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THE KELANIYA CONFERENCE

THE Conference of leading bhikkhus and representative lay Buddhists that met at Kelaniya on Sunday, 31st March, 1946, bids fair to be an event of historic significance in the annals of the Buddha Sasana in Ceylon. The venue of the Conference was a very happy selection. Hallowed by the sacred presence of the Master when He paid His last visit to Lanka on the special invitation of the Jewel-eyed Manikkhika, King of the coast-dwelling Nagas; celebrated in legend and song as the birth-place of Ceylon's greatest woman, Vihara Maha Devi, who first earned a nation's gratitude by allowing herself to be cast adrift in an open boat into the swirling sea and to almost certain death, to save her people from the wrath of the devas, and then became the mother of and the chief inspiration behind Dutugemunu, saviour of the national faith and of the Sinhalese race at one of Lanka's greatest crises—Kelaniya has almost from time immemorial been the most important centre of pilgrimage in the maritime provinces. The Kelani Ganga, flowing from Ceylon's holy mountain, Sripada, has woven itself into the romance of the sylvan scene and given it added sanctity. The shrine has witnessed many events of great religious significance. It saw, for instance, the departure of the last of the recorded missions that, in the days of our independence, left these shores carrying with it the message of the Buddha to the lands of South-eastern Asia.

The Portuguese vandals destroyed the holy shrine almost completely and despoiled it of its lands and valuable possessions but once more some of its ancient glory has been restored. Phoenix-like it has risen from its ashes; it stands today as a symbol of the resurgence of Buddhist power and influence now animating the land and proudly holds up its head amidst scenes that yet remind us of the days of its adversity.

Here the Conference met in an atmosphere of great serenity; its deliberations were conducted with the sobriety and solemnity associated with gatherings of the

Sangha. The laymen present contented themselves with taking part in the discussions only to assist in clarifying the issues raised and with promising to do all in their power to implement any decisions arrived at by the Maha-theras in conclave.

The immediate reason for the summoning of this august assembly by the All-Ceylon Buddhist Congress was the necessity of arriving at some authoritative decision regarding the question of bhikkhus and politics which had been raised in some influential quarters and which threatened a rift in the Order. The discussions that centred round this problem took place in the greatest cordiality. All possible points of view were brought up for examination; their review was comprehensive and probing and the decisions finally arrived at clear-cut and unequivocal. Attempts had been made to cloud the issue by maintaining that no definition of "politics" would be possible, that any effort to circumscribe political activity within a limited sphere would be futile. But the proponents of such a view were soon proved to be false prophets; the age-long wisdom of the Sangha was more than equal to the task of finding a solution. No attempt was made to say what politics was or was not but certain activities were singled out as coming indisputably within the ambit of the term and these were proscribed. No bhikkhu could—such was the unanimous decision arrived at—take part in these particular activities without compromising the Vinaya rules which he had taken upon himself to observe and it was imperative, therefore, that bhikkhus should eschew such activities and abstain from them.

What these activities are appear in the report of the proceedings of the Conference published elsewhere in this issue. They include membership of various official bodies and political parties and participation in electioneering campaigns. A further decision declared that bhikkhus should abstain from exercising the right of the franchise, a right that belongs to them as citizens. This decision was a necessary corollary to the earlier resolu-

tions. Those who say, as some do, that to ask for such abstention would be to demand an unwarrantable renunciation of personal rights, evidently forget that the fundamental principle of Pabbajja—going forth from home, to homelessness—is nekkhamma or renunciation, undertaking voluntarily and at nobody's behest the giving up of all the rights and privileges that belong to the householder and to the citizen. To go back upon that renunciation even in the slightest degree is a reversal from brahmachariya—the higher life—to hinachariya—the low, ignoble life of the householder, which the bhikkhu is expected to regard with revulsion and disgust "like a blob of spittle spat out in the morning," a return to "the vomit" of worldliness. These decisions, it should be noted, do not preclude the bhikkhu from acting as the layman's guide, counsellor and friend, from showing him the way to the good life, the life of happiness and welfare, to advancement both in this world and in the next. The wise bhikkhu knows how to be discriminating in what he should or should not do; he realises the nature of his calling and acts accordingly. It is for the foolish and the foolhardy that directions must be laid down.

The Conference recognised clearly the danger of the unscrupulous layman using religion for his own selfish purposes and called upon laymen, therefore, in no unmistakable terms, to refrain from prostituting their influence with members of the Sangha who depend for their living upon the generosity and the patronage of the laity. The layman is thus reminded that to be allowed to provide the Sangha with the "four requisites," clothing, food, shelter and medicine, is a privilege of great consequence for his spiritual growth and not the earning of an obligation to be used to his selfish advantage. It was very necessary to clarify the relation that should exist between the Sangha and the laity because not every one is aware of it and the guilty ones are to be found both among bhikkhus and laymen. Having thus settled

the question of politics with remarkable acumen, wisdom and foresight, the Conference proceeded to examine the present position of the Sangha with a view to remedying the abuses that had inevitably crept in especially in recent times after the protective influence of Buddhist kings had disappeared. There was no attempt to ignore the colossal magnitude of the task involved, or the numerous difficulties that would beset the path of reform. There was, on the contrary, a refreshing candour, a keen desire to face facts squarely, a refusal to condone the shortcomings of those in high places. There was present, withal, a sober optimism, a deep earnestness, an atmosphere of great spiritual quality, a determination to recognise the truth and to act up to it. There was no eagerness to condemn; "to spit upward" as the saying goes, to indulge in recriminations or to attach blame upon others rather than upon oneself. Everyone had numerous shortcomings; let

that be recognised and remedies devised to remove them. It was a task for heroes and their efforts would be heroic. Throughout the deliberations there was apparent a vibrant resoluteness that would never acknowledge defeat.

* The issues involved were too complicated for hasty action; it would be mere folly to attempt to rush "reforms." A great deal of heart-searching was necessary on the part of everyone, much propaganda, Khantivadi's patience (greater than even Job's), tact in speech and action, if anything was to be achieved at all. And so it was decided to have recourse to the ancient Vinaya procedure of Ubbahika, of setting up a committee to examine the problems in all their implications and submit proposals. The Conference itself was adjourned for a date in July.

When the Conference was first mooted it was regarded in the

nature of an experiment but it proved to be an unqualified success exceeding the highest hopes of those responsible for organising it. It proved beyond all shadow of doubt that wholehearted unanimity can be obtained among the leading theas of the several Nikayas in matters of common interest affecting the Sasana. It has inspired with tremendous confidence those that had long striven to restore the Sangha to its due place in the life of the community. It has paved the way for a great forward movement; it has enlisted powerful spiritual forces for the advance of the Buddha-Sasana, the welfare of gods and men. But every move will have to be undertaken with much care and wisdom, with deep faith and humility. Let us recall to mind the Buddha's injunction: අනුප්පිංඛෙකං මෙතාපී මොකමොකං ඛෙජ්ඣ ඛෙජ්ඣ.

"The wise man proceeds with well-laid plan, little by little, making use of every possible opportunity."

Handicap for All Buddhist Activities

Absence of a Buddhist Constitution

BEFORE the British occupation of Ceylon the Buddhist religion enjoyed royal patronage, and the King was closely associated with the monastic colleges which were responsible for the maintenance of discipline among the Sangha as well as the administration of the temporalities through lay officers. Their power to degrade and disrobe monks, backed by the authority of the King, was a guarantee against the misappropriation and misapplication of the vast incomes derived from large and widely distributed lands and fields. All lay officers attached to the different temples and devalas having been appointed by the King, he was able to exercise a vigilant supervision over them.

When the British took over the administration of the Island they agreed and declared, by the Kandyan Convention of 1815, that the religion of the Buddha shall be inviolable, and undertook to maintain and protect its rites, ministers and places of worship. The British Government assumed the prerogatives, exercised by the kings of Kandy, of appointing incumbents and lay officers to the temples, and therefore the liability to protect and preserve the Buddhist temporalities.

In 1819 the Government made a generous gesture by issuing a proclamation exempting temple lands from all taxation. Attempts to make lists of temple lands by registration of title having failed in spite of a number of trials, a commission had to be appointed for the purpose in 1836. In 1870 an ordi-

nance provided for the commutation of services by Paraveni tenants of temple and other lands.

VIOLENT SETBACK

In the meantime Christian missionary activities appear to have exerted their influence on Government policy, and the administration of Buddhist affairs received a violent setback in 1840, when Governor Mackenzie, with true Christian zeal, refused to sign warrants appointing incumbents and lay officers to temples. **It is no mere coincidence that in this same year the Diocesan Committee for the Propagation of the Gospel was established.**

By

G. K. W. PERERA

It must have been perfectly obvious to the Governor that his refusal to make appointments would throw the administration of temple property completely out of gear. From this date commenced the refusal of tenants to pay their dues, and misappropriation by lay officers who could not legally be dismissed or replaced. The courts refused to accept the complaints of monks unless they could produce their powers of appointment. Owing to the lack of machinery for the collection of temple revenue, Buddhist affairs attained a degree of confusion. Lord Torrington, when he resumed the making of appointments, reported that temples had been ruined by lack of

revenue caused by the refusal of the Governor to sign appointments.

Secretaries of State have at different times admitted the obligation on the part of Government to uphold the stipulations of the Kandyan Convention both in the letter and spirit, in spite of contrary advice they had received from certain officials as well as Christian bodies. They had urged that the connection of Government should be limited to the duty of a generous toleration and the extension of the laws of protection to the rights and property of the Buddhists. Earl Grey said that their hostility to Buddhism was shown by their interpretation of the Kandyan Convention to mean no more than that the Buddhists should be free to celebrate their religious rites, and to hold all the places and property devoted to their worship without molestation from their new sovereign or from anyone else.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Between the strong influence exerted by Christian bodies and the obligations it had conscientiously recognised as arising from their solemn Convention, the Government found itself in a difficult position. Government decided to divest itself of its responsibility by giving legal sanction for the Buddhists to manage their own affairs, and giving them "A sound working constitution."

An ordinance was accordingly drafted creating a central committee having full power over every matter concerning Buddhism inclusive of the management of temporalities throughout the Island.

This measure, if it had a chance of becoming law, might have arrested the impetus given to immoral and dishonest tenants and others to rob and misappropriate Buddhist ecclesiastical revenue. It was, however, opposed by the Christians, and the Secretary of State refused his assent. The reasons for his refusal were admitted to be that **the British Government must be actually and apparently disconnected from idolatry, and that no powerful hierarchy must be created, nor even, if possible, any artificial support given to a declining religion.**

Coming from the Christians the charge of idolatry is at least curious; their appreciation of the dangers of giving such an organisation to the Buddhist hierarchy can be understood. In 1849 another ordinance was framed, but this too failed to receive the approval of the Secretary of State.

MISSIONARIES WIN

The victory of the missionaries became complete when, in 1852, the Secretary of State ordered that **the Government should relinquish its rights to appoint incumbents and lay officers to temples, and that the question of giving the Buddhists a constitution should be shelved.** The Government accordingly gave up its control of Buddhist affairs in favour of a **committee of chiefs, consisting of nine ratemahatmayas and four basnayake nilames,** with power to supervise Buddhist temporalities.

This unfortunate and ill-advised step, whereby the Government relinquished its responsibility without establishing a safeguard such as originally contemplated in the form of an ordinance creating a Buddhist constitution, served as an encouragement of the depredations made on temple property. Several successive Governors have since expressed their, I hope sincere, regret that this step should have been taken, tracing back to it all the confusion caused in Buddhist affairs as well as the loss of considerable properties belonging to the temples. The only excuse Government could have for such an extraordinary procedure is probably that they believed that the Sinhalese chiefs commanded in their persons the respect traditionally shown to them by the people. This is a gross error. That respect was due, and actually paid, to the royal power behind the chiefs, which at that time was that of the British Government. Bereft of this royal backing the power of a chief was only that of any lay man. It is notable that the Government had not the same dread of forming a powerful central organisation of chiefs that they had of a similar organisation of monks or other Buddhists. This vesting of power in the chiefs introduced a new factor which had happily been absent hitherto from the ravages made into Buddhist revenue.

At the time of the Kandyan Convention, we are told, "the morality and honour of the Buddhist Clergy were all

that was desirable." The Sangha, traditionally as well as by the rules of their holy order, is bound by strict allegiance to established Government; but they owe no respect to the authority of any lay man however exalted he may be. It is the pride of the Sangha that they do not rise even at the approach of the King in person, quite consistently with their loyalty to the throne. The committee of chiefs, therefore, had no terrors for anyone, and their appointment served as an opportunity for the black sheep among the flock of monks to emulate the tenants in their careers of dishonesty. The evil spread, and the number of dishonest monks grew to such an extent that devoted lay Buddhists began to entertain doubts as to the propriety of making veneration in the traditional manner to the sacred wearers of the yellow robe. These, however, salved their consciences by making distinction between the persons of the monks and the robes they wore.

For many years this unhappy state of things continued, tenant, trustee and, in many cases incumbent alike and their friends and relations, converting for their personal use revenue which should have been devoted to purposes connected with their religion. The labour which should have been employed for the repair of temples was frequently taken for the erection of private buildings for monks and trustees. Even Government began to appreciate the fact that in consenting to forego its tithe they had not benefited religious endowments but only enriched fraudulent trustees and their families.

In 1877 Government proposed the appointment of three commissioners with almost unlimited powers to manage the temporalities, but the Secretary of State would not permit this. He deprecated any direct interference with the affairs of the Buddhists, and disapproved the scheme. Several other schemes had been suggested and rejected, all falling short of a free constitution with a single governing body for the Buddhists. The objections of the Secretary of State to Government interference were as potent as his objection to giving "a dangerous organisation to the Buddhist hierarchy."

ATTEMPTS AT REFORM

It was not till 1888 that Governor Gordon, unable any longer to tolerate the great and scandalous abuses which prevailed in the management of temporalities since the withdrawal of control by Government, introduced a new bill whereby the administration devolved on lay trustees, district committees, and provincial committees, the last having executive power. The constitution, directed mainly towards safeguarding temple incomes, was patently unworkable with its divided responsibility, although it was hailed in Council

by the Hon. Mr. Ramanathan as "an important contribution to self-government on lines more enlarged than we have had hitherto." The Attorney General, in moving the first reading, made his excuses for the weakness of the measure. He said that "to have one central committee would be far the better plan, but conflicting local interests and jealousies render this impracticable," thus hinting at the sources from which opposition to the creation of a powerful hierarchy came.

The Governor was more outspoken: "To some, no doubt, the measure will be distasteful. It will be so to those who wish to let things alone, and allow everything to remain on its present footing. Two classes of persons continue desiring this, though for very different reasons. That the majority of such as are incumbents of viharas, who gain by the existing state of things, and who will be deprived by the ordinance of their present absolute control of the goods of their temples should oppose this, or any other reform, is natural and intelligible, and needs no comment. But many of the strongest enemies of Buddhism also desire abstinence from all legislative intervention, being aware that existing abuses throw an amount of discredit on the Buddhist clergy, from which they do not desire to see them freed; and perceiving that if things go on as they now are, the pecuniary resources of the Buddhist monastic establishments, which they desire to see exhausted, will not long hold out. I confess it appears to me that to refrain from interference for such reasons is neither just nor moral."

The Governor's words on winding up the debate were notable: "This Council is about to legislate upon the constitution of the Buddhist Church, or rather Buddhist Temporalities, a most difficult subject, affecting the vast majority of the people of the island, and yet this legislation is to be effected by a body in which not one Buddhist finds a place." However ineffective the ordinance proved to be, the Governor meant well and we are grateful. An outstanding feature of the ordinance was provision for the audit of accounts under the direction of courts.

The utter desolation to which Buddhists had been reduced after 70 years of British rule, that not one of them had been left fit to be given a place in the Legislative Council, was forcibly brought home by the Planting Member, who said: "If what we are told concerning Buddhism is really true, it seems to be a wonderful religion indeed—a religion that is able to draw comfort from a very miserable diet. When the Government recognised one of the national holidays of the people, we were told that Buddhism was very much encouraged. When the Government undertook to prevent an old dagoba from falling to pieces, we were told

that Buddhism was as much strengthened as the dagoba was. Now that we propose to show our absolute distrust of the monks and most of the laymen, we are told that Buddhism has at last reached the goal of Government recognition and encouragement. I myself would as soon expect to see a thief, when caught by a policeman, boast of his connection with the Government as to see the Buddhists boast of the stigma which this (audit) clause throws upon them. **I trust in time that this portion of the ordinance will be repealed.....** All the recognition that will be given by the judicial audit is the recognition that the people are not to be trusted. That is the only recognition we intend to give them."

Mr. Christie's criticism was just, if forcible, but it failed to raise a spark of national pride in the Buddhists. In fact things went from bad to worse. Provincial committees failed to function, and funds continued to be misappropriated with monks starved and temples gone to rack and ruin. Things were so bad that Government Agents persistently urged that the revenues of temples should be taken over by Government and devoted to vernacular education.

Dishonesty and fraud of funds had become so intolerable that Government felt bound again to interfere and present another bill in 1905, abolishing provincial committees, and providing for the election of trustees by the votes of the residents of districts served by each temple; executive power was given to district committees. The Governor also took power to appoint Government Agents and Assistant Government Agents as commissioners for the purpose of assisting any of the committees in the administration and management of the funds and property of temples. The opposition to this last provision was so great that the first reading could not take place till two years afterwards.

CHRISTIANS OPPOSE

The Christians conducted a violent campaign against the bill. Widely signed memorials, letters from influential quarters in England and India, as well as all manner of dilatory tactics were tried. The General European Member championed their cause, and warned the Government that this ordinance "may excite attention beyond the bounds of the island." He said: "I firmly believe that these temporalities, these endowments in lands, have been a curse to Buddhism and its monks all along," and suggested that the Government should confiscate them for the benefit of education. He also said that the Buddhists had a good enough "constitution," and no change was necessary. Lieutenant Governor Ashmore's reply was angry: "What is the matter with the constitution? It does not work. It has never worked..... (The Member's) object is that they should ruin themselves, and, as an alternative

to ruin, he proposes that we should rob them."

The Bill was passed with the General European and Burgher Members alone dissenting; but the clause to which exception had been taken was never put into operation. As a consequence, with nobody to advise them, the committees and trustees began to fall out; meddling with leases of temple lands was no doubt remunerative, and these disputes ending in litigation and validating bills constitutes an ugly chapter.

In 1918 Government appointed a commission to go into the management of temporalities again. This Commission recommended the repeal of ordinance 8 of 1905. They held that lay trustees were as unsatisfactory as incumbent monks, and recommended the curious remedy that they should be combined. Trustees were to be nominated by the incumbent monks, on the principle no doubt of setting a thief to catch a thief. A bill was accordingly introduced in 1922, but it was not proceeded with; obviously democratic control did not suit those concerned.

ORDINANCE 19 OF 1931

In 1931 the Legislative Council with its dying breath adopted the ordinance now in force. Considering the delay since the recommendations of the Commission, the haste with which this law was passed might almost be considered unseemly. Elections for the new State Council, on a new and wide franchise, were to follow immediately, and that apparently put a spur on the promoters. Anyway the provisions of the present ordinance have definitely removed even the vestige of democratic control, and utterly ignored the right of the Buddhist public or of its Sangha to manage their own affairs.

