.

Physical Culture Branch:—The activi-
ties of the Gymnasium are becoming
increasingly popular among our younger
members. An analysis of the members
visiting the gymnasium regularly shows
the reasons for this popularity. There
are a few seekers after health; a few
after physical development; a few work-
ing hard to overcome physical defects;
one or two striving to get rid of spare
tyres round the waist; one or two aiming
at increased height, and a few having an
eye on weight lifting championship
honours. It may not be presumptuous to
add that the Y.M.B.A. Gymnasium is the
only one of its kind in Colombo, and
probably in the Island, where varied
physic culture needs of everybody can be
satisfactorily catered for. Details of a
"Best Physique" Competition for mem-
bers are being worked out by Mr. D. S.
Samarasinghe, Secretary of the Branch,
and will be announced in due course.
Mr. R. D. Lankatilaka is always ready
for a wrestling or a ju-jitsu bout and
those who do not know either art will be
soon initiated into it by him.

Additions to the Library:—The Dice of
the Gods by Lucien de Zilwa; A Chandala
Woman by Lucien de Zilwa; The Hearts
of Men by H. Fielding Hall; Book of
Christ by Sir Pelham Warner; Exercises
in the Bath by T. R. Tognia; Treachery
in the Kandyan Court by L. C. Weera-
sooriya; Stalin by J. T. Murphy; How
to Psycho-analyse Yourself by Joseph
Ralph; Japan's Islands of Mystery by
Willard Price; The Constant Star by
George Blake; Folly Bridge by D. L.
Murphy; Trent's Last Case by E. C.
Bentley; The Ingenious Mr. Stone by
Robert Player; Odd Man Out by F. L.
Green; Presidential Agent by Upton
Sinclair; The Left was Never Right by
Quintin Hogg; A Farewell to Arms by
Ernest Hemingway; Judith by Janet
Whitney; Long, Long Ago, by Alexander
Woolcott; A Cockney on Main Street by
Herbert Hodge; Bugles in the Afternoon
by Ernest Haycox; Dragonwyck by Anya
Seton; A Bell for Adano by John Hersey;
The Making of Russia by Alexei Tolstoy;
Quiet Skies on Salween by Ellen Thorp;
Quiver's Choice by Sagittarius; The Night
is Ending by James Ronald; Cradle of
Splendour by George Borodin; The Rope
Began to Hang the Butcher by C. W.
Grafton; and Vinayathakatha Part II
(Complimentary by the Tripitaka Publi-
cations).