The management of temple properties is still vested in trustees; the viharadhipatis or incumbent monks of the richer temples, of which there are about a hundred, could nominate themselves or others as trustees. The procedure as to accounting is such that no honest man might be expected to accept the humiliation of becoming a trustee.

The Atamastana Committee, which formerly consisted of six members, is now reduced to three, thus making the management secure in perpetuity for the head of the Nuwarawewa family. The Diyawadana Nilame as well as the Basnayaka Nilames will continue to be drawn from the same class as before, their electors being confined to adigars and disavas, ratemahatmayas and basnayaka nilames.

Thus from a constitution which had once been hailed as a step in self-government, the management of the temporalities has been handed back completely into the hands of the very people from whom they had for so long to be saved. A safeguard had been adopted by making the Public Trustee

the general supervisor of accounts which every trustee is expected to render to him; with power to investigate complaints. The public have no doubt been misled into a sense of false security by the official title of this officer; as regards temporalities he does not occupy a position of trust; he is in fact little more than an auditor so far as the safety of temple revenue is concerned.

Before introducing this ordinance the Government explained that they had "made repeated attempts to secure agreement among those concerned to a scheme for the management of Buddhist temporalities which would remove the defects of the present system." The provisions of the ordinance show clearly whom the Government regarded as "those concerned." The Government has refused to see that the party primarily and mainly concerned is the general community of Buddhists in Ceylon, including in special the community of bhikkus. The Nayaka Theras of the several Nikayas might properly have been the only persons consulted, representing as they do the whole Buddhist community, whereas they are not even mentioned in connection with the temporalities. Even the Mahanayaka Theras of Malwatte and Asgiriya, who might have been given sole charge of the temporalities to be dealt with at their pleasure, have received consideration only to the extent of being honoured each as the recipient of one-third part of one vote for the election of one member of the Atamastana Committee, and the status of one of a hundred electors who are given votes for the election of the Diyawadana Nilame.

REGISTRATION OF BHIKKHUS

Far from receiving the respect due to the Sangha who among all the clergy in the world are probably deserving of the highest regard and consideration, this order has been subjected to the most humiliating procedure which has no precedent in any country in the world. In this ordinance which professes to provide an adequate system of administration and control over temporalities, two sections have been included which cannot have the remotest connection with the subject matter of the ordinance. Section 41 provides for the preparation of a register of bhikkhus, and section 42 imposes a penalty on any person holding himself out falsely as a bhikkhu.

Any bhikkhu who does not submit registration forms, as prescribed, duly filled in with all possible items of information about himself from birth upwards, makes himself liable to a fine. Some of these items might have been consolidated into the one question of caste. There is, however, this consolation for them that no space has been provided for "previous convictions, if any," and they have not been required to affix their thumb-mark. All the Nayaka Theras are liable to conviction and fine if they omit to keep a

complete and up-to-date register of bhikkhus. It is perfectly obvious that the legislators had neither love nor respect for the highest dignitaries of the Buddhist Church.

The law is such an exact parallel of similar provision relating to master and servant, that there is little doubt where the draftsman must have gone for precedent. A servant, who is a major, shall, before he may engage himself as a household servant, submit for registration all particulars of his history and qualifications countersigned by his employer and the pastor of his parish. If a minor, the employer shall submit such form. Contravention of this law would be followed by prosecution and fine. Substitute upasampada for major, samanera for minor, and chief monk for employer, and we get this section which is a gross insult to the whole Buddhist community.

The provocation for this gratuitous insult is to be found in the next section making it an offence falsely to personate a Buddhist monk. In proceeding to provide for this, it was discovered that a "monk" has not been defined in any law. It is grimly humorous to submit the whole sacred body calmly to insult in order to achieve this object, even if it were necessary. Why should anyone not pretend to be a better man than he is, as long as he does no harm, does not attempt to cheat and thereby make himself liable under the ordinary law? It is human nature for everyone to pretend in that manner, and I am not sure that it is a weakness which should be discouraged. Supposing it had become necessary to introduce such a provision, it should have been brought in its proper place, the Penal Code, so that it could be considered in its proper perspective. Introduced as it is, the conclusion cannot be resisted that the legislators, having laid the monks low over their claim for the temporalities, proceeded to kick them.

It was not so long before the passing of this ordinance that the Governor of the Island had stated: "Government makes it a point of honour as well as of expediency not to interfere in the internal affairs of any church whatever." They apparently make a distinction between interfering for the good of a religion and the reverse. Sections 41 and 42 should be immediately erased from the Statute Book. Any registration that may be necessary the Sangha themselves will look to, and the different Nikayas do in fact keep their own records. A certificate from a Nayaka Thera should be the only evidence as to who is and who is not a bhikkhu, for any purpose the Government may be interested in.

WHY A CONSTITUTION IS NECESSARY

When the Secretary of State discovered that he could not implement the Kandyan Convention consistently

with his obligations to the Christian religion, he decided to give legal sanction to the Buddhists to manage their own affairs by granting them a sound working constitution. He later qualified this by stating that no powerful hierarchy must be created. From his refusal to permit the creation of a central committee we must conclude that he was following his well-known maxim of divide and rule, in order to make a Buddhist revival impossible.

All schemes approved by the Secretary of State were for a divided control of properties, as thus "the danger of creating a new and formidable power is escaped." Having ruled that any single central authority would be dangerous, the Secretary of State consented to the creation of a number of provincial committees as separate governing bodies. These having failed to achieve anything, the number of governing bodies was increased into a still larger number of district committees as independent directors. Both these steps were intended to separate the Sangha from the laity. The monks who, up to the advent of the British, alone had the power to dispose of the income of the temples were placed under the direction of lay trustees even regarding their food and lodging.

By the last ordinance now in force the assets of the Buddhists have been further dispersed by the creation of a separate governing body for each individual temple in the island. Each trustee or viharadhipati decided for himself what he should do with the revenue of his own temporalities. Thus the Buddhists are denied the privilege of combining revenues or co-ordinating activities for any Buddhist purpose.

OWNERSHIP OF TEMPLES

The most far-reaching reform which has been effected by the new Buddhist Temporalities Ordinance has not been sufficiently appreciated. Up to the passing of this ordinance in 1931, the legal ownership of all temples and their movable and immovable properties had vested in the Government as the legal successor to the King of Kandy. This ownership the Government had retained throughout all the history of Buddhist legislation, until they decided, without any blare of trumpets, to relinquish that ownership under the cloak of improving the management of temporalities. Although by Section 4 only the management of property has been entrusted to trustees and chief priests of each temple, the ordinance proceeds by Section 20 to vest the legal property in all movable and immovable properties completely in the same persons; so that no voluntary reform in the organisation of the Sangha or of the whole Buddhist system could ever reassemble effectively all the resources of the Buddhists.

During the debate in Council, whilst wholeheartedly approving this ordin-

ance, Mr. Madawala stated: "This ordinance is more in consonance with the state of affairs in ancient times. **The Buddhist monks are a corporation sole, and they had property;** they were not in the nature of trustees, nor were they in the position of owners, they were between the two." Mr. Madawala had failed to see that nothing in this ordinance restores to the Buddhist monks their ancient organisation. If the Buddhist monks had been a corporation sole they are no longer so, and the efforts of the Buddhist monks since the question had first arisen, if they had borne fruit, would have assisted the re-establishment of this kind of corporation. The Government had always resisted the restoration of such an organisation. Mr. Madawala also overlooked the fact that depriving in advance a future corporation of Buddhist monks of all its assets does not assist in recreating such a corporation.

The Sangha is only a voluntary body, not conforming to our laws even as a voluntary society. Certain Buddhist matters such as that of succession to incumbencies have been taken notice of by the Courts, subjects which had been within the exclusive jurisdiction of our ecclesiastical courts or Sangha Sabhas. The present law does not help to restore co-operation between the Sangha and laity in any way, nor between viharadhipatis and Mahanayakes. The public who had been much worried over the squandering of temple revenue concentrated on that question, relegating the creation of a constitution to the background. To existing troubles have now been added those created by trustees who have unwarrantably acquired rights in the management of temple properties.

A HANDICAP

It is 90 years since the Secretary of State shelved the question of a constitution. We have too long delayed reviving the subject. The Secretary of State will not do so now on his own initiative, as we have a State constitution with sufficient freedom for legislation on our own internal affairs. The absence of a Buddhist constitution has been a handicap under which all Buddhist activities have so long suffered. How necessary such a constitution is will be obvious if we consider a few matters over which we are now worrying.

We have been witnessing with considerable alarm and anxiety, not unmixed with jealousy, the great progress which some Christian institutions are making. We have been attempting to devise means of combating this with indifferent success for a number of years. Our latest effort to penalise Christian educational institutions by denying them grants from Government on account of children of other denominations in their schools has been resisted, not without good reason from a constitutional point of view.

What actually gives the Christian bodies an advantage over us? Our societies as well as individuals have been carrying out independent and unco-ordinated activities in building schools and maintaining them, without an effort at a unified control. We have denied the right of the Sangha to take a hand in Buddhist education in our school system, very properly perhaps in view of their own want of organisation. Above all we have suffered from the want of adequate finance, finance which should have been found where all other denominations find theirs, in the funds of the churches.

Our Buddhist temporalities consist of some 400,000 acres of agricultural land alone, besides vast amounts annually subscribed by a devoted public throughout the island. Once a proper relationship is established between the clergy and our laity these vast resources will enable our schools to offer attractions equal to any offered by other institutions. A well thought out constitution alone can grant us these benefits.

A constitution with a single governing body of their own choosing for the Sangha will enable the different Nikayas to co-operate more than they do at present. The fact that they function as separate bodies involves a waste of effort so far as their mission to spread the Dhamma is concerned. This separation also brings little credit to the religion of this country which enjoys a reputation for its nobility and purity throughout the world.

A proper constitution will enable the Sangha to maintain better discipline. A constitution alone can give them a leader or supreme body who could exercise the authority once wielded by the king. In the absence of such a controlling power each monk may go the

way he pleases. Under the rules of the Sangha the power of the Sangha Sabha to degrade or disrobe a monk is possible only if the monk voluntarily submits to such discipline. This must be remedied.

TIME FOR OFFENSIVE

Buddhist activity is at a standstill; it has long been passive, except perhaps in the field of English secondary education. Even here we are mainly on the defensive. Even our efforts to provide ourselves with suitable school-books for Buddhist schools has been a failure. Unless we are content to allow Christian denominations to increase their membership unchallenged, it is time we took the offensive.

The excellent constitution of the Roman Catholic Church should be a good object lesson to us. They had taken advantage of the passing of the Buddhist Temporalities Ordinance of 1905 in order to claim the right to establish their own constitution, a constitution which is functioning so efficiently all over the world. Clearly the Secretary of State's ban against the establishment of powerful hierarchies did not apply to the Christians. By Ordinance 9 of 1906 all Church property vests in the Archbishop. If any devoted Catholic leaves any land by will or otherwise to the Catholic Church it automatically vests in the Archbishop. They have no fights over incumbencies, nor any necessity to invoke the assistance of the courts for their internal matters. Why should all our temple property not vest in a Maha Sangha Raja created under our own constitution? The Buddhist Constitutions of Burma and Siam may be followed as our guides.

The Buddhist Congress has passed resolutions on which action has not yet

been taken, deprecating the appearance of monks in the witness box, and their constant recourse to the courts on disputes over incumbencies and other litigation. All these unseemly squabbles which bring disgrace on our religion could be obviated if they are made subject to a central authority of their own election whose decisions could not be questioned by the courts or any other power.

A constitution for the Buddhists will have to be carefully drafted in order to meet the many objections and views held by different sections of the people; paramount consideration should, however, be given to the desire of the Sangha. The objection that the Sangha cannot deal with property may be met by nominating a body of laymen to manage the property for them and expend the revenue in accordance with the decisions of the Sangha Sabha. It must not be forgotten that under the present law the Sangha do own property and have the power to deal with them. The fact that at present the Sangha have no business experience could be cured by the training of a number of samaneras who would act as secretaries to the executive heads of the Sangha.

Transitional provisions might be made to meet every emergency. Once the principle is agreed on, the collaboration of the Sangha with a representative body of laymen could without any great difficulty produce a satisfactory constitution. We laymen have shown a tendency to usurp some of the power as well as of the duties of the Sangha. But whether we decide to hand over complete control of all Buddhist affairs to the Sangha with or without safeguards for a transitional period or not, the supreme importance of creating a constitution for Buddhists cannot be over-emphasised.

Narada Thera Outlines

The Life of an Ideal Bhikkhu Counterfeit Monks Who "Assail the Sangha"

Before dawn the bhikkhu is awake, and in the early hush of daybreak he repairs to the shrine room to pay his respects to the Great Master as the song of the first morning bird is heard. He kneels at His holy feet, gains inspiration from His noble example and reflects on His virtues. He then retires to his cell or solitary abode to engage in meditation. Though temporarily, he purges his mind of impurities. This temporarily purified mind he fills with loving-kindness and pervades the whole world with those thoughts of boundless love. He develops compassionate understanding with all making no distinction whatsoever between himself and others.

Daily he makes an introspection of himself and tries to eradicate his ce-

fects, and consolidate his virtues. With this object in view he constantly thinks of the ten Paramis, namely, generosity, morality, renunciation, wisdom, energy, patience, truthfulness, resolution, goodwill and equanimity—and strives to translate them into actual practice in the course of his daily activities.

After attending to his physical and spiritual needs, he either teaches or studies, as the case may be, till the time comes for him to go on his alms pilgrimage (Pindapata).

With robe neatly arranged, bowl in hand, eyes cast down, not looking ahead for more than a yoke's distance, in measured steps he gracefully walks

barefoot, from house to house, collecting the alms respectfully offered him by the devotees, and silently blessing them for their kind act. Returning to his monastery he first makes an offering to the Buddha, and then partakes with others the scanty meal without displaying any greediness for the food. Before the sun crosses the meridian he finishes his meal as he cannot take any substantial food after mid-day. He can neither accept any food nor beverage which is not offered to him.

In the afternoons he is free to do whatever duties he has to perform. At night again he pays his homage to his Master and to his senior co-celibates and meditates before retirement.

An ideal bhikkhu who leads such an exemplary life is indeed a blessing to himself and others. He teaches both by example and by precept. Within he is pure and without he purifies.

THE IDEAL BHIKKHU

He leads no idle, parasitic life, as he is ever strenuous in working for his inner spiritual development, catering at the same time to the spiritual needs of those lesser brethren and sisters. He is no burden to society because he gives no trouble to any. He is like the bee that extracts honey from the flower without hurting it. He possesses no property, for he has renounced everything worldly. His needs are few, and contentment is his wealth. He repents not for the past, nor is he worried about the future. He lives in the present, free from all responsibilities and trammels of the world. Like a bird he is ready to wander whithersoever he desires without clinging to any abode. Under all vicissitudes of life he maintains a balanced mind. Neither fame nor wealth nor honour would induce him to do anything contrary to his lofty principles. His free services are always at the disposal of others. Purity, perfect celibacy, voluntary poverty, simplicity, selfless service, and harmlessness are some of the salient characteristics of a bhikkhu.

The following noteworthy sayings appearing in the Dhammapada and Suttanipata clearly depict the life and characteristics of an ideal bhikkhu:—

Good is restraint in eye, good is restraint in ear;
Good is restraint in nose, good is restraint in tongue;
Good is restraint in deed, good is restraint in speech;
Good is restraint in mind, good is restraint in everything;
The monk everywhere restrained is from all sorrow freed.

He who is controlled in hand, foot, speech, and in the highest (head); he who delights in meditation, and is composed; he who is alone and is contented; him they call a bhikkhu.

That bhikkhu who is controlled in tongue, who wisely speaks, who is not puffed up, who explains the meaning and the text—sweet, indeed, is his speech.

The bhikkhu who dwells in the Dhamma, who delights in the Dhamma, who meditates on the Dhamma, who well remembers the Dhamma, does not fall away from the Dhamma sublime.

Let him not despise what he has received, nor fare envying (the gains) of others. The bhikkhu who envies the gains of others does not attain concentration.

Though a recipient of little, if a bhikkhu does not despise what he has received, even the devas will praise him who is pure in livelihood and is not slothful.

He who has no "I and my" (conception) whatever towards mind and body; he who grieves not for that which he has not—he, indeed, is called a bhikkhu.

The bhikkhu who abides in loving-kindness, is pleased with the Buddha's teaching, attains to that state of peace and happiness, the stilling of confirmations.

Empty this boat*, O bhikkhu; emptied by you it will move swiftly.
Cutting out lust and hatred, to Nibbana you will thereby go.
Five cut off, five give up, five further cultivate;
The bhikkhu who has gone beyond the five toils is called a flood-crosser.

* The boat is the body, water is bad thoughts.

The bhikkhu who has retired to a lonely abode, who has calmed his mind, who clearly perceives the doctrine, experiences a joy transcending that of men.

THE WISE BHIKKHU

And this becomes the beginning here for a wise bhikkhu: sense-control, contentment, restraint with regard to the Fundamental Code (Patimokkha), and association with beneficent and energetic friends whose livelihood is pure.

Let him be cordial in his ways and refined in conduct;
Thereby full of joy he will make an end of ill.

As the jasmine creeper sheds its withered flowers, even so, O bhikkhus, should you cast off lust and hatred.

The bhikkhu who is calm in body, calm in speech, calm in mind, who is well composed, who has spewed out worldly things, is truly called a "Peaceful One."

By self do you censure yourself, by self do you examine yourself. Self-guarded and mindful, O bhikkhu, you shall live happily.

Not by a shaven head does an un-dutiful man who utters lies, become an ascetic. How will one be an ascetic who is full of desire and greed?

He who wholly subdues evil—both small and great—is called an ascetic, because he has overcome all evil.

Forbearing patience is the highest asceticism.

Nibbana is supreme—say the Buddhas.

For he is not a recluse who harms another.

Nor is he an ascetic who molests others.

Not insulting, not harming, restraint according to the Fundamental Moral Code, moderation in food, secluded abode, attend on the higher consciousness—this is the advice of the Buddhas.

Surely the path that leads to worldly gain is one, and the path that leads to Nibbana is another. Thus understanding, the bhikkhu, the disciple of the Buddha, should not rejoice in worldly favours, but should cultivate seclusion.

Whosoever not freed from stain, void of self-control or truthfulness, should don the yellow robe, is not worthy of it.

He who has vomitted all impurities, in morals is well established, and endowed with self-control and truthfulness, is indeed worthy of the yellow robe.

The Buddha's exhortation to Venerable Rahula:—

"Leave pleasure's fivefold strands, so sweet, so dear;
and, led by Faith, leave home, to end all ills.

Choose worthy friends; a distant lodging seek,
remote and quiet; sparing be in food
and raiment, alms, the requisites and bed.

Crave not for these, lest back to earth thou come.

Obeys the code; control thy senses five;
watch well thy body; grow to loathe world.

Forsake the gay appearances of things,
where passion reigns. In things austere, not gay,
school thy heart to fixity and calm.

Foster what harbours no appearances,

Discard all trend to pride; pride comprehend,
And thou shalt go thy way serene and calm."

The Anchorite's Ideal

"Best anchorite is he who heeds not omens, dreams, portents, or prodigies;
who sets no store by luck;

whom passion cannot tempt with joys of men or gods,
because rebirth is quenched because the Truth is won;

who resolutely turns his back on calumny and wrath and selfishness,
till love and hate are dead;

who bans dislikes and likes, whom nought sustains, whom nought supports, whom nought enchains;

who never sets his hopes on mundane things, nor lives for pelf, whom nought upholds,
who follows no man's lead;

whom words nor thoughts nor deeds distract from grasping truth,
who for Nirvana veers;

whom homage ne'er inflates nor scoffs depress, nor feasts of honour can elate;

who casts out covetise and lust for life to come;
who harbours no desire to chain or maim; whose doubts, with inward barbs, are gone;

whom sense of duty keeps from harming anyone,
because his eyes have seen the Doctrine's verities;

whom wrong proclivities lead not astray because their harmful roots are gone;
who nothing needs nor seeks;

whose Cankers are destroyed; who casts forth pride, and quells all passion—schooled and sure;
who, being quick, is dead;

whom Faith and Lore have led to find salvation's road;
whom sects can ne'er pervert; whom no resentment moves,
nor hate, nor covetise;

whom purity has crowned with victory; who strips the veil from things, and knows all outlooks, mast'ring all, wantless and fully skilled to quench each Plastic Force,

who outgrows time—to come, or past—by purity and insight, with Release from all that springs from sense;

who knows the path and grasps the Doctrine seeing clear how he may Cankers oust by sapping mundane ties;
—best anchorite is he."

A bhikkhu is not a beggar as is often mistranslated, although the term is derived from the root bhikkha, to beg. Neither is he a priest, since he does not act as a mediator between God and man; nor is he strictly a monk in the Christian sense of the term. There is no appropriate English equivalent that exactly conveys the meaning of the Pali term. Mendicant monk may be suggested as the nearest equivalent.

The ascetics of other sects are invariably called paribbajakas, ajivakas and sanyasins. Bhikkhu or Sanskrit bhikshu has now become exclusively Buddhist.

The rules of a bhikkhu do not permit him to beg anything from another. He may accept the four requisites—robes, alms, beds and medicine—presented to him. If he is in need of any requisite, he is allowed to ask from his parents, close relatives, and from professed supporters who have requested him to do so.

In Buddhism there is no necessity for priests to intervene on behalf of laymen, for Buddhists do not believe in a supernatural being who should be supplicated or whose favour should or could be won through a mediator.

NO LIFE-LONG VOWS

A bhikkhu, on the other hand, is not bound to life-long vows. Of his own accord he enters the Order in order to lead the holy life as long as he likes. When once he dons the yellow robe, the emblem of arahants, he is bound to observe the rules that pertains thereto. If he cannot, he is at liberty to leave the Order at any time he likes without polluting the Sasana. He automatically ceases to be a bhikkhu if he violates any of the major rules. In such Buddhist countries like Burma, Siam, Cambodia, almost everyone enters the Order even for a day. In Ceylon, however, the custom is to remain in the Order for life.

There is no hard and fast rule with regard to the admission of candidates into the Order. Race, colour, caste, class, rank or any such external difference does not preclude one from entering the Order. If worthy, the beggar, the outcast has an equal claim as the king, the noble to wear the yellow robe. Deformed persons, those suffering from leprosy or consumption, debtors, professional soldiers are debarred from entering the Order.

According to Vinaya even a boy who is old enough to "scare away crows" is free to join the Order, but cannot be ordained as a bhikkhu till he attains majority.

Those who are below twenty years of age are not entitled to become bhikkhus. They are known as samaneras—sons of the ascetic—and are expected to observe the Ten Precepts—namely, (1) abstinence from killing, (2) stealing, (3) all unchastity, (4) false speech, (5) intoxicating drinks, (6)

taking food after mid-day, (7) dancing, singing and unseemly shows, (8) the use of garlands, perfumes, unguents, things that tend to beautify and adorn the person, (9) the use of high and luxurious seats, (10) accepting gold and silver.

During their probationary period as samaneras they prepare themselves for the higher ordination (Upasampada). When they complete their twentieth year and if they possess the necessary qualifications, they are initiated into the Order of Bhikkhus.

Any qualified bhikkhu or thera who has counted more than five years in the Order is empowered to ordain a candidate as a samanera, but no self-ordination is permissible. To be initiated into the Higher Order there should be at least five full-fledged bhikkhus.

220 MAJOR RULES

A newly ordained bhikkhu is obliged to remain under a competent teacher for a period of at least five years, studying and practising the Dhamma, until the teacher thinks it advisable to allow him to live by himself.

Unlike the samaneras a bhikkhu has to observe 220 rules, excluding the seven courses intended to pacify disputes (Adhikaranasamatha Dhamma). There are several other minor rules besides. The four major rules which deal with perfect celibacy, stealing, murder and false claims to higher spiritual powers, must strictly be observed. If he violates any of them, he suffers defeat and is expelled from the Order. In the case of other rules he has to make amends according to the gravity of the offence.

When a bhikkhu commits an offence he confesses it to another junior or senior bhikkhu who then admonishes him not to do so again.

A bhikkhu may lead either a contemplative or a studious life. The former is more in harmony with the ideal of a bhikkhu. For the ultimate object in donning the robe, the emblem of sanctity and humility, is to eradicate passions and realise Nibbana. It should be emphasised that the bhikkhu life or in other words, renunciation of worldly pleasures, is only an effective means to attain the goal, but not an end in itself.

To lead a life of perfect purity and selfless service, to control and purify the mind with ease, to see things as they truly are, to think rightly and deeply, to develop the higher inner natures of man, to appreciate fully the higher spiritual values, no other mode of life affords such facilities and opportunities as the life of an ideal bhikkhu.

Though nearly 2,500 years have elapsed since the establishment of this noble Order by the Buddha, yet there is still room in Buddhist countries to live the perfect holy life. Devout and generous Buddhists have established and

are establishing suitable lonely abodes in most congenial surroundings for the benefit of those contemplative sincere followers of the Great Master. It has to be admitted that town life is not very congenial to the contemplative bhikkhu, since he is obsessed with manifold duties which hinder his spiritual development.

There is at present a growing tendency amongst the more educated sincere bhikkhus to retire to solitude, and make the best use of this golden opportunity. Whilst some are unfortunately becoming materialistic and worldly-minded a worthy few are trying to revert to the primitive form of the homeless life. Possibly in the near future spiritually advanced Westerners who have heard of the Buddha-Dhamma might come to the forest hermitages in Ceylon to gain personal experience of this holy life.

At present the majority of bhikkhus are following the studious course. They consider it their chief duty to study the Dhamma with the object of practising it to the best of their ability. As circumstances permit they try to disseminate the Dhamma in every possible way.

In the time of the Buddha all the bhikkhus were engaged in the study, practice, and teaching of the Dhamma. They specialised themselves in various branches of the Tipitaka, and in other higher branches of knowledge.

For instance, Venerable Sariputta and his pupils were distinguished for "great wisdom," Venerable Moggallana and his pupils for "psychic powers," Venerable Kassapa and his pupils for "higher ascetic practices" (Dhutanga), Venerable Anuruddha and his pupils for "divine eye" (Dibbacakkhu), Venerable Punna Mantaniputta and his pupils for "righteous converse," Venerable Upali and his pupils for Vinaya, Venerable Ananda and his pupils for "erudition."

DISSENSIONS

At the first Convocation, according to the Saratthadipani Tika, the Digha Nikaya was entrusted to the pupils of Venerable Ananda Thera, the Majjhima Nikaya to the pupils of Venerable Sariputta Thera, the Samyutta Nikaya to the pupils of Venerable Kassapa Thera, and the Anguttara Nikaya to the pupils of Venerable Anuruddha Thera.

With the march of time dissensions arose in the Sangha mainly with regard to doctrinal points. Different schools of thought arose, but the orthodox bhikkhus remained as theravadins or vibhajjavadins and preserved the doctrine in its pristine purity.

Today we find only two main divisions, namely, **Theravada**, sometimes called Hinayana, and **Mahayana**.

There is a marked difference between Theravada and Mahayana bhikkhus. The latter pay no regard for Vinaya rules. Some of the Mahayana bhikkhus especially in Japan, have even gone to

the extent of "sublimating marriage" and live with their wives and children in their temples. This kind of corrosive sublimation is absolutely foreign to the spirit of the celibate life.

The Theravada bhikkhus, whilst respecting the Vinaya rules, found leisure to engage in literary activities too. At first they compiled Buddhist works.

In Ceylon, however, the Sinhala bhikkhus who were the custodians of their mother tongue, began to translate the Tipitaka into Sinhalese and write religious books for the benefit of the Sinhalese. Thus they disseminated the Dhamma amongst those who were ignorant of Pali, and indirectly they enriched their national literature. Ultimately the bhikkhus became the intelligentsia of the community.

Gradually amongst bhikkhus there arose saints, saintly scholars, and mere scholars. Owing to their religious and literary activities they were able to exercise considerably their benign in-

fluence over the people. They played the dual role of being spiritual advisers and scholars.

POLITICAL BHIKKHUS

Times have changed. Some ultra-modern bhikkhus seem to be flowing with the tide. A few have receded farther from their worthy goal. Some have become professional teachers and salaried Government servants. It is feared that this number will multiply in the near future unless something effective is done to check the temptation for these worldly careers. A suggestion has been made that bhikkhus should participate in politics. It is certain that ideal bhikkhus who strive to lead the holy life would never dream of entering the political arena nor would they allow themselves to be used as political instruments by designing politicians.

It is needless to comment here on the life and character of those pseudo-

monks who have qualified themselves as astrologers, physicians, landed proprietors, book-sellers and so forth. From a religious point of view they are degrading the Noble Order and are not worthy of the yellow robe.

Those who desire to engage in worldly activities which are totally foreign to the spirit of a bhikkhu would be doing a greater and a nobler service both to their religion and country by speedily reverting to the busy lay life, congenial to such callings, instead of polluting the Noble Order by donning the yellow robe of the arahants of old.

It is of them the Buddha has said: Wearing the mantle of the Pious, he who is forward, a polluted of families, impudent, deceitful, unrestrained, a babler, walking in disguise—such a (monk) is "one that defiles the way."

As the Samyutta Nikaya states it is such counterfeit monks that assail the Order, but not external forces.

Narada Thera Takes Buddha Relic to Nepal

Greetings to Maharaja from Pelene Vajiranana Nayaka Thera

THE following is the Message of the Venerable Pelene Siri Dhammarakkhita Vamsalankara Dhammakitti Siri Vajiranana Maha Nayaka Thera, of the Siri Dhammarakkhita Sangha Sabha of Sihaladipa, to His Majesty the Maharajadhiraja Tribhuvana Vira Vikrama Sah Deva of the Ancient and Famous Kingdom of Nepal and his Majesty's Subjects, sent through the Maha Nayaka Thera's chief pupil, the Maha Thera Narada, who was honoured by the Laotian Buddhist Sangha with the designation of Sadhu Maha (at the request of Laos' royal ruler) the Thera Piyadassi, the Bhikkhu Amatananda, and the devoted upasaka Ratnasuriya, a Doctor of Philosophy of the University of London, Dean of the Faculty of Oriental Studies, first Professor of Sinhalese, and Editor-in-Chief of the Sinhalese Dictionary in the University of Ceylon, and the devoted upasaka Aryapala, a Lecturer in the University of Ceylon:

namo tassa, anuttarasamma sambuddhassa, samantacakavalissarassa, sabbasattatikicchakassa, maha karunikassa, paradukkhadukkhittassa, nathassa, amatam dadassa, hitasukha maggadesikadhammarajassa, devabrahma pujitassa, acchariya manussassa, dapitammarassa, vijita vijayassa, sabba-lokekapajjotassa.

Homage to the peerless perfect Buddha, lord of the universe, healer of all flesh, the very soul of compassion, Who suffers with all suffering beings, the refuge, who is the donor of the deathless, Truth's sovran Who points out the way of

goodness and weal, Who is honoured by devas and brahmas, the marvellous man, the defeater of death, the conqueror of conquerors and the one light of every world.

May happiness and health belong to His Majesty the Maharajadhiraja of Nepal and his subjects.

Through our pupils ayasma Narada, Piyadassi and Amatananda, and our upasakas Ratnasuriya and Aryapala, we send our most cordial greetings to all the lovers of righteousness in the land of Nepal dear to all good people the world over and especially to five hundred million Buddhists as the homeland of the Teacher of Truth, the Sakya Simha, the greatest of all benefactors known to history.

On Nepal we invoke the blessings of the Triple Gem and trust that peace and plenty will descend on all its inhabitants.

We of Sri Lanka ever remember your country as a place of pilgrimage. The very name Lumbini can quicken the pulse of Sinhalese and move them profoundly. Your ancient territory, though spatially separated by a vast distance, is near and dear to us through love and veneration for the Greatest of the Sakyas.

This island where we live fell like your country to the non-violent armies of the harmless yellow-robed saints of the Buddha who wrought the Conquest of Righteousness in All Directions for the greatest of all good rulers of mankind, Dharmasoka the leal follower of the Sage of sages.

Since that far-off day in our history we of Simhala have lived in the sub-

lime light of Pure Aryan Principles in spite of national karma often marked by most unfavourable circumstances for spiritual growth, and just now, are after one of the periodical stretches of difficulty and hardship, approaching a time of quiet advancement and tranquillity which is likely to bring in a state of heightened cultural activity.

The religious edifices which our great and good kings erected in honour of the Conqueror's Faith are still to be seen though not in all their pristine glory and much is being done to preserve and renew those ancient shrines in a fit way. The saying common in Jambudvipa twenty centuries ago that Tamraparni is adorned with garlands of beautiful shrines is still true, for new and elegant places of worship have been built in our own times and these bear the salient features of classical Buddhist architecture largely.

According to our chronicles, in our country are enshrined more relics of the Master than anywhere else. At Seruvila in the East is the shrine of the frontal-bone relic. At Mahiyangana in the middle of the country is the shrine of the sacred hair relic and the throat relic, close to the famous Bodhi Tree in whose gentle shade the gentlest of all the kings of the world, the Sinhala Siri Sangha Bodhi, drank the milk of the Buddha's Doctrine of Compassion. In our charming shrine of Thuparama is the collar-bone relic. And in the Great Shrine Suvannamali, the ornament of Anuradhapura, our capital of capitals, is preserved the drona of relics that was worshipped by the Kodiacs, the cousins of the Sakyas, in Nepal.

In this island too is the oldest historical tree in the world, the branch of the Bodhi Tree of our Master sent to Sri Lanka by the Emperor Asoka with his daughter, the Arahant Theri Sanghamitta. And it is still after twenty-two centuries green and thriving in the Maha Megha Garden of the first of our royal Buddhist cities.

As the wonderful eyes on your famous shrines of Svayambhunath and Bodhnath have witnessed the ebb and flow of your country's history, so this great green living symbol of the undiminishing vitality of our emerald isle and the resplendent faith that rules it has beheld the procession of Simhala civilisation and its wonderful power to be reborn again and again after every severe setback and it stands sentinel today as ever before over the consciousness of our people reminding them that their sheet-anchor is their religion, for amidst all the mutations of history the only immutable thing is the Truth of the Buddha.

Here, too, in this island, is the sacred tooth-relic of the Master brought from Ind, by the Princess Hemamala still to be seen and accessible to the devotee's reverent gaze every year when the splendour of the Perahera makes our most beautiful of cities, Kandy, amphitheatred by green hills, draw all feet itwards.

As your mountain home became a casket for precious and rare Buddhist writings in Sanskrit so our country became a repository of the original Buddha-word of the Pali Canon, and thus Nepal and Sri Lanka can be called the Treasuries of the Good Law from which humanity in the East and West were enriched with the Gold and Pearls of the Wisdom of Liberation from Suffering.

In Sri Lanka, the Dharmadvipa, today there are colossal structures resembling your domed Bodhnath where we offer our homage to the Master with the stainless offerings of choice flowers, sweet scents and the like. Also there are hundreds of monasteries where nearly thirty thousand monks have their dwelling and in many a monastery there is present the calm and sanctity of vigorous spirituality that bids fair to flood the wide world with the waters of compassion, enlightenment and solid spiritual achievement.

It is our hope that the spirit of resurgence of the Dharma that can be felt in our island will also be shortly felt in your country. We hope that our Buddhist brothers and sisters of Nepal will, as we in Sri Lanka are doing, study the original Buddha-word so that they may all the better be able to understand even more intelligently than at present the developed doctrines which are Nepal's legacy to the world. We hope that there will be Buddhist schools established for them and that more amongst them will endeavour to live in

the utmost purity taught by the Blessed One and by their lives bless their own and other people.

No country which has not a properly disciplined Sangha can have the true Buddhist spirit. It is the strenuous monk that leads the people along the ways of righteousness and helps the common man to solve the problem of right conduct. Thus the monk is in the vanguard of all moral and spiritual progress and is rightly called the bearer of the Saint's Banner, Arahanta Dhaja Dhari.

These are our final admonitions to the Buddhist devotees of Nepal:

Apart from righteousness there exists no happiness.

Meditate on the Parable of the Saw: "Even if villainous robbers with a two-handled saw were to carve you limb from limb thus should you train yourselves: 'Unsullied shall our hearts remain; no ill word will fall from our lips. Kind and compassionate ever, we will abide loving of heart, and will not harbour hate. And we will enfold those very robbers with the river of love un-failing; and forth from them proceeding, we will radiate the whole wide world with constant thoughts of loving kindness, vast, measureless and benevolent.' Thus, my disciples, thus should you train yourselves."

Unfailingly remember Asoka's immortal edict that underlines toleration:

Samavayo eva sadhu kimti anamam-nasa dhammam srunarua ca susumsera ca.

Concord alone is commendable, to wit, hearkening and hearkening willingly to the doctrines professed by others.

Fulfil the seven conditions of welfare taught by the Lord.

Live in peace and harmony with your fellow-countrymen of other faiths. Serve them. Respect them. Love them with all your heart.

Help your neighbours and be to them as a mother to her only dear child, remembering the Discourse on the Love That Must Be Accomplished, Karaniya Metta Sutta.

Do everything to further the happiness, welfare and well-being of all the people of Nepal and the rest of the world.

We trust that the rulers of Nepal in their turn will in accordance with the lofty principles of Aryavarta give encouragement and succour to their Buddhist subjects to achieve what rightly helps to noble living.

Invoking the blessings of the Triple Gem on the inhabitants of Nepal again, we wish them prosperity and the final bliss of liberation from the defilements

of lust and hatred and the defilement of ignorance, which is a bar to right understanding.

We wish that they will partake of whatever merit we have acquired in the service of the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha, and work out their salvation with diligence, through the conquest of purity, the conquest of generosity and above all the conquest of knowledge which opens the eye of compassion, kindness, mercy, pity and love for all that breathes.

"If we behold the relics of the Lord, we behold the Lord," said the Arahant Mahinda, the son of the Emperor Dharmasoka, to the King of Sri Lanka. To the wise the presence of a sacred relic is as conducive to spiritual growth and to peace as is the presence of the Lord.

Tisthantam pujayed yas tu yas capi parinivrttam

Samacittaprasadena nasti punyavisasata.

Therefore in token of our love, we through our pupils and upasakas, offer to our Buddhist devotees of Nepal the gift of the most sacred Body Relic of our Lord, dearer to us than our life, and wish that His Majesty the Maharajadhiraja will become the custodian of it on behalf of his Buddhist subjects and build a worthy shrine for the sacred relic out of love for the Crest-jewel of the Aryas, the Greatest Man ever born and the Truth that He proclaimed for the liberation of beings.

We feel that with the entry of this priceless relic into Nepal, the Lord of Mercy is once again entering His own Janmabhumi to awaken His people to a sense of their magnificent heritage and to shelter them as compassionate cow her only calf or motherbird her frail fledgelings. And so we trust that all Nepal will honour this holy relic as the blessing of the very Lord's presence.

The spell that puts baneful passion to rout,

The vehicle best to bliss and all ills' end,

The bright sun that drives dark dangers out,

Worship Him, the three worlds' only Friend.

Given at Vajirarama, Colombo, Ceylon on the seventh day of the waxing moon of Caitra of the Buddha Year 2489, according to the reckoning prevalent in Simhala, Monday the eighth of April, in the year one thousand nine hundred and forty-six of the Christian Era.

(The preliminary arrangements for this visit were made by the Colombo Y.M.B.A. who obtained for Narada Thera and party necessary facilities to enter Nepal—Editor, The Buddhist.)

Procedure at an Almsgiving to Bhikkhus

Mudaliyar P. D. Ratnatunga Explains the Sanghika Dana

(Inquiries are often made, especially by non-Buddhists, about Buddhist customs and ceremonies. To such this article should be of particular interest.—Editor, "The Buddhist").

DANA means charitable gift or the distribution of such. Giving in charity is highly commended in all religions. According to Buddhism voluntary renunciation of one's possessions is the beginning of the religious life and is the first of the three meritorious deeds, the other two being *sila* (good conduct) and *bhavana* (cultivation or development of the mind). It is thus the simplest form of morality and the easiest and the most visible. Dr. Paul Dahlke remarks that "charity in a certain sense is the second-hand on the moral horologe of Buddhism." Like the movements of the minute-hand and the hour-hand, the higher virtues of good character and mind-culture are not so readily noticed as the practice of giving.

There are three classes of givers. The first embraces those who give in order to eliminate *lobha* or *tanha* (greed) which is the cause of continued existence. The antidote to greed being *dana*, they give with a view to make themselves as free and as light as possible in their progress towards the highest. The second are those that give with a view to being rewarded in this life or in future births. There is, finally, the donor who gives out of pure compassion without the thought of ridding himself of a burden or of expecting a reward in the future. The commonest motive for giving in charity, not excepting instances of casual relief of distress, may be said to be the hope of future reward. The measure of such reward, according to Buddhism, is in proportion to the virtues of the recipient; thus, the best field for Buddhist givers to sow their seeds is in the Sangha (the community of monks) who are "of good and upright conduct, worthy of gifts, offerings, and hospitality." It must not be understood, however, that those who give to the virtuous are thereby debarred from ultimately getting rid of greed.

TIME-HONOURED PRACTICE

Special merit and importance are attached to gifts of the Sangha (1). They are known as *Maha-dana*, the great offerings. From the time of the introduction of Buddhism to Ceylon, our kings gave *Maha-danas* to the Sangha. It is recorded that "never has a race of rulers given themselves so completely to the service of religion as this long succession of Sinhala kings,

(1) A bhikkhu "is entirely dependent on the laity for food, robes, lodgings, and medicine."—I. B. Horner, "The Book of the Discipline" (Vinaya Pitaka), Vol. I, p. xviii.

one after another of whom sought to outdo his predecessor in his gifts to the monkhood. There were times in which the land supported sixty thousand monks. One single cloister in Anuradhapura numbered three thousand inmates, who all lived upon the bounty of kings."

This time-honoured Buddhist practice of giving *Sanghika-dana* (or gifts to the Sangha) prevails up to date. Today, even with rationed and controlled food, the number and frequency of repasts to monks is not by any means less than in the plentiful times of the past.

A *Sanghika-dana* is the distribution of any suitable gifts—of which there are several lists in the Pali books—to members of the Sangha. It is, however, now commonly understood to mean a rich and plentiful meal to them accompanied, almost invariably, by other useful gifts such as robes. It is generally accepted that at a *Sanghika-dana* five or more *Upasampada* bhikkhus should be present (2). The following is the usual procedure, though there are slight variations and modifications according to the number of individuals present, or the occasion &c.

NO NUMBER MENTIONED

About a week or two before the day of the *dana*, the *dayaka* (donor of the gift) himself, or if he is ill or otherwise incapacitated, an adult son or other senior male member of the family, goes to the nearest *vihara* or to the *vihara* which the *dayaka* frequents most, and invites its chief *thera* "for a *Sanghika-dana*" without mentioning the number of bhikkhus he expects for the *dana*. To invite a particular number of guests is irregular as the full merits of a *Sanghika-dana* are not acquired thereby. The bhikkhus who come in response to an invitation "to the Sangha," whatever their number, represent the whole community of bhikkhus. If a definite number is invited, the *dana* is to that number of individuals only and not to the entire Sangha. The *dayaka's* worth in worldly possessions and the extent of his *saddha* (faith in Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha), being known to the bhikkhu who accepts the invitation on behalf of the community, the latter decides on

(2) A *Vinaya-kamma* (ecclesiastical act) requires the presence of not less than four bhikkhus fully admitted to the Order (*Upasampada*). A *Sanghika-dana* not being a *Vinaya-kamma*, can be given to, and accepted by, even one *Upasampada* bhikkhu who in that case represents the whole community of bhikkhus.

the number of monks—not less than five—(3) to be taken to the repast. If, however, the *dayaka* expects an unusually large number, he mentions the number at the time of the invitation by saying "not less than twenty, fifty, &c." (4). If the *dayaka* wishes to secure the presence of any one or more particular bhikkhus, he should give their names to the monk to whom the invitation is made. To extend direct invitation to others except with the approval of that monk would be discourteous. Sufficient money for the travelling expenses of any bhikkhus who may have to come from a distance and money for postage and stationery (if such be needed) should be deposited with the lay attendant at the *vihara*, who will make payments as necessity arises.

The special occasion, if any, for the *dana*—e.g., the anniversary of a relative's death, or the marriage of a daughter or son—is also intimated to the bhikkhu so that the monk preaching *bana* (the sermon) at the *dana* may refer to it.

The invitation was accepted in silence in former times but it is done so by word of mouth now. If, however, there is any insurmountable difficulty in regard to the date, another suitable day is fixed for the purpose, or the *dayaka* invites some other bhikkhu.

If the number of monks resident in the *Vihara* is not sufficient for the *dana*, the *thera* goes to other *viharas* in the neighbourhood (as a rule of his own *nikaya* or sect) and invites a number a little in excess of the number required; the excess is to provide for any who may not be able to come owing to unexpected reasons. Even in these days of economic difficulty, the exact number of bhikkhus to be present at a *dana* is rarely specified beforehand.

On the day of the *dana*, the *dayaka* or other male member of the family goes to the *vihara* to conduct the bhikkhus to the house. He also brings from the *vihara* the *dhatu-karanduva* (5) placed on his head, under an awning (*viyana*). The bhikkhus, having assembled earlier at the *vihara*, follow the *dhatu-karanduva* in the order of *Upasampada* seniority, any *samaneras* (neophytes) bringing up the rear according to seniority in robing. When the number is large, the bhikkhus and

(3) See foot-note (2).

(4) Not many years ago, the number of bhikkhus at a *Sanghika-dana* in the Southern Province exceeded one thousand.

(5) Dagaba-shaped casket, generally of silver, containing Buddha relics.

the dhatu-karanduva are brought in a formal procession with music.

On arrival at the house, the dhatu-karanduva is placed on a table or other suitable stand in a prominent position in the hall where, by now, the food—not the whole of it (6), but small quantities of each kind—dished into plates or bowls(7) is placed on the floor within reach of the bhikkhus when seated (atpasa), on mats spread with white calico. Other offerings (Pirikara—Pali, Parikkhara) consisting of articles useful to bhikkhus such as robes, sandals, umbrellas, books, stationery, brooms, plates, &c. are placed beside the food. A clean white sheet is spread over all the offerings.

ORDER OF SEATING

The bhikkhus are conducted into the house after the feet of each one have been washed and wiped with a clean white cloth. They proceed on carpet or white cloth spread on the floor (pavada) up to the hall where the meal is to be served and they sit down on coir(8) cushions placed either on cloth-covered mats on the floor, or on low benches or low chairs, according to the means of the dayaka. In sitting, the eldest monk in Upasampada seniority sits at one end and the others sit next to him in due order. Sometimes, as in the days of the Buddha, the eldest sits in the middle (like the chairman at a public dinner) and the others sit on either side of him in order of seniority.

Pansil (the five precepts) is now administered to all present by one of the senior monks, after which the Buddha-pujava (offering to the Buddha) is made. A cup of strained water is placed on the table on which the dhatu-karanduva stands; a portion of rice and curry, a portion of curd and treacle (pani) if available, and any other food used for the dana are placed on the table, as well as a tray of betel and areca and a pirikara (a silk handkerchief or a towel or other such thing). All this is formally offered (to the Buddha) by the dayaka reciting a four-line stanza(9). A senior

(6) Whatever quantity of food is formally offered in a Sanghika-dana is the property of the Sangha and no portion of it, if left over, may be eaten by others. It is, therefore, usual to place on the floor for formal offering a quantity that is likely to be consumed by the bhikkhus. When the quantity so offered is found to be insufficient, more food is brought from the reserve supply.

(7) Bhikkhus of the Ramanna and Amarapura Sects use iron bowls. Most bhikkhus of the Siyam Nikaya eat off ordinary plates.

(8) Cotton is forbidden.

(9) අධිවාසෙනු නො හනෙන
භොජනං පරිකප්පිතං
අනුකම්මං උපාදය
පිතිහෙතාතු මුක්ඛං

"Out of compassion for us, O Lord, please accept this gift of food &c. I have offered One."

bhikkhu then tells the dayakas briefly the merits of giving in charity and calls upon the chief dayaka to offer the dana-vastu (the food and other gifts) to the Sangha. The dayaka formally offers the food and the pirikara to the whole Sangha, i.e., to the community of bhikkhus as a whole. It is the practice among the dayakas of some nikayas to make the offering only to "all the bhikkhus seated in the hall." Several formulas are used. One such is "Imam bhikkham sa-parikkharam sakalassa bhikkhusanghassa dema" meaning "this food with the accompanying gifts we give to the whole community of bhikkhus." This is repeated three times. Another is "Imam bhikkham sa-parikkharam imaya salaya nisinnassa sakalassa bhikkhusanghassa dema," meaning "this food with the accompanying gifts we give to all the bhikkhus seated in this hall," repeated three times. When the latter formula is used, those assembled and seated accept the dana on behalf of the whole Sangha as is also the case when the other formula is used. It is said that the distribution of the pirikara is facilitated by the use of the second-mentioned formula. If there are no pirikara (accompanying gifts) but only food, the word "sa-parikkharam" (with the accompanying gifts) is omitted.

The actual eating of the food should be finished before noon. If time permits, the bhikkhus recite pirit wishing good luck to the donors. All the Upasampada bhikkhus then utter a formula(10) wishing well to the dayakas. Soon after, one of the senior monks "gives merit" by reciting a formula the length of which generally depends on the importance of the occasion, or the size of the assembly of monks and of the dayakas forming the audience. A specimen formula is subjoined as an appendix.

At the request of a senior monk, the dayaka or other layman present gives to the monk's hands a portion of food and a pirikara, if any, (e.g., a robe or a towel). The monk proceeds to the most senior bhikkhu (the 'chairman') to whom he offers the food and the pirikara uttering a formula meaning "this first portion is offered to you; the others of us partake of the rest."(11). He then resumes his seat.

(10) ඉච්ඡිතං පජීතං තුඤ්චං
බිඤ්ඤාමෙව සමප්පෙති
සබ්බෙ පුරෙනතු වික්ඛසංකප්පා
මඤ්ඤි ජොතිරසො යථා

"May your desires and wishes reach immediate fulfilment. May all the aspirations of your heart attain completion like the radiance of a jewel of many facets." For the last three words "mani jotiraso yatha" (like the radiance of a jewel of many facets) some substitute the words "cando pannarasi yatha" (like the moon when it is full).

(11) This is done halfway of "obtaining leave" to proceed with the meal and the subsequent division of pirikara.

HOUSEHOLDER SERVES

A cup of strained water is served to each monk with which he washes his mouth and fingers, spittoons being provided for the purpose. The spittoons are then taken away from the hall to be brought back later to rinse the mouth and wash the fingers after the meal. The dayaka then hands a plate or bowl, as the case may be, of food to each bhikkhu individually. The serving of the meal and the attendance there at serving (including the lifting of spittoons) are done by the dayaka himself assisted by the other males present; nowadays females also join, though rarely. Old and trusted servants are also allowed to join in the serving so that they, too, may acquire merit. The bhikkhus partake of the meal in silence, while all the time the dayaka and his assistants serve more and more food till food is refused by the monk covering the plate or bowl with his fingers(12). At the end of the repast—which generally consists of rice and curry (fish and flesh also, but some bhikkhus do not eat them), curd and treacle, sweets, dessert and coffee and tea—trays of betel with the five ingredient (paspalavata) used therewith, viz., arecanut, camphor, cinnamon, ginger, and lime to which are also added tobacco, nutmeg, catechu, zingiber &c., are passed round.

A senior monk experienced in preaching the Dhamma then delivers a sermon in which he explains, inter alia, the nature of the kusala-kamma (good deed) performed and the merit acquired by giving food—food which confers long life, colour (happy faces), comfort, physical and mental powers, and wisdom (ayu, vanua, sapa (sukha), bala, panna)—to those who need them in order to fulfil the purpose for which they took to the robes. The devas are thereafter called upon to share the merit, which is followed by the pavadima (pouring of water). A lipped jar or other similar vessel is filled with water and this water is slowly poured by the dayaka and others who wish to join in the ceremony into a bowl placed on a receptacle, while reciting a gatha transferring the merit acquired to departed relatives(13). After all the water has been poured to fill the bowl and overflow it, the bhikkhus give their blessing by reciting a formula which means "May you have all you wish. Just as water falling on a height flows to the lower ground, this merit given by you inevitably reaches beings less fortunate than you, who are in need of merit." The pinkama (ceremony of Sanghika-dana) then comes to a conclusion.

(12) He eats the food with great decorum and in moderation observing many rules.

(13) The Tirokudda Sutta of the Khuddakapatha and Petavatthu and their commentaries explain this "giving of merit" to departed relatives. See also F. L. Woodward, "The Buddhist Doctrine of Reversible Merit" in "The Buddhist Review", London, Vol. VI (1914) pp. 38-50.

The *abittayas* (temple attendants), if any, who accompany the bhikkhus are fed well and given more food to be taken away for their dinner. After the bhikkhus have departed, any beggars present are also lavishly fed, after which the *dayakas* take their mid-day meal (14).

In the distribution of the *pirikara*, the *garu-badu* (indivisible articles like lamps, furniture &c.) are given to the temple, the chief bhikkhu of which had accepted the invitation for the *dana*. Robes and other divisible articles are divided among all the bhikkhus present at the *dana*. Those who are in need of any particular articles are requested to take them. In the division of the *pirikara*, the *dayaka* has no voice whatever. If he desires, he may give any special article to a particular bhikkhu separately, but it is not then "given to the Sangha," and the merit of such individual gift is not so great as that of a gift to the Sangha as a whole.

APPENDIX

FORMULA OF MERIT-GIVING

“එසො නිබ්බුතීනො
අපේයොසා අනුගාමිකො
පභාය ගමනියෙසු
චිතං ආදාය ගච්ඡති”

යනුවෙන් දනාදී වූ කුසල කම් යෙහි ආනිශංසය භාග්‍යවත් සමස්ත සම්බුද්ධ සම්මාද රජෝත්තමයාණන් වහන්සේ විසින් ගෙන භාර දක්වා වදාරණ ලද්දේය. මෙසේ හෙයින් අසෙසජන වැනකිය වූ භාග්‍යවත් බුදුරජාණන් වහන්සේ ගේ ශාරීරික ධාතුන් වහන්සේලා ප්‍රමුඛ කොට සවි සීලසාදී අමිත ගුණගණ්ඨකයෙන් උපලක්ෂිත වූ මහාසම්මතරත්නය විෂයයෙහි පිරිනමන ලද මෙම සම්ප්‍රදාය ගත දක්ෂිණාවෙන් ලැබිය යුතු කුසල කුසල සමහාරය ප්‍රථමකොට ලොක සංරක්ෂණය කරන්නා වූ මහෙස්ස, කමලාසන, පිතාකර්ම දී වූ සමසන දිව්‍යරජසමුහයා විසින් අනුමෝදන් වනු ලැබේවා. ප්‍රථම පුණ්‍යානු මොදනාවෙන් අධිකතර විතනප්‍රීති යට පමිණියා වූ එම දෙවියන්ගේ දෙව්‍යානුභාවයෙන් හා බුද්ධාදීරත්තන යානුභාවයෙන් මෙබඳු ශ්‍රාවණයන් තුළින් ඉහාත්මකාවසම්බන්ධය මේ ලෝකයෙහි දී වන්නා වූ සකලාන් තරය සමෝපද්‍රවයන් තීරුද්‍රව අදරු මෙන් විභන විධිංසනයකොට ආයු රු රෙ ගසා දී සකලාභිවාචි වධිතය ද නෙරේවා.

තවද මේ කුසලානිශංස ධර්මයන් තම තමන්ට හා තමන් තමන් කාල ක්‍රියා කලා වූ මාතෘ පිතෘ භාතෘ භගිනියා දී වූ සියලුම ඥාතීන් කෙරෙහිත් පිහිටා ඒ මේ හැම

(14) *Sanghika-dana* is generally an occasion for a family gathering and much conviviality prevails at the meal following the *dana*.

දෙනම මෙතැන් පටන් නිවන් දක්නා ජාතී දක්වා ම නරකාදි සතර අපායොත්පත්තියකට කිසිම කලෙකවත් නොපැමිණ වානුම්භා රජකාදී වූ සද්විප ලොකයෙහි ඉපිද සද්විප ශ්‍රී සම්පත් අනුලොම ප්‍රතිලොම වශයෙන් වලඳු නැවත මෙම මනුෂ්‍ය ලොකයෙහි උපන් කල්හි ක්ෂත්‍රිය බ්‍රාහ්මණ දී උතුම් මහා සාරවංශවල ඉපිද මහා සම්මත වංශාධිපති වූ මහරජදරුවන්ට මෙන්ද ජෝතිය, උප්පලවන්ත, පුණ්වධිත, මහාරොපාලසාදී අමිත භොගී මහත් ධන සිටුවරුන්ට මෙන් ද, පිතාබා, චක්‍රා, පද්මා, සුමනා, සුජාතා, යසොධර දේවීන්ට මෙන්ද, අකලට නොනැස්නා ක්ෂේත්‍ර වසනු හිරණ්‍ය සවණ් වසනා හරණ මධුරවූ ආහාර පාන වර්ග පිරිවර සේනා සම්පත් ආදී සිතූ පැතු සියලුම සම්පත් ලබා, ලද්ද වූ සම්පත් කෙරෙහි නිරුඳයව, තම තමන් සිත්සේ ප්‍රයෝජන විඳීමෙන් කිසිත් මධුරු චේතනාවක් නැතිව ඒ ඒ කාලවලට තම තමන් කර පැමිණෙන ශ්‍රමණ බ්‍රාහ්මණ කපණ්‍ය ධික වණ්ඛකාදීන් විෂයයෙහි දන්දීම ආදී වශයෙන් නොයෙකුත් සුවර්ත ධර්මයන් රැස් කරමින් සැප යෙන් අහුප්‍රාණාව සසර සැරිසරණ කල්හි මතු අනාගත කාලයෙහි ලොව පහල වි වදාරණ මෙහි නම් භාග්‍යවත් බුදුරජාණන් වහන්සේ විසින් සකල සත්ත්වයන් සන්තෝෂ කරමින් දෙශනාකර වදාරණ ලබන් නා වූ උතුම් වූ ශ්‍රී සම්මි දෙශනාවන් අසා තුන්තර බොධියෙන් තම තමන් විසින් ප්‍රාණිතා කරණ ලද එක්කර බොධියකට පැමිණ අජර මරවූ උතුම් වූ අමාත මහා නිචාණ සම්පත් ලැබීමෙහි සිතා විතනප්‍රීතින් යුක්තව පින් අනුමෝදන් විය යුතුයි.

TRANSLATION

“.....this is the hoard well-hoarded, unbeatable, that goes along (with him);
casting away things that might go, but laying hold of this he goes.....” (15).

Thus the exalted and perfectly self-enlightened omniscient Buddha expounded the beneficial effects of good deeds such as giving in charity. Accordingly, in the first place, may all celestial rulers such as Sakka, Brahma and Visnu, who protect the world, participate in the weighty merit acquired by the respectful offering of this gift (of food &c) to the community of the Great Jewel of the Sangha which is adorned by the possession of limitless noble virtues &c—an offering made after placing in the forefront the bodily relics of the Buddha who is the Exalted One worthy of worship by all. By the spiritual power of these devas who are exceedingly delighted by being invited first to accept merit, and by the influ-

ence of the Three Jewels, namely, the Buddha [Dhamma and Sangha], may all accidental injury and ailments in this world never approach [good] people like these who have religious faith, and may such disasters in this life disappear like darkness at the sight of the sun, and may all prosperity such as long life and good wealth accrue to them.

Furthermore, may the merits of this good deed be established in each one of you and in all your deceased relatives such as father, mother, brother, and sister, and by virtue thereof may they and these all, from now till the birth in which Nibbana is realized, never be born in any of the four states of suffering such as purgatory (Naraka) (16). May you [and they] be born in the six realms of the devas such as the Catur-maha-rajika (17), and enjoy all heavenly pleasures therein in regular order and reversed, forward and backward. Thereafter when you re-enter this realm of human beings, may you be born in noble, distinguished and wealthy families such as those of Khatthiyas and Brahmins, and have earthly possessions desired and not perishable untimely, such as fields and farms, gold and money, wearing apparel, ornaments, delicious food and drinks, attendants and guards—in short prosperity like unto that of great and noble princes of the dynasty of Maha Sammatta, and of millionaire merchants (18) like Jotiya, Uppalavanna, Purnavardhana, Migara, Upali and of ladies (18) like Visakha, Candra, Paduma, Sumana, Sujata and Yasodara, and without any lust, craving or attachment to such prosperity, and not being niggardly or miserly, but enjoying the use of those possessions in the manner each of you prefer, and accumulating therewith merit by doing various good deeds such as gifts to applicants for relief who come to you at various times, for example, to ascetics, Brahmins, beggars, tramps and encumbrants, may you attain to the zenith of well-being. While you in this manner sojourn in Samsara (continued existence), on the appearance on this earth of the exalted Buddha [to be] named Maitri of the future, may you, after listening to the noble Dhamma which he will preach pleasing all beings, gain enlightenment in that Bodhi (19) which

(15) *Nidhikanda Sutta* in “The Minor Anthologies of the Pali Canon,” Part I (*Khuddakapatha*), pp. 152 and 153. Cf. “What I spent I had; what I saved I lost; what I gave I have.”
(16) The other three are re-birth as—
1. an animal
2. a ghost (*Petayoni*), and
3. an Asura (*Titan*, demon).
(17) The other five are—
1. *Tavatimsa* presided over by Sakka,
2. *Yama* (the realm of the *Yama Devas*),
3. *Tusita* the realm of Delight,
4. *Nimmanarati*, and
5. *Paranimmita-vasavatti*.
(18) These were well-known lay folk of the time of the Buddha.
(19) The three grades of enlightenment are (1) Buddha, (2) *Pacceka Buddha* and (3) *Arahat*.

each of you aspire to, and attain to the undecaying, deathless, and most

excellent Nibbana. With cheerful and joyous minds, realize the extent of the

merit you have acquired and aim at that highest state Nibbana.

Norm Notes

By

Bhikkhu Soma

Pivotal to Buddhist philosophical discussion is the objective standpoint, the detached view, the seeing of things in dry light. In the commentary to the Discourse on the Specific Reason (Mula-pariyaya Sutta) the first discourse of the Middle Collection (Majjhima Nikaya), Buddhaghosa mentions craving (tanha), prejudice (ditthi), vanity (mana) as causes of imaginings (manana) and cites the following from the Later Rehearsal (anusangiti) of the Scriptures:—

"He (the worldling) knows not what the five-group individuality (sakkaka) really is, and all imaginings arise from that wrongly grasped individuality. He, the foolish worldling, takes this repellent, perishing, suffering individuality that cannot be led in the opposite sense, and causes the growth of imaginings. Like moth the fire, he sees the individuality as good and pleasing, and so by craving imaginings rise. As a dog sees excellence in filth, he roots himself in the perception of permanence and thinks that the individuality is something fortunate; Like a witless one looking into a mirror, the unintelligent man thinks, "this individuality is my self, this belongs to my self," and thus from prejudice imaginings rise. Imagining is called the subtle, hard to be got rid of bond of evil, by which the worldling is fettered. Even by much struggling he cannot get beyond the concept of his individuality tied as he is to it like dog by thong to strong post. The fool who is attached to individuality is ever harried by birth, decay, disease, sorrow, etc."

Only the Perfect One, the Araha is entirely free from imaginings, "because of his complete penetration into the nature of the object, and because he has totally annihilated the root of unskill (akusalamulam)".

Pure intellectual activity according to Buddhism cannot come to be unless the mind is rid of imaginings; and freedom from imagining is the heart of the detached view of things which guarantees right understanding of life. Without preparatory psychical catharsis (citavodana) no progress in true knowledge can be made. The mind has to be cleansed of its passions before it can get to know things as they are (yathabhutam).

Intellectual integrity is impossible with a will that is divided against it-

self. Impartial judgments cannot proceed from a biased will; a will that is torn between likes and dislikes cannot hope to view a thing in that medium where a thing is seen just as it is, and without egoistic undertones vitiating the meaning of the object.

Pure intellectual activity is rational throughout, and its objects are all objects of reason as distinct from objects of sense and objects such as heaven and hell which fall outside the region of intellection and sense-perception.

The truth of suffering as regards all component things, and the universal truth of the emptiness of all things whatsoever as regards an ens (dukkha sacca sabbasunnata bhavam), are pure intellectual things, pure knowledge (nanam).

As indicated above, the attainment of nanam is clearly not the same in the teaching of the Buddha as it is outside the teaching of the Sugata be those outside teachings what they may, i.e., teachings of faith or of science. In the Dhamma, the condition of the mind which knows is taken into serious account—the condition of the mind as regards moral purity and emotional equipoise. The pacifying of the mind and the eliminating therefrom of all factors hindering clear comprehension are carried out as basic needs for pure intellection.

Pure intellectual activity needs a pure mind as ground of action. According to the Dhamma, the mind is at every renewal of itself, clean, unsullied and bright. Says the Buddha: "Pabhasaramidam, bhikkhave, cittam; tanca kho agantukehi upakkilesehi upakkilithanti (Radiant is this mind, o monks; and indeed by adventitious defilements is it soiled)." It is possible to keep pure every state of consciousness to the end. Renunciation, morality and contemplative practice are the means to keep the mind pure. They are solvents of the "adventitious defilements" which obscure correct vision and they develop the inner environment suitable for apprehending reality. Through the persistent application of these three factors one gains the truly objective standpoint, and realises the truth, in all its fullness and splendour.

through pure intellection. Realisation (sacchikaranam) is wisdom (panna). The instrument of pure intellection by which nanam is gained in the Dhamma is termed radical reflection (yoniso manasikara). It is attentiveness which goes down to the root of things, the womb of things. It penetrates to the very foundations of things, and grasps fully the nature of an object. Its nature is to comprehend, take in, understand the meaning of a thing. And when the meaning is understood, the thoughtful man uses the knowledge he has gained to end suffering. That use is wisdom. "Just as, o king, a barley reaper, laying hold of a sheaf of barley by the left, and the scythe by the right, cuts the sheaf with scythe, even so the endeavouring aspirant for light having laid hold of the activity of mind by reflection, by wisdom cuts off the defilements. Thus comprehension is the mark of reflection, and the destroying (of suffering) is the mark of wisdom."

But "the person who is markedly unreflecting does, like a herd of cattle fallen into a river's eddy, like an ox tied to a revolving wheel-contraption, turn round and circle again and again going into the womb." For him there is no ending of ill.

The person who practises radical reflection develops the eightfold path headed by right understanding and for him ignorance and the whole mass of suffering linked to ignorance end.

Thus in lack of radical reflection is rooted the round of rebirth; in radical reflection the escape from that round.

* * *

Wisdom in the sense of realisation is essentially beyond the limits of the communicable and the logical. Therefore the highest truth, Nibbana, is sometimes called alogical (atakkavacara). But the alogical character of Nibbana is not something unique to that highest experience. In every common experience there is a party that is alogical, a part that is beyond description in words. Considering the fullness, greatness, purity and richness of the experience of Nibbana, we can infer that there must be in that experience very much more that is inexpressible than in lesser experiences. Yet there is, in the Scriptures, enough explanation of what Nibbana is, to enable an inquirer to gain a rational idea of the highest wisdom.

* * *

Realisation of the truth is the application to life of the nanam reached

Buddhists know well the limitations of logic and systems of philosophy. Therefore the Buddha taught in the discourse to the Kalamas: "Ma takka-hetu, ma nayahetu." However far logic may be from the highest truth, yet it is only in the sphere of the logical that one can talk about a teaching and set forth something at least of its drift to those who need the truth to be pointed out to them. That the Buddha was a consummate speaker and thoroughly skilled in the use of

words in the right way show that he valued the sphere of the logical (takka) for the highest purpose; the salvation of beings. The fact that the Master who could by his very personality inspire confidence found it almost always necessary to expound and explain the truth in order to lead men aright, makes it clear that, barring exceptional cases, a thinking mind has to be logically satisfied if it is to proceed on towards the task of realisation. If a teaching, generally fails to

impress, in a rational way, it is doubtful that that part of it which is beyond the scope of reason will convince the intelligent. For this is certain: The allogical part of no teaching of salvation, false or true, can be disproved. It is this negative fact that is the mainstay of all religions based on blind faith and which do not possess a rational means of explaining their doctrines. But in the teaching of the Buddha it is the provable that is most stressed.

Buddhist Ideals in Education

When Monasteries Acted as Feeders to Universities

By GUNASEELA VITANAGE

"Neither father nor mother nor any other relative will do a man so much good as a well-directed mind."—(Dhammapada).

Volumes have been written on the enlightening and ennobling influence that Buddhism exercised on humanity in general, its heightening the moral consciousness of man, its emancipating the human mind from the fetters of orthodoxy and superstition, its freeing woman from the tyranny and thralldom of man and its contribution to the cultural aspects of life such as painting, architecture, sculpture and literature, but even today very little is known about the tremendous part it played in the field of secular education. It is for instance not very well known that Buddhism was the first world religion to enter the field of secular education and make it both popular and free; neither is it generally known that it was under Buddhist auspices that the world's first universities, or seats of higher education, had had their origin and growth. The ideals and traditions created by the early Buddhists in the sphere of education have diffused themselves the world over and have survived up to our day as mighty living forces.

In the course of an address delivered at the Calcutta University in 1916, Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam traced the development of the university ideal through ages and indicated how the origin of the modern universities like Oxford and Cambridge could be traced to the Buddhist Universities in Ancient India. "The earliest and most famous of the European universities were Paris, Salerno and Bologna," said Sir Ponnambalam, "Salerno, established under Saracen influence, was for centuries a famous school of medicine; Bologna was a great school of law with other faculties added later, while Paris was the centre of philosophy and theology, and was the model on which the universities of Oxford and Cambridge were organized. The intellectual revival in Europe, of which these universities were the expression, had its source in the great Mohammedan universities which

extended from Samarkand and Bokhara to Fez and Cordova."

Sir Ponnambalam then pointed out that the Islamic universities themselves were modelled on the great Buddhist universities of Taksha-sila, Ujjaini, Nalanda, Dudda, Vikramasila and other centres of learning in India which flourished from the 2nd century B.C. to 10th century A.C.

ARAB CONTRIBUTION

Every student of European history knows that Arabs were mainly responsible for the intellectual revival in Modern Europe. Montucla says for instance, in his "History of Mathematics" that "The Arabs were long the sole depositories of learning and it is to their commerce that Europe owes the first rays of light which came to chase away the darkness of the 11th, 12th and the 13th centuries." The cultural links that Arabs had with ancient Greece on the one side and ancient India on the other side are also well known to students of history.

We must not run away with the idea that before the advent of Buddhism, India was in an intellectual vacuum. As a matter of fact Buddhism came into existence at a time when the country was in an intellectual and spiritual ferment. Philosophies ranging from idealism to materialism and from theism to atheism had already made their appearance. Reference is made in the Pali Commentaries to sixty-two schools of religious thought which were in vogue during the Buddha's time. Moreover, the priestly class or Brahmins, as a community have been famous from times immemorial for their learning. But all these philosophies and Brahminical teachings had one grave defect, in that they failed to reach or educate the masses. The philosophers were indulging themselves in lofty metaphysics or hair-splitting sophistry; the Brahmins were contented with the performance of their mystic rites and sacrifices, while the vast majority of the common people lived in utter ignorance believing in whatever the philosophers

or the Brahmins deigned to tell them.

It was Buddhism that brought the torch of learning to these common people. In spirit as well as in letter it was thoroughly suited to the task. It had already cut across all barriers of class, caste and creed. Under its dispensation salvation was no longer to be the prerogative of a chosen people, whether of the hereditary aristocracy or of the intellectual aristocracy. It was to be the common heritage of all those who were prepared to live the Good Life. Faith, authority, tradition and revelation had no place in the new teaching. Intellectual assent, critical spirit, use of reason and personal experience were considered virtues instead. "Ehi Passiko" "Come and see," said the Great Teacher and that call was to all men, princess and paupers, philosophers and peasants alike.

The early Buddhists who were infused with the missionary spirit sought to enlighten all people, children and adults, in all possible ways. They converted every monastery into a school, and taught the children from their seventh year by holding regular classes. Where there were no symbols for writing in the vernaculars, these pioneers innovated characters; where there was a developed language, they used it constantly, improved its grammar and enriched it by introducing Pali and Sanskrit terms. During a time when paper was not known, when books had to be copied laboriously by hand, it speaks volumes for their zeal, when we know that these missionary teachers wrote books and made copies of them for the use of their students.

ASOKA'S 84,000 MONASTERIES

It is recorded that the great Emperor Asoka alone founded as many as 84,000 monasteries in all parts of India. The Buddhist kings and householders who followed Asoka too must have built quite a large number of monasteries. The Chinese traveller, Hiuen Tsiang or Yuan Chang, who came to India in the 7th century records that there were ten

large monasteries with 500 resident monks in Kalinga, 20 monasteries with 3,000 monks in Andhra and 20 monasteries with 1,000 monks in Dhanyakataka. Considering the fact that Buddhism had already entered its period of decline in India by this time, it can fairly be assumed that there was a network of monasteries in that country during the heyday of that religion and what a tremendous difference it must have made those days in the intellectual life of India with each one of these monasteries as a potential centre of religious and secular education!

In these monasteries the students were not only taught the three R's, but also learning of a higher type. Hiuen Tsiang says: "When the children were seven years of age, they are sent to the monastery to learn the Five Sciences. The first was the science of grammar; the second that of the skilled professions concerned with the principle of mechanical arts, the "dual process" and astrology; the third was the science of logic or reasoning; the fourth was the science of medicine and the fifth the science of eternal values or Buddha Dhamma with its attendant ethics, psychology and philosophy."

Hiuen Tsiang also commends the great perseverance, kindness and skill the teachers exercised in the discharge of their duties. "These teachers," he observes, "explain the general meaning to their pupils and teach them the minutiae; they rouse them to activity and skilfully win them to progress; they instruct the inert and sharpen the dull. When pupils, intelligent and acute, are addicted to idle shirking, the teachers doggedly persevere in repeating instructions until their training is finished. When the pupils are thirty years old, their mind being settled and their education finished, they go into office and the first thing they do then is to reward the kindness of their teachers."

It can be safely inferred that a great many of these monasteries acted as feeders to those great universities that had sprung up in various parts of India during that time.

There was the University of Takshasila in the Far North on the banks of the river Indus, Mathura and Ujjaini in Central India, Nalanda, Dudda and Vikramasila near Pataliputra in Bihar. All these universities attracted students

not only from various parts of India but also from distant countries like China, Persia and Arabia. The most famous of all these was the Nalanda University where for some time the great philosopher Nagarjuna was the head.

GUPTA PERIOD

Nalanda University came into prominence during the Gupta period. According to Hiuen Tsiang the rise of the University was due to the munificence of Sakraditya (Kumara Gupta I) who is also reputed to have founded it. The Gupta monarchs who followed Sakraditya extended their patronage to the university and it flourished from the beginning of the Christian Era to the 9th century as a reputed seat of learning. Hiuen Tsiang also observes that "In the establishment were some thousands of brethren, all men of great ability and learning, several hundreds being highly esteemed and famous; the brethren were very strict in observing the precepts and regulations of their order; they were looked up to as models by all India; learning and discussing they found the day too short; day and night they admonished each other, juniors and seniors mutually helping themselves to perfection. If among them were who did not talk of the mysteries of the Tripitaka, such persons, being ashamed, lived aloof.

"Hence foreign students came to the establishment to put an end to their doubts and then became celebrated and even those who stole the name of "Nalanda Brother" were treated with respect everywhere they went. Of those from abroad who wished to enter the schools of discussion the majority, beaten by the difficulties of the problems withdrew; and those who were deeply versed in old and modern learning were admitted, only two or three out of ten succeeding."

I-tsing, another Chinese student who stayed at the Nalanda University for ten years confirms and supplements the account given by his illustrious predecessor, Hiuen Tsiang. Speaking of the largeness of the university, he says that there were eight large halls, three libraries and three hundred apartments and more than 3,000 resident students. One of the libraries was housed in a

building of nine storeys.

The spirit of tolerance, freedom and cosmopolitanism which existed in these Buddhist universities can best be appreciated by reading an account given by Bana in his Harsa Charita. When King Harasavardhana went to the Vindhya region in search of his sister Rajasri he came across the famous Sangharama presided over by the great Buddhist Sage Divakaramitra. "While King Harsa was still at a distance from the Holy Man's abode," says Bana, "he saw Buddhist monks from various provinces of India seated in different places, perched on pillars, or seated on rocks or lying in bowers of creepers or lying in thickets or in the shadow of branches or squatting on the roots of trees; all of them devotees dead to all passions. Jains in white robes, white mendicants, followers of Krishna, students of religious systems, ascetics, followers of Kapila (Sankhya), Lokayatikas (Materialists), followers of Kanada (Atomic school), followers of Upanishads, theists, assayers of metal, students of law, students of Puranas, adepts in sacrifice, adepts in grammar, followers of Panchatantra and others besides, all diligently following their tenets, pondering, urging objections, raising doubts, resolving them, giving etymologies, disputing, studying and explaining, and all gathered here as the disciples of the great sage Divakaramitra."

The Brahminical revival, the differences in the brotherhood and influence of political factions eventually brought about the decay of these monasteries. Signs of this decay was already noticed by Hiuen Tsiang in the 7th century. The final blow came during the Islamic invasions when every one of the monasteries was destroyed leaving not a trace behind. But as already stated, the ideals and traditions created centuries ago by these universities are still alive among us and if a true Buddhist revival is to come, it must obviously be based on the cultural heritage created by the early Buddhists at those great universities like Takshasila, Nalanda, Vikramasila and others which flourished during the heyday of Buddhism. Our glories of the past should serve us only for one purpose and that is to spur us on to greater glories in the future.

Equanimity

It Cannot be Cultivated in a Day

By ANANDA PEREIRA

Equanimity—*Upekkha*—is a quality upon which Buddhism lays great stress, and one can easily see why. Life, however satisfactory and even pleasant it may seem at any given moment of time, is subject to change. The Law of Impermanence holds good in every single drop of the "sea of *sansara*,"

from the highest and most blissful heavenly states to the lowest depths of hell. Everything passes away and is subject to change, and however much one may wish that a particular state of existence will remain static, it cannot remain so for long. Equanimity is the only true way of dealing with the "sea of *sansara*"

is its unsatisfactoriness. If there is one recurrent theme in the symphony of life it is *dukkha*, ranging from the minor annoyances and disappointments of everyday life to those major tragedies that drive people insane.

Taken together, these two truths of impermanence and suffering weigh so

heavily upon every living being that the possession of some mental quality to combat them is vitally necessary.

POSITIVE AND OPTIMISTIC

Whatever captions critics may say to the contrary, Buddhism is a positive and optimistic religion. It is not "negative" to refrain from unskilful action, nor is it "pessimistic" to see things clearly. But having seen clearly that life is unsatisfactory, the intelligent individual naturally wishes to put an end to this undesirable state of affairs. If such a line of thought is pessimistic, then it is "pessimistic" to see that you have an ulcer on your leg and wish to cure it. If the scope of Buddhist philosophy was limited to the realization of suffering it could in fairness be called a pessimistic philosophy. But this is not so. It goes much further and sets out clearly the method by which this suffering can be ended. This, surely, is the very essence of the Buddha's teaching, the bright spark that gives hope to the hopeless and courage to those who are disillusioned and sunk in despair.

There is a way out, but Buddhism goes on to say, the way is not easy. Here again the dim-witted "optimist" may raise his plaintive cry of "pessimism!" But we are used to his voice by now. Let him cherish his ulcer if it pleases him while we set about the difficult task of preparing and applying the medicine which is going to cure our's.

It is a difficult task, needing patience and courage and unflinching optimism, in the truest sense of the word. And here we return to the subject of this article—Equanimity.

Equanimity is needed, not the bovine indifference of the fool but that delicate balance of mind which the wise man preserves undisturbed under all circumstances. It is easy to be level-headed when everything is going smoothly, but the shifting sea of *sansara* is treacherous and liable to terrible storms. It is equanimity, above all other qualities, that enables one to be "sea-worthy"; this balance of mind, so easy when the skies are clear and the waves are gentle, so difficult to maintain when the wind begins howling with the voices of a hundred devils and it seems as though the fates are conspiring to destroy one.

Such equanimity cannot be cultivated in a day. Nothing worthwhile can be cultivated in a day. Things that can be picked up quickly are generally not worth having, like thorns and infectious diseases. But this need not discourage us, because we do spend a lot of time and energy in acquiring a number of accomplishments that are not nearly so valuable as equanimity.

Most of us have at some time or other listened to some assiduous pupil practising a musical instrument. The experience, though not entirely pleasant, can be highly instructive. Laying

aside the book that one is vainly trying to read, one feels amazed at the audible evidence of patient, untiring effort. Again and again and again the phrases pulse through the air, each repetition seeming identical with the last, but only seeming so. In reality there is a difference, because each repetition is so much more experience gained, so much more skill acquired. Little by little, the assiduous one is creeping closer and closer to perfection. One may earnestly wish to accelerate the process, but this cannot be done. Each person has a certain ratio of practice to improvement as it were, which cannot be altered. And the moral is clear. One cannot "fall into" something worthwhile like falling into a ditch. It needs patience and steady endeavour.

If this is true of a physical skill, it must be true also of a mental skill. A skill is really nothing more than a deliberately cultivated habit, and equanimity is a mental habit, a habit so woven into one's pattern of thought that it is a part of one's character. The weaving takes time, and, before the process is complete, one may be suddenly and involuntarily subjected to too severe a test, and fail. We have no control over external events, and, until we have patiently acquired it, very little control over our own emotions. Some people are phlegmatic by nature, slow to react to external irritation. Others are more highly-strung, with violent impulses that can only be controlled by an effort of will. The impulse to violence is not confined to a "criminal class," of low intelligence and loose morals. On the contrary, it is often the self-respecting and perhaps over-sensitive, person who finds it hardest to keep calm, say, when he is misjudged or slandered:

It is hard to bear pain without wincing

And to bury the dead without tears,
But hardest of all is to swallow your gall

And pretend that you haven't got cars.

CHILDISH RAGE

It is hard at such times to bear in mind that a lie cannot turn something clean into something dirty. It is easy for anger to usurp reason and for a normally gentle nature to turn savage. Such anger is childish, being based on the false assumption that one will always be treated fairly and never be blamed unless one is in the wrong. But even childish rage can be dangerous, in this fair island of *ahimsa* and bloodshed. The hasty knife claims yet another victim, and so do the gallows, on the well-established principle of British justice that two wrongs (the second deliberate where the first was merely unthinking) can make a right. Deterrent punishment, good in theory, has one default. It frequently fails to deter. It is equani-

mity, and a sense of humour, that deter people on the very brink of the precipice of murder, seldom the fear of consequences. Unless the cultivation of equanimity is interrupted by some such fatal act, necessitating an indefinite postponement to a future birth, one should not be discouraged by failure. If you swear at the man who drives callously close to you on a rainy day and splashes you with mud, it does not mean that you can never cultivate the habit of equanimity. Indeed, you may be further on the road to equanimity than the man who says nothing at the moment but simmers with anger for the rest of the evening and kicks the cat when he gets home. Immediate external actions or inaction is a poor criterion of equanimity. Brooding over old grudges, nursing the insults that the insulter has long forgotten, being harsh to one's subordinate while cringing to one's superiors, these are the hall-marks of an unbalanced mind, because a balanced mind comes with a realization of true values and a sense of proportion.

Every being goes according to his own *kamma*. If your neighbour insults you it is because you deserve to be insulted. It may be that your present conduct is above reproach (although, as a general rule, we are much too ready to assume that this is so, whereas perhaps a candid observer of our behaviour would not be so sure). But even assuming that the insult is entirely undeserved on the footing of one's present conduct, the assumption does not hold good as regards the past. If one believes in rebirth, one would have to be an exceptionally self-righteous person in order to believe that never in the past has one done anything discreditable. And in the majority of cases, there is no need to go so far back as a previous birth in the search for the discreditable. If we are not saints, or self-righteous hypocrites, we must admit that we too have done things that we should not have done. Then why get heated over an insult? Let it go to lessen our debit in the bank of moral rectitude.

Certainly no good is done by resenting or returning the insult, or by brooding over it. Let it pass, as all things pass. Let it fade, like the stink of a passing conservancy-cart.

A potent enemy of equanimity is an undue concern over other people's affairs. When it is directed towards their misfortunes there is undoubtedly something to recommend it. As responsible members of society we should be ready to help others, where such help is feasible and needed. There are people who pride themselves on "minding their own business", when in reality they are thoroughly self-centred and unwilling to move a finger to help another. But this sense of social responsibility can become pernicious. Who has not encountered the over-zealous

social worker with an itch to blow other people's noses for them? And, the seeker after equanimity has also to remember that worrying over the troubles of others does no good to anybody. It may be nice to know that somebody is worried about the state of your health, but it does not make you any healthier.

Each one of us goes according to his or her own *kamma*, and though it is distressing to see the sufferings and misdeeds of others, this distress should not upset one's mental balance.

There are many illustrations of the balanced mind in the Buddha's teaching, and equanimity is the tenth *parami*, or perfection, to be fulfilled by the aspirant to Buddhahood. The balanced mind has been likened to the hub of a cartwheel. Any spot on the rim rises up and sinks down with the wheel's turning, but the hub remains constant. A better illustration is the earth, which remains unmoved whether perfume or filth is poured on it. One can make one's own illustrations, in order to get a firm grasp of the ideal aimed at, and also in order to give one's mind familiar anchors as it were, in moments of stress.

The Buddhist meditation upon *upekkha* does not come within the scope of a general article such as this. It is a highly-specialized course of mental culture which the layman will hardly find practicable in the midst of earning his living and attending to his many other duties. But those who wish to acquaint themselves with the method can do so by reading the *Visuddhi Magga*, which has been translated into English.

COPING STONE IS CONTROL

For those who wish to cultivate equanimity while living the lay life, the following extracts from Lord Horder's lecture on "The Quiet Mind," delivered in 1938, may be helpful. Calling it, "the highest product of mental hygiene," he says: "The Quiet Mind is capable of very great influence both upon one's own life and upon the lives of others. It is a quality which

balances intelligence with energy, and gentleness with fortitude. Its foundation is integrity. On this foundation, a diligent search for, and a strict adherence to, Truth, build the house. The coping-stone is Control.....

"Some seem to have had it from the start. They have not so far to go as others in the effort to get it. Others have had to fight for it.....

"There was this quality about Livingstone in Africa, Gordon at Khartoum, Pasteur and the Curies. There have been many others who achieved this coveted end and, by virtue of it, were leaders of men. They were able to drop still dews of quietness' as they made their way amongst their fellows. They brought with them a coolness and a balm, and their fellows blessed them because of their tranquillity and themselves became quieter and stronger....

"Can we also achieve it? Yes. Not by doing 'some great thing.' 'Why were the saints saints?' someone asked. The answer came: 'Because they were cheerful when it was difficult to be cheerful, and patient when it was difficult to be patient. They pushed on when they wanted to stand still, and kept silent when they wanted to talk.' That was all, so simple, but so difficult.....

"There seems no doubt whatever that a certain aloofness, a withdrawing of the mind at times from the busy-ness of life, is a requisite to mental hygiene. The apostle Mark explains why Jesus bade the disciples to 'come into a desert place.' Because 'there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure.'

"The herd instinct seems to have taken charge. Men want to march through life together, shoulder to shoulder, wool rubbing wool, and the head down. Peoples are looking for a shepherd and a sheep dog. We must recover our ability to be sometimes alone.....

"Seclusion must not be mechanical, but spiritual, that is, must be Elevation. At times the whole world seems

to be in a conspiracy to importune you with emphatic trifles. Friend, client, child, sickness, fear, want, charity, all knock and say: 'Come out unto us.' But keep thy state; come not into their confusion.....

"Some side-track the pursuit of the quiet mind either from laziness, or selfishness, or from mistaken zeal. There are many ways of escaping from the rigours attaching to mental hygiene, and the responsibilities of using our minds in the service of others.....

"We dare not escape the responsibility of mental discipline to attain the quiet mind, though its maintenance is unfortunately conditioned by things as they are in the world. All the more vital is it that we should hold on to the spiritual values and harbour them, in a mind that strives all the more for 'plainness and clearness without shadow of stain', because spiritual values have gone temporarily awry elsewhere."

These are not the words of a secluded ascetic but of a modern English physician in active practice of his profession, and they were spoken almost on the eve of a major war. As a background to these simple words of a clear-headed thinker one can imagine the tramp of thousands upon thousands of men, marching, "wool rubbing wool and the head down" towards mutilation and death, at the bidding of a few power-crazed leaders. Sane words such as these were soon to be drowned in the roar of guns and tanks and planes, and the strident blare of propaganda—the hideous discord of war. If there is one thing that humanity in bulk studiously avoids, it is being influenced by good advice. But this only goes to prove the truth of the words and the value of the advice. Perhaps they were intended as a desperate attempt to stave off the avalanche of war, and if so, they did not succeed. But it is open to intelligent people to pick them up and value them for their quality, as pearls are picked up from the trampled mud after the herd of swine has stampeded on its way.

Iconography of Sinhalese Paintings

By Nandadeva Wijesekere

The uncertainty of purpose—whether religious or secular—in the case of Sigiriya court art deserves exception from the strict observance of a rule until more definite views can be expressed on the point. Sigiriya frescoes, for the present at least, may offer insufficient material for an iconographic treatment, since a religious significance cannot be attributed to any one aspect of the paintings. Yet, in so far as the figures resemble one another in general and seem to conform to some

unknown, but predetermined, type as to suggest the idea of adherence to an accepted code, perhaps then current in Ceylon, for portraying figures of this nature it would be an act of justifiable commission. What the lost canon was cannot be known due to the scarcity of the information from this period of painting. However, all later frescoes seem to be, and in fact are, religious and conform with remarkable similarity to the Indian prototypes as laid down in the ancient texts on the sub-

ject, in spite of this problematic aloofness in the case of Sigiriya. It has, therefore, become necessary to allude to certain points that may help further study.

Even the texts on iconography permit freedom and relaxation of the rules in the portrayal of female figures. Perhaps this same elasticity has been exploited to the greatest advantage by the painters of Sigiriya when they overstepped the furthest limitations by portraying such charming models of the

beauty of the female form. The elaborate head dresses though every one of them not so elaborately complete approach the later "makuta" pattern at least in contour and conception. Yet hardly a difference marks the ornaments of the personalities—lady and attendant—that adorn them.

The hands constitute the special feature of this art and if anything could be symbolic of a deeper meaning such a significance must be looked for in the delineation of those very hands. The gestures show not a single manual sign (*hasta-mudra*) of later times. But how can anyone seeing them deny to this apparent treatment of gesture a meaning? The hands have a special character with their "refined" high caste fingers quivering with nervous vitality. The gift of bestowing actual speech was denied to the painter but all that goes to form a spoken language is seen in the gestures he gave to the fingers.* These may yet reveal a common language expressed by a lost art.

The flowers carried in them and the manner of holding the flowers with the fingers may likewise constitute a feature once pregnant with meaning. Certain unidentifiable objects are also borne by some. Such "taperingly beautiful but instinctively expressive fingers" and hands must definitely mean something that, if understood, may offer a clue to the interpretation of the whole symbolism of the females at Sigiriya. Coming finally to the supposed attributes of divine personalities, the clouds, apparently enveloping the figures themselves, seem to be the main evidence which the "tilakas" that adorn the foreheads together with the pose vibrating with rhythm confer such divinity. These characteristics fail to appeal as divine attributes and constitute flimsy threads for resting the whole force of the argument.

The religious frescoes present quite interesting features for an iconographic study. In Sinhalese art the Buddha is nowhere shown in symbolic form but he is represented always in human form either standing, seated or reclining. In painting only the first two postures have been found. Both at Hindagala and Dimbulagala, the Buddha is shown seated but in a different *mudra*.† At the latter site he is seated in *dhyana-mudra* under a *makara-torana*. The vertical posts‡ of the arch incline inwards as they rise. The superhuman aspect is demonstrated by the largeness

of size as well as centrality of position. At Hindagala the figure with hands in *Abhaya-mudra* is lively and human but the figure has become stereotyped at Dimbulagala. In the boat scene the Buddha is seated simply on a platform under a canopy and in the procession scene he may have been seated¶ on a "sinhasana" as the throne was in fact once visible.

The standing Buddha is portrayed only once and that in the Sankassa scene at Polonnaruwa. Well over life size the figure stands eight feet with hand in *Vijakkyana-mudra*, both halo and *chattra* being shown to proclaim divinity and royalty respectively. Buddha standing under torana with nimbate head was seen at Polonnaruwa but cannot be identified now.

Bodhisattva figures may be present worshipping the Buddha at Galvihara. A beautiful lotus was held in the hand. But the Bodhisattva is often seen in the Jataka scenes at the Northern Temple at Polonnaruwa. He is represented as a royal personage in many cases. As a king he wears princely dress and ornaments, sits in *raja-lila* on a canopied seat. Armed attendants and *chattra*-bearers stand behind. The Bodhisattva sometimes assumes the form of a Brahmin, an ascetic, an ordinary citizen or even an animal according to the story. Then he is not always shown nimbate but can be distinguished by size, position, refinement in look and bearing and comparative excellence of portrayal. In one example from Polonnaruwa he is shown seated under a canopied pavilion with a miniature dagoba over the roof expressive of the Bodhisattva idea. He is the one beautiful figure that persists throughout the popular art at Polonnaruwa.

Brahma is shown as a powerful god in gorgeous and elaborate dress and may have been shown as such in the Sankassa scene but no details are preserved. Indra is probably shown holding the parasol in the Sankassa scene. No details of feature can be recognised. Nevertheless a gorgeous head dress, nimbus around head and god like portrayal may be seen in this case. Sakra is represented in all wealth of adornment. He wears elaborate head dress conical in shape, shoulder string (*vijnapanita*) and loosely flowing princely garments as lower part of the dress. The upper body remains here. At Hindagala the head of Sakra shows him as a god. The four *lokapalas* are represented adorned with headdress as handsome young persons. The devas are represented with conical shaped elaborate head dresses (*makuta*). They

are shown amidst clouds. Sometimes a halo appears around the head. They pay homage to the Buddha as shown by the clasped hands.

The king and other royal personages are depicted in regal attire such as crown, elaborate head dress, rich ornaments on body, costly garments and beautiful appearance. A parasol (*chattra*) is held over the head of the king whilst attendants with fly whisks (*chauris*) stand to right and left of him. When seated the king is portrayed in *raja-lila* under a canopied *sinhasana*.

Clean shaven heads and loosely flowing yellow robes combined with a serene look and simplicity of deportment depict monks (*bhikkhus*). Brahmins are shown with initiation thread and upper body bare. They sometimes wear flowing beard and moustache. Nagas and yakkas, when they represent human beings, are portrayed as such, no special feature being added. The laymen are depicted according to the requirements of the story in simple dress and appearance. Demons also find a place. Short of body and stout of limb the demons are characterised by a fierce uncouth expression, unkempt hair on head and face, large teeth with a pair of tusks at either end of the mouth. In the court art flowers are realistically drawn but in the popular art a stylized form is employed to denote vegetation, buildings and natural objects.

As mentioned earlier the secular aspect of this art of the court, preserved only at Sigiriya, is by far the most impressive of all Sinhalese paintings. A fuller and detailed examination of the subject matter of this phase of art needs emphasis much more than the rest. Here the ladies—except for one male—in all their wealth of exquisite refined ornament beautifying the still more beautiful limbs command immediate attention of the observer. The attendants almost rival the ladies in this respect. Flowers abound, loosely scattered, borne in hands or carried in trays. The dresses are simple. The gorgeously attractive colours and mode of wearing suggest a superficial popular air. The designs mostly in checks please the eye, while the lovely colours harmonise well. The ornaments are wrought in chaste patterns, showing skilled craftsmanship. The lower garment consists of a short close fitting *dhoti* tied at the waist and the blouse (*choli*) barely hides the nudity of the breasts. Floral crowns or *taras* on the head, ear rings, throatlets, necklaces and pendants, floral garlands, a profusion of jewelled armlets and bracelets make up the list of body ornaments. One stringed breast ornament is also there. The absence of waist bands, nose ornaments and rings is surprising.

* Brown—Indian Painting p. 75, 79.

† Even in the boat scene at Polonnaruwa the Buddha may have been shown seated in this posture.

‡ Compare the Lankatilaka and the Northern temple entrance walls which rise very high including inwards. This is a peculiar architectural feature at Polonnaruwa.

¶ The Buddha was also shown at Polonnaruwa seated in *padmasana* in the *dharma-cakra-mudra* under a large arch encircling the whole figure. The head is nimbate and has a top knot.

The Heart of the Holy Life

By

Bhikkhus Piyadassi and Soma

He who wishes to put out the fire of anger holds fast to restraint and control and never separates from the genial company of love, Metta, that super-solvent among virtues which causes all disharmony and luridness of mind to disappear.

Ever is the loving one—Mettavadi, one who draws in the claws of retaliation and revenge in him. For him all that irritates and makes for anger is as it were non-existent. He holds himself well in, under the greatest provocation.

"Seeing well, he seems to be one blind;
Hearing well, he seems not ware of sound;
Knowing he seems a fool of some kind;
Powerful, he seems to weakness bound."

Effacing himself, expunging his propensities and tendencies to anger, he cools his heart with the water of love's unfalling spring and sprinkles all whom he contacts with the self-same soothing potency.

Intact is the strength of one who keeps his heart in obedience to reason and strays not to the asperous ways of hate. He hurts not himself; he hurts not others. He is a blessing to himself and to all else. He becomes beloved of all. His paths are made smooth. None envy him. Nobody grows jealous of him. Nobody is against him. He wings through life like a swan through the blue sky unhindered, an object of delight to all eyes.

Where such a loving one dwells, there all is at peace; for the loving one never interferes with others' rights, with others' freedom, with others' lives, in any way. He helps others in pleasant, kindly acts, endearing, encouraging, energizing, and vitalizing all with his benign nature.

If in a woodland haunt such a loving one stays, says:

"The tigress seeing the lean young deer
Gives it such as tho' it were its cub;
And serpents sun-struck for shelter
To the shade of pea-fowls' wings;
Against the sides of deadly snakes
And through the fearful coils make
their way,"

says the poet, and continues thus:

"In forest glade anywhere does one
Who spreads forth love grown great
And by his thought all hatred does
In brute breast, homage to him I
pay."

Through love does the Blessed One tame all beings. It is with love that he overcame the hosts of Mara in the terrace of enlightenment. All violence and ferocity can be overcome with love; it is the magic wand to quell the waves in men's unruly hearts.

Other kinds of spiritual emancipation are not equal to the sixteenth part of the emancipation of the heart through love. Through love one adds to the fund of human happiness, one makes the world brighter, nobler and purer and prepares it for the good life better than in any other way. There is no ill-luck worse than hatred, it is said, and no safety from others' hostility greater than the heart of love, the heart in which hate is dead.

Therefore, says the lovable Santi-deva:

"How may I slay my foes as welkin vast!
Aye, if hate in my heart is slain my foes don't last."

And, again showing a way to overcome the thought of hate he in his own inimitable way says:

"Overlooking the missiles that hurt
if I rate
At him who hurled them moved by
force of hate,
Right better would it be to hate
hate which wove
The thought which him to act of
hurling drove."

If one has developed love truly great, rid of the desire to hold and to possess, that strong clean love which is untarnished with lust of any kind, that love which does not expect material advantage and profit from the act of loving, that love which is firm but not grasping, unshakable but not tied down, gentle and settled, hard and penetrating as diamond but unhurting, helpful but not interfering, cool, invigorating, giving more than taking, not proud but dignified, not sloppy yet soft, the love which leads one to the heights of clean achievement then, in such a one can there be no malevolence at all. So our books say that if one should say that he has developed mental emancipation through love, and has still hate in his heart he should be told: Not so! Speak not thus..... Do not misrepresent the Blessed One..... Surely he would not say this was so!

The power of love as illustrated by the life of the Buddha can be seen in many a story told of him. Among the best is that of Roja, the Mallian who in order to escape a fine imposed on persons of his class who did not visit the Buddha, undertook a visit to the

place where the Buddha was living once, and then was drawn to the Master as a cow to its calf even before he saw him. That was an instance of the psychic power of love (Metta-iddhi). The taming of the drunken elephant Nalagiri, of the demon Alavaka, the saving of Patacara, Kisa-gotami and many another, of helping the greatly worried and dejected Culla Panthaka, Nakulapitar and so forth are all examples of our Teacher's love. Love is an active force. Every act of the loving one is done with the stainless mind to help, to succour, to cheer, to make the paths of others easier, smoother, and more adapted to the conquest of sorrow, the winning of highest bliss.

The way to develop love is through thinking out the evils of hate, and the advantages of non-hate; through thinking out according to actuality (kamma) that really there is none to hate, that hate is a foolish way of feeling which breeds more and more of darkness that obstructs right understanding. Hate restricts; love releases. Hatred strangles; love enfranchises. Hatred brings remorse; love brings peace. Hatred agitates; love quiets, stills, calms. Hatred divides; love unites. Hatred hardens; love softens. Hatred hinders; love helps. And thus through a correct study and appreciation of the effects of hatred and the benefits of love should one develop love.

A Perfect One is a patient one. Patience is of the essence of all holy living. Without this quality one cannot persevere in good, one cannot maintain oneself in harmlessness, in non-anger, in kindness; one cannot help others; one cannot become fit for full enlightenment.

Therefore does the Bodhisattva cultivate this virtue of patience at all times, in all circumstances, whatever befalls.

In the past birth stories of the Master we read that he bore up with unsullied heart dreadful punishment inflicted on him and with his dying breath blessed his torturer. So deep set was this quality in him that even when re-born as an animal he displayed tremendous endurance and forbearance when put to severe pain.

The patient one becomes dear to all, beloved of all; he becomes freed of many faults. At death he is well-composed.

Patience and forbearance, says the Master, comprise the aim of a recluse.

Bearing up is the best ascetic way. Forbearing, the ceasing best, Buddhas say.

And further, it is said:

Who bears with a heart that's from
anger free
The gyve, the scourge, the rack, the
stake, that one,
For whom his patience can an army
be,
That one's a man who unto worth has
won.
It is because folk are impatient of

others that discord is rife in the world.
Violence, spoliation, bloodshed, all
these, source from hatred, the child
of impatience. The patient one is
ever forgiving, ever restrained, ever
ready to overlook others' shortcomings,
and to forget injuries done to him. He
cannot cherish revenge. He knows:

"Time-honoured is this saw which
says: 'Never ended
Is hate by hatred here; but by non-
hatred'.
Therefore is it said:
Just as the fragrant sandal-wood tree
Perfumes the axe which lays it low,
So the good man, willer of world's
weal,
Angers not though struck by cruel
blow.

Our Readers' Queries

Is Pirit Buddhist ?

Sir,—

I shall be grateful to you if you will kindly enlighten me on this point: Is pirit a Buddhist ceremony?

Yours, etc.,

M. B.

Katugastota.

Note by Ed.: According to tradition, yes. The belief generally held is that the Buddha preached the Ratana Sutta which is considered to be the most important of the Suttas used in the pirit ceremony, in order to protect the people of Vesali from an epidemic. The word pirit which comes from Pali paritta, means protection, and the Buddhists believe that truth, i.e. Dhamma, is the greatest protecting influence. The Suttas chanted in the pirit ceremony are statements of truth, at the end of which recurs the formula: "By virtue of this true word may there be happiness." This is a form of sacca-kiriya, or act of truth. In the pirit ceremony, as observed nowadays, there are elements

which certainly show the influence of Hindu customs.

BUDDHISM AND ASTROLOGY

Sir,—

I have always been perplexed by the prominence given to astrology by Buddhists. What was the attitude of the Buddha towards astrology?

Yours, etc.,

RAHULA.

Matara.

Note by Ed.: The Buddha definitely discouraged superstitious belief in the power of the stars to influence human action. He especially condemned the observance of auspicious moments. In the Lakkhana-Jataka there is a stanza spoken by the Buddha, the meaning of which is, "Good fortune evades the fool who honours auspicious moments. The need for a thing to be done is the auspicious moment for its performance. What can the stars do?"

DOES VISHNU GUARD CEYLON?

Sir,—

There is a popular belief that Vishnu is the guardian deity of Buddhism in Ceylon. How did this originate?

P. H. J.

Ambalangoda.

Note by Ed.: The belief probably has its origin in a passage found in the Mahavansa which says that as the Master lay dying, He addressed a god, Uppalavanna by name, and asked him to protect Vijaya and his descendants who would inhabit Ceylon because that would aid the continuance of his sasana. Who this Uppalavanna is, it is difficult to say. The word means the lily-coloured one, the lily common in India being blue. Since Vishnu is also described as having a blue body, Uppalavanna seems to have latterly become identified with Vishnu. Passages, however, can be quoted from Sinhalese literary works even as late as the 15th century to show that Vishnu and Uppalavanna were considered to be two personages.

All That Glitters is Not Gold

A Story by B. U. E. R.

Once upon a time, a man hunting in a stream for stones to polish, came across a ruby. He had never seen such a stone before, but its colour appealed to him. He was only a forest man and not an expert either in collecting gems or polishing them. He merely rubbed off its crude edges and set it upright. But even in its crudely polished state, the fire of a true ruby dimly showed. But times were bad, and one day, a neighbour who had long coveted this unusual stone, was able to purchase it for five bags of meal. "After all," thought its finder, "if I live I may find another such stone. If I die I lose life and stone." And so the ruby changed hands.

The time came when the neighbour began to tire a little of this curiosity which he had purchased for five good bags of meal and was very pleased

when a passing stranger offered to take the stone in exchange for five of his oxen.

This man took the stone to the small town where he lived. He was able to put a better polish on it and the fire within the stone leapt brighter. He wished to give it to his wife. But a wife needs silks and scarves, earrings and jewels. And this stone was too large in its present semi-polished state to appeal as an ornament for a wife even though of a somewhat rotund nature. And so the jewel again changed hands.

Several times it changed hands, each time for a larger sum, until it came into the hands of an expert in gems. The gem was scientifically cut and polished and the fire seemed to burn deep and bright within its heart.

From now commenced its historic course. Imitations flooded the market, but in those far off days, no imitation could compete with this genuine ruby. Other stones might glitter and from many facets throw off bright lights, but none shewed as much as a single spark of a fire within.

Wives of ministers of state, courtesans, turbans of petty rajahs, each in turn it adorned. Until at last a war was waged and then another until, so history tells, an emperor gave a kingdom and became a royal beggar for its sake. The stone took on a sacredness and a royal prince its guardian, fed, clothed and housed by his former subjects. To his son he left it and the latter to his son and so to the third generation.

The fire burnt as brightly as before but clever mechanics were making equally brilliant stones. Cunningly crystals were inserted in bases of red quartz so that a very good imitation of the fire within the genuine ruby could be seen. Its guardian of royal descent was oft forgotten. Slates fell off the roof of the keeper's house and were not replaced. His silken robes split but none replaced them. Even when he at last went to beg for meals, people turned away, pretending not to see. Then, most ingenious of all, a mechanic, whom the people called a magician, but we of these times would call an electrician, cunningly inserted a small electric bulb in the very centre of a magnificent block of flawless red quartz. The hole bored for the insertion of the minute bulb was well hidden in the stone's setting of rich and exquisitely turned gold of rare design.

A special hall was built. Thousands came to pay and see this marvel.

Up on the hill, the royal watcher, when men came, sold the very setting of his jewel for the setting of the spurious one in the hall, now called a temple, in the valley where stood the town of ten thousand gates and twenty thousand streets.

The royal watchers fell ill and his young son, ill-trained and knowing naught of the stone's true value, tried to sell it in the market places of the city. But he was laughed to scorn. On every side glittered imitation stones. But all were dim in contrast with the one which glowed within the temple in the centre of the central square and whose rays even reached the street at time when admiring crowds, somewhat tired of the gem's insistent glitter, began to turn away.

The boy returned to the broken ruin upon the hill. At the threshold lay his father, dead. And so the boy learnt not the secret of the stone and the fire within its heart. None wanted

it or him and so he too died and neglected lay the stone.

Synthetic gems cannot last for ever. Cement in sockets loosened and inserted crystals then fell out and rough quartz, masquerading as true rubies, were seen for what they were. There came a day when the rubber insulation perished. There was a short circuit and the king ruby was found to be no more than purest glass.

One of the crowd remembered the building on the hill, but two skulls and one or two ancient and scattered bones were all that remained of the watchers who had been. The interior of the building was a mass of fallen roof and blown in scattered leaves. A true ruby is a small thing, much smaller than the glass monstrosity now lustreless in the city's central temple. None knew quite what to look for and so they went away.

That is all—or—is it? Who can say?

Dhamma's Approach to Man

By ZEN

The religious systems of the world have various ways by which they approach man respecting his religious welfare. This psychological approach illustrates the value in which man is held by the various systems. Some tell him that "he is god," others that "he is debased sinner," "a worm," and utterly unfit to enter and enjoy "the celestial bliss of the god" unless he still goes through a further humiliation and debasement. Out of all these various systems there is one which ignores these two extremes in approach and pursues the golden mean by pointing out to man that he has a mind that is the basis or origin of all his thoughts, words and deeds; that he has this latent potential that, when properly trained, can make him saint, a mystic; can release him from all illusion, bring him to the highest it is possible for him to realise. It takes no notice of his "sins", his alleged corruption and degeneracy, but it places into his power the knowledge, the way, to attain the highest, his inherent potential is capable of. This system values man knowing his latent capacity, knowing what man may become if he chooses and so places before him a natural idea, a natural method by which he can, in a quite natural way develop the highest he has capacity for. This system is the Buddha-Dhamma.

The true and pure Dhamma of the

Buddha then proves to be, in its approach to man, not only a natural system, but also an appeal for the personal culture that will dispel the clouds of ignorance by insight into Truth. It is a cultural method centred in man's mind—whatever that may be—itself. It sees in this mind-culture the key to overcome all obstacles, all difficulties and man is thus initiated into, from the first, the secret of his life, of his potential. Dhamma values man! Dhamma teaches man to develop his natural, the latent potential. Dhamma is thus science.

Then again, Dhamma approaches man from a rational platform by telling him to first pass all—even itself—through his mind, accept only that with which his mind agrees. It also invites him "to come and see"—an altogether new approach to man which no other system has yet equalled. Dhamma is thus unique in the history of religions! To those who have been accustomed to a "believe or be damned" system Dhamma comes as a refreshing oasis in a large desert! Dhamma is thus rational!

Then again, Dhamma points out the influence of another latent potential in man—a natural potential, when highly developed and thoroughly pure, can raise man to the highest point of culture and influence; can bring all with-

in his grasp, can deliver him when all other sources fail; which is above all other powers and influences or potentials in man. Dhamma was the first discoverer of this potential; the first proclaimer of this enormous latent power; the first to produce its fruits. And this latent, all-powerful potential, is described in a short word of four letters—love!

And with this highly developed potential, worth a million times more than any other potential, must be accompanied by wisdom—which also Dhamma teaches, hence the approach to man is not only an appeal to develop his latent potential, but is coupled with an appeal to his highest and purest emotions—karuna-panna: Love and wisdom. Dhamma is thus culture and philosophy.

Such is Dhamma's approach to man! It appeals to his highest, to the culture of his mind and emotions; to the expansion of mind and heart; to the embracing of the entire cosmos and all it contains. It approaches man through the development of his insight, of his reason, and a general appeal to him to practise meditation, contemplation, through which all his latent potentials can be brought into active service. This is the one method by which man can be a real Buddhist—an enlightened man! Dhamma is thus life.

History Made at Kelaniya Conference

No Politics for Bhikkhus—Verdict of Sangha and Laity

A conference of bhikkhus and laymen, summoned by the All-Ceylon Buddhist Congress, met at the Raja Maha Vihare, Kelaniya, on 31st March, 1946.

The following statement regarding the Conference has been issued for publication by the President of the Buddhist Congress:

A conference of bhikkhus and laymen met at the Raja Maha Vihare, Kelaniya, on Sunday, 31st March, 1946, at 9 a.m. The conference was

summoned by the Working Committee of the All-Ceylon Buddhist Congress. Those present were: the Ven. Heramitigale Dhirananda, Anunayaka Thera representing the Mahanayaka Thera of Malwatte Chapter, the Ven. Yagirala Pannananda Maha Nayaka of the Pata Rata, the Ven. Baddegama Piyaratana, the Ven. Vidurupola Piyatissa Maha Nayaka, the Ven. Karadana Jinaratana Nayaka, the Ven. Beruwala Srinivasa Maha Nayaka, the Ven. Karaputugala Dhammaloka Nayaka, the Ven. Hisselle Nanodaya Maha Thera, the Ven. Bambarende Dhammavasa Nayaka, the Ven. Denagama Panasara Maha Thera, the Ven. Kirulapone Vimala Anunayaka, the Ven. Walagedara Somaloka Maha Thera, the Ven. Matara Dhammavamsa Maha Thera, the Ven. Molligoda Ariyavamsa Anunayaka, the Ven. Rasnakaveve Saddhammavamsa Maha Thera, the Ven. Paravahera Vajiranana Maha Thera and Mr. T. B. Ratwatte, Diyavadana Nilame, Mr. P. B. Bulankulame Dissave, Mr. D. R. Wijewardene, Mr. Arthur V. Dias, Mr. M. H. Jayatilaka, Mr. E. A. P. Wijeratne, Mr. D. L. F. Pedris, Dr. L. A. Rajapakse, Mr. Hubert Rajapakse, Mudaliyar E. A. Abeyasekara, Mr. D. C. Wijewardene, Drs. N. Attygalle, P. B. Fernando, B. E. Fernando, A. Ratnapala, Mr. Sydney Ratwatte, Mr. T. U. de Silva, Mr. P. P. Wickramarachchi and Dr. G. P. Malalasekera.

The Ven. Heramitigala Sri Dhirananda Anunayaka Thera occupied the chair and proceedings began with the administration of pansil.

Doctor Malalasekera, President of the Buddhist Congress, welcomed those present. He said that when problems arose affecting the welfare of the Buddhist community it was very desirable that conferences should be held of responsible bhikkhus and laymen so that

matters of policy might be decided upon and suitable measures taken to deal with such problems. The Buddhist Congress proposed to hold such conferences periodically. He had, on behalf of the Buddhist Congress, issued to them a questionnaire containing a large number of subjects which might be discussed at these conferences. He did not think that the first conference could find time to discuss more than one or two of those subjects. All those questions involved issues of far-reaching importance and it was necessary that the discussions should be frank and free and conducted in a friendly atmosphere. He would leave it to the conference to decide which of the subjects should be taken up first.

The meeting agreed that the first item for discussion should be the question of bhikkhus and politics.

After a discussion in which most of those present expressed their views, it was decided that all questions affecting the Sangha should be decided by the Sangha.

The laymen present expressed their entire agreement with the resolutions adopted and declared themselves ready at all times to do all in their power to implement them.

THE DECISIONS

The following resolutions were thereupon unanimously adopted by the conference:—

(1) In no circumstances should a bhikkhu seek election to or be a member of the State Council, Parliament, Senate, any municipal council, urban council, village committee or any other like institution or any political organization.

(2) No bhikkhu should seek registration as a voter or exercise the rights of a voter in respect of any of the institutions mentioned in resolution (1).

(3) In no circumstances should a bhikkhu associate himself with any

election in respect of any of the institutions mentioned in resolution (1).

(4) In no circumstances should Buddhist laymen induce bhikkhus to take part in any matter which is contrary to the above resolutions.

(5) Where a bhikkhu has been expelled from the Sangha Sabha of his nikaya for acting in contravention of the above resolutions no Buddhist laymen should pay to such bhikkhu the honour and respect due to a member of the Sangha.

The meeting also unanimously adopted the following resolution:—

That suitable legislation should be introduced providing for the enforcement of the decisions of the Sangha Sabhas of the respective Nikayas.

A sub-committee was appointed to work out the details of the last-mentioned resolution and to submit a full report to the next meeting of the conference to be held in July. The members of the sub-committee are: the Ven. H. Dhirananda, the Ven. Yagirala Pannananda, the Ven. Vidurupola Piyatissa, the Ven. Beruwala Srinivasa, the Ven. Hisselle Nanodaya, the Ven. Matara Dhammavamsa, the Ven. K. Vimala, the Ven. Valagedara Somaloka, the Ven. Pelane Vajiranana, Dr. L. A. Rajapakse, Dr. N. Attygalle, Messrs. E. A. P. Wijeratne, T. B. Ratwatte, P. B. Bulankulame, Dr. A. Ratnapala and Professor G. P. Malalasekera (convener).

Mr. P. B. Bulankulame Dissave on behalf of those present thanked Mr. D. C. Wijewardene and the other members of the Dayaka Sabha of the Raja Maha Vihare, Kelaniya, for making all arrangements for holding the conference at that historic temple with its inspiring associations and entertaining those who attended the conference.

The conference ended at 3 p.m., with the bhikkhus present chanting pirit.

Impressions of the Conference

(By Mudaliyar E. A. Abayasekara)

Hallowed by a visit of the Enlightened One to bring about peace and reconciliation between the warring factions of Yakkhas and Nagas, Kelaniya Raja Maha Vihara once again became a venue of peace and reconciliation—this time between two sections of His own disciples. In the annals of Sri Lanka, Kelaniya occupies a unique place. The epic story of this capital city of an impulsive king whose unjust suspicion and subsequent punishment of a member of the Holy Order called down the wrath of the Gods, which could only be appeased by the sacrifice of his only daughter, is still sung as it has been for centuries in song and verse all over the country. This temple of renown and sanctity, immortalized in the Sela-hini Sandesa, and where, as tradition

has it, a person if he once worships "is absolved of the sins of a life-time" will once more adorn the pages of history, on account of what took place within its precincts on Sunday, the 31st of March, 1946.

A "convention" of the Sangha the like of which had not been seen or heard of within living memory, met on the morning of this memorable day to deliberate over ways and means of preserving the Dhamma from the onslaught of modern heresy, and of protecting its exponents from the taint of modern hypocrisy.

It is 9.30 a.m. now. The monks assembled in the ~~residence~~ (dormitory) went their way to the dharmasala in order of seniority, and take their

allotted seats. The laity follow them and sit on seats facing the monks. A solitary chair, handsomely carved and covered with a white cloth, is on the dais for the chairman. The stage is now set for one of the most momentous meetings, the deliberations of which will guide the aspirations and conduct of the order tomorrow, for a century and, may be, for all time. The monks—maha nayakas and anu-nayakas, upadhayayas and karmacharyas, maha theras and theras, representing almost all nikayas—men of high erudition and ripe scholarship, well versed in the Dhamma face the assembly, their features depicting a sense of grave responsibility. The members of the laity present—doctors, lawyers, dissawas, temple dignitaries, pandits, planters,

business men and teachers await the pleasure of the Sangha, their faces showing both earnestness and anxiety. The proletariat is represented by a score or so of upasakas and worshippers of the historic shrine. They are provided with two mats on the verandah. All present, great and the humble, seem satisfied except a lonely Press representative who is courteously but firmly informed that "the proceedings are not open to the Press and that his presence might embarrass the monks." He withdraws and the proceedings begin with the administration of pansil.

The chapter of priests elects a chairman, and the Ven'ble the Anu-Nayaka Thera of Malwatte, representing the Ven'ble the Maha-Nayaka Thera of the Siamese Sect, occupies the chair. The organiser of the conference, Professor G. P. Malalasekera, President of the Buddhist Congress, accords a welcome to those assembled and explains the reasons for holding the conference. The subjects which would come up for discussion had already been communicated to them but out of the thirty odd points enumerated in the questionnaire, it would be possible to discuss only a few of the most important at this meeting. He is a fluent and versatile speaker, Professor Malalasekera, but today he speaks haltingly, weighing every word he utters. This is no place for rhetoric. Too great a risk may be run by the use of a wrong word or an inappropriate metaphor. He is right. Too much is at stake to take such liberties. One could almost visualise Henry Spaak delivering his opening address at the U.N.O. Conference.

The assembly decides that the first matter for discussion should be the burning question of the day: "Should monks take part in politics." The ball is set rolling by a translator Mudaliyar questioning the correctness of the Sinhalese rendering (*desapalanaya*) of the English word "politics." He suggests "raja-tantraya" as a more correct rendering. The Nayaka Thera of the Low-Country asks for the definition of the English term. He enquires if one of the eminent K.C.s present would kindly oblige. A full explanation is given and

the monks agree that Raja-tantra or Raja Dharma would be more appropriate, and expressing at the same time the opinion that everyone now understands what the word "politics" stands for. The whole assembly unanimously decides that monks should have nothing to do with politics either directly or indirectly.

A diversion is caused by an eminent member of the medical profession who asks, "Sirs, are we to be deprived of your benevolent counsel in this one of the most important things in the life of a layman?"

"Please understand, Sir, that we are your spiritual leaders, not your political advisers," came the terse and pointed reply from a Nayaka Thera.

The first resolution is unanimously adopted and the first and the most difficult hurdle is cleared. A sigh of relief is heard—the battle is half won. The rest is plain sailing. It does not mean, however, that there were no verbal duels nor humorous recriminations. Impudent question is met with retort courteous; scintillating repartee flashes, but the best of feelings prevail.

Stung to the quick by a careless remark regarding the luxurious living of the Sangha, the Diyawadana Nilame stands up, his broad chest heaving with pent-up wrath, and addressing the gathering in stentorian voice he exclaims "the land and wealth donated by Buddhist kings were donated to the Buddha. It is true that the income is enjoyed by the Sangha. But what do the monks get? Come with me and I will show you how the monks live. It may be true that there are a few who are well off. But 90 per cent. of them live drab lives with little or nothing for their subsistence, unhonoured and uncared for. You talk glibly of their wealth. Have you ever cared to inquire after their well-being? Hasten slowly! Many are the rocks ahead. We must work together with great care and deliberation if we are to avoid pitfalls and make a success of our efforts, so well begun. Give heed to the advice of one who has an inner knowledge of things."

So spoke the chief temporal authority of the Dalada Maligawa, the Temple of

the Sacred Tooth, in his blunt and Churchillian style. An uncomfortable pause of a few minutes follows and after a searching of hearts and silent self-examination the meeting proceeds with the remaining business in a more subdued mood than before.

It is eleven fifteen now—time for the monks' dana and the laity's lunch: The members of the Wijewardene family have spared no pains to provide for the comfort of the visitors. The greatest conviviality prevails and more knotty problems are solved during the half hour preceding the lunch than during the previous two hours. At the conclusion of a sumptuous lunch Bulankulame Dissawa in a happy speech thanks the hosts. The last course of the lunch—curd and treacle—is symbolic of the happy blending of the Sangha and the laity.

The conference reassembles a little past 1 p.m. The five resolutions passed in the morning session are re-read and signed, and then the vexed question of enforcing the decision of the Sangha Sabhas is considered. A powerful committee is appointed to draft suitable legislation and to submit their suggestion to the next meeting of the conference just before the Vas season (retreat) begins in July.

This brings the proceedings to a close and the organiser thanks all those who have attended the conference and expresses his hope and prayer that in time to come the conference would develop into a powerful organisation for safeguarding the interests of Buddhists and laying down the law in all disputed religious matters. So ended this historic convention, the monks chanting pirit and calling upon all the devas to shower their blessings on all those there assembled:

"Bhavatu sabba mangalam
Rakkantu sabba devata
Sabba Buddhanubhavena
Sada sotthi bhavantu te."

May all joys be yours,
May all gods protect you
By the grace of the Buddha
May you for ever be happy.

Buddhist Influence at the Sinhalese Court

By M. M. THAWFEEQ

The power of the Buddhist monks at the court of the Sinhalese kings was very weighty. Not only were they the advisers to the court but even mediators in domestic quarrels in the royal family.

The first monk to wield political power was Bhikkhu Dathasiva, who was granted a post (with all privileges and everything found) at the court of King Agrabodhi I (564-598) who was "in splendour imitating the sun, in charm

the moon with full disc, in steadfastness the Sumeru mountain, (and) in depth the ocean....."

It is said that the late Sinhalese kings preferred to appoint a Buddhist monk as the Prime Minister and Highest Counsellor. The appointment had to be confirmed by an oracle, which again is confirmed by the devatas. For this they made the bhikkhus spend a night at the temple of the gods and placed him—if he had found favour

with the deity—as his chief adviser (head of an advisory council of monks).

We hear that when Parakrama Bahu II., during his last years, wished to hand over the government of his country to one of his sons, it was the Sangha whom he consulted. By this time (1240 A.D.) the Buddhist influence was very strong at the court. The successor to the throne of Lanka was to be decided by the Sangha.

The king summoned the Sangha and asked them: "Which of these six princes, my sister's son and my own son, is worthy of the royal crown?" The princes—Vijaya Bahu, Bhuvaneka Bahu, Tibhuvanamalla, Parakrama Bahu, Jaya Bahu (his sons) and Vira Bahu (sister's son)—listened eagerly for the words of wisdom to fall.

"O Great King," they replied, ".....they are all capable men and well-instructed.....worthy of the royal crown as protectors of the laity and the Order. But thy eldest son, Vijaya Bahu, has from childhood believed with joy in the triad of the jewels. His heart was ever set on the care of infirm bhikkhus..... ever bounding in pity for aged people and suffering creatures.....children beaten in wrath by father and mother come to him and tell their woe. Then Vijaya Bahu makes the parent come to him, exhorts them in his pity to beat their children no longer and lets them have from his own storehouse the necessary food for their various children....."

"How canst thou, O King.....knowing as thou dost that in Vijaya Bahu the merits dwell which constitute the ornament of the royal dignity, yet ask the Order? Learn then, O great king! that he possesses the lucky signs

to hold sway not only over Lankadipa but even over Jambudipa."

That was the final word.

Intervention in royal family quarrels could be said to date even earlier than the time of Bhikkhu Dathasiva—it one is to take into account the intervention of the Sangha in the dispute between Dutugemunu and his brother, Tissa. The Sangha wielded no real power in Court. But respect to the Order stayed Dutugemunu's hand.

The most outstanding instance of ecclesiastical influence in settling royal quarrels was the classic settlement of the Gaja Bahu-Parakrama Bahu conflict. When Parakrama's forces rushed down from Madhukavanaganthi to capture his cousin, Gaja Bahu, alive, the latter sent an S.O.S. call to the bhikkhus at Pulathinagara: "I see for myself no protection save with the venerable brethren; let them out of pity free me from my sorrow."

The Order intervened, met Parakrama Bahu at Giritataka and pleaded with him: Gaja Bahu had neither a son nor brothers, but being old was almost dying; his life should be spared and he be even allowed to continue to reign. "Therefore shalt thou give up the strife and return to thine own pro-

vince, hearkening to the word of the bhikkhu congregation."

Parakrama Bahu bowed to their advice.

The Sinhalese kings rewarded the monks in a novel way—weighing the monarch's self and offering alms to the amount of that bodily weight. Udaya II (952-991) three times gave an offering of rice (to the monks) "equal to his body weight." Vijaya Bahu and Parakrama Bahu are also said to have rewarded them thus.

But all was not plain sailing. Conflicts were bound to arise—on the policy and deeds of the kings on the populace. The most notable instance was in the reign of Udaya III, when some officials who fled the court were chased by the king's men and had their heads cut off at the "Grave of the Penitents" (the forest district to the west of Anuradhapura). The Sangha disapproved of the deed and left the kingdom for Rohana.

A rebellion against the king was the outcome when the people heard of the monks' decision. It was not until the king threw himself at the bhikkhu's feet and begged their mercy that the matter was settled and the monks returned to the kingdom as advisers to Royalty.

COLOMBO Y. M. B. A. NEWS

New Members

9.4.46: Mr. D. J. Paliheena, Ceylon Cold Stores Ltd., Colombo; Mr. Paul Samaraweera, 29, Francis Road, Wellawatte; Mr. L. G. A. Buddhipala, Food Commissioner's Office, Barnes Place, Colombo.

16.4.46: Mr. G. V. S. de Silva, Imperial Bank Buildings, Colombo.

23.4.46: Mr. C. Nitkunanathan, Food Control Office, Colombo.

Literary Branch (English)

During the period under review five meetings were held.

Film Shows

Three film shows, consisting of Educational, Medical and Musical films, arranged through the courtesy of Mr. E. P. P. Dyer, American Vice-Consul, were given on March 8, 21 and 27.

Library

Arrangements have been made to place orders on the more important English magazines and periodicals direct with the agents in England.

Steps have also been taken to add some American magazines to the reading room.

The Sinhalese section of the library and the reading room is being strengthened.

Lectures

Mr. N. Nadaraja delivered a lecture on Gandhi and Gandhism.

Dr. S. Paranavitana, Archaeological Commissioner, delivered a lecture on the recent finds at Ruanweliseya. Dr. L. A. Rajapakse presided.

Mr. T. M. Krishnaswamy Aiyer, Chief Justice of Travancore, delivered a lecture on Love and Life.

Kandyan Dancing

Members who desire to learn Kandyan Dancing are requested to communicate with the Hony. Gen. Secretary. The services of a well-exponent of Kandyan Dancing will be available.

Personal

Dr. F. A. Silva is now in charge of the De Soysa Maternity Hospital, Colombo.

Dr. W. G. Wickremesinghe, Assistant Director of Sanitary Services, has left for Australia and America on study leave. He will be away for about nine months.

Dr. E. A. Blok, Assistant Director of Medical Services, has retired from the Public Service.

Mr. Raja Senanayake has left for Bombay to pursue his studies in architecture at the J.J. School of Arts.

Mr. K. C. de Silva, B.A. (Lond.), took his oaths as an Advocate.

Dr. P. C. Gunasinghe, D.M.A., Gampola, has been transferred to Nuwara Eliya as D.M.A.

Mr. D. Amarasinghe has been appointed to the Treasury as Accountant (Supply).

Mr. A. Jayasinghe has retired from Government Service.

Dr. L. F. Gunaratne, M.O.H., Kadugannawa, is now medical officer, Anti-malaria Campaign in Colombo.

Obituary

We regret to record the death of Mrs. Fernando, wife of Mr. N. Paules Fernando, of No. 5, S. S. Molligoda, mother of Mr. S. T. Molligoda, and three of our members, Mr. C. C.

Perera, Mr. C. Robert Fernando and Mr. B. W. Fernando.

Religious Examination

The annual religious examination for teachers was held at the Nalanda Vidyalaya hall on April 7. Out of 35 applicants only 23 sat for the examination. In future this examination will be held at different centres.

Resignations

Mr. T. H. Kassim.

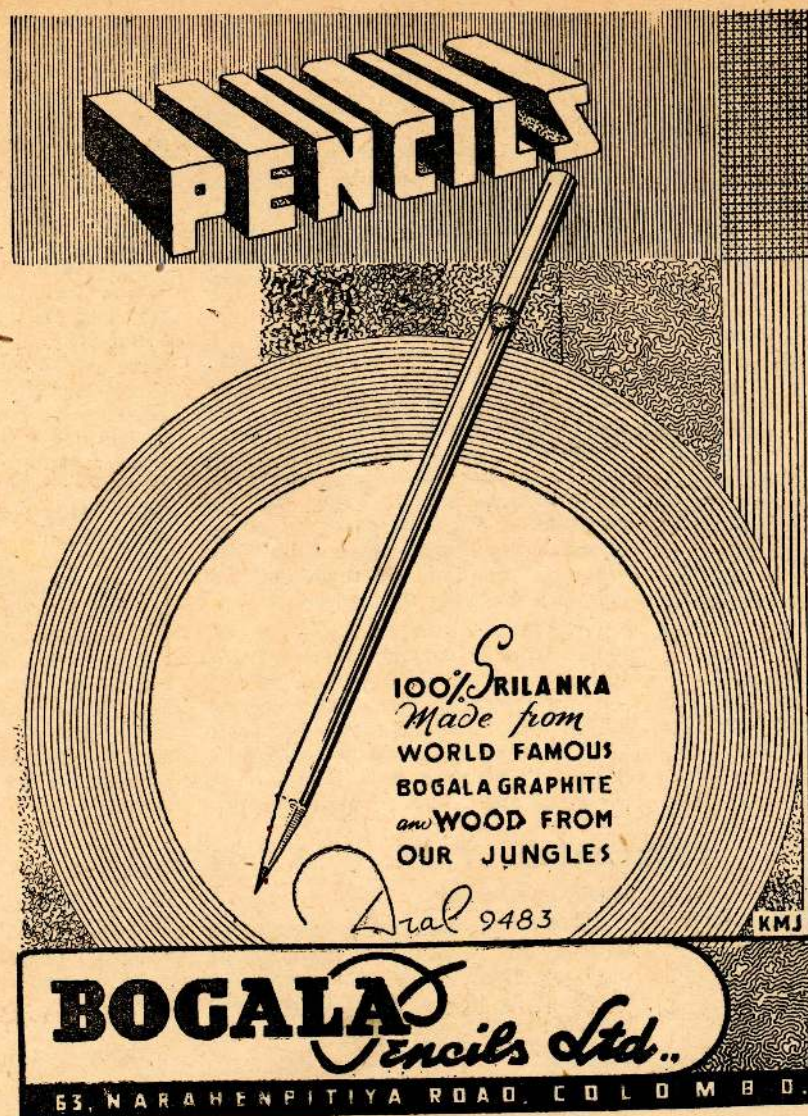
Narada Thera

Narada Thera delivered a lecture on "The Gospel of Buddhism" at Gokhale Hall, Madras, on April 18, under the auspices of the Mahabodhi Society. The Hon. Mr. Justice Chandrasekhara Aiyar presided.

Bhikkhu Nilwakke Somananda, representative of Mahabodhi Society in Madras, welcomed the audience, and Rao Bahadur N. Sivaraj, Mayor of Madras, welcomed the lecturer.

Narada Thera pointed out that Buddhism rested on the bedrock of facts which could be tested and verified by experience. It was the Dharma, the doctrine of equality and reality, and means of deliverance. He emphasised that whatever religion they belonged to, they should lead a life of righteousness. It was high time for them to unite and meet on a common platform and work for the welfare of mankind. The best religion was the religion of love actuated by wisdom.

Mr. K. Sanjiva Kamath, B.A., B.L., Advocate, proposed a vote of thanks.



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