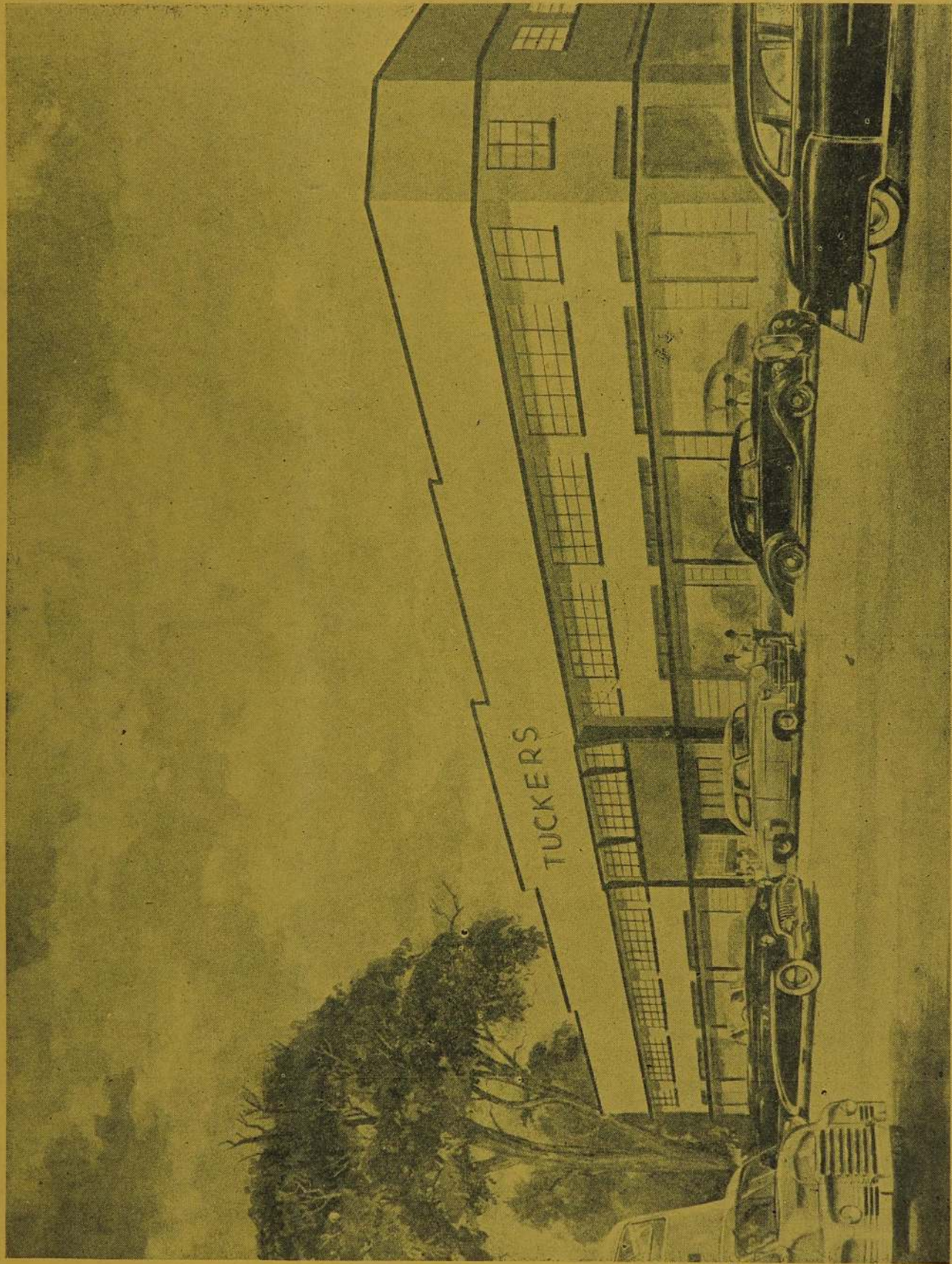


THE BUDDHIST



NOVEMBER, 1952
Vol. XXIII
No. 7



COLOMBO'S NEW AUTODROME AT UNION PLACE.



THE BUDDHIST

(Organ of the Colombo Y.M.B.A.)

“*Sila Paññānato Jayam*”

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Vol. XXIII.]

REGISTERED AS A
NEWSPAPER IN CEYLON.

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PUBLISHED BY THE
COLOMBO Y. M. B. A.

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SHEER IMPUDENCE

THE world has at all times possessed its quota of jesters who contribute to the irresponsibility of mankind. Similarly, the world is not complete without fools. Some are innocuous; others are, or can be malicious. We do not as rational men quarrel with fools, but when fools choose to assume an air of superiority, it is time we introduced them to others as infernal pests. One such is the writer of the article, “Buddhism and Free Thought,” which we reproduce elsewhere from the “Truth Seeker,” which styles itself “the oldest free thought paper in the world (founded 1873) and the official organ of the National Liberal League. The writer seems to be English; the magazine is published in America.

Presumably this “free thought” paper lends its columns to half-wits and ignoramuses to launch vile attacks even on founders of religions. Its idea of freedom is obviously the freedom of the wild ass. If we were convinced that the writer could be brought to his senses by pointing out the innumerable mis-statements, fallacious arguments and illogical deductions we might have devoted some time for such reformation, but he seems to be such a hopeless case that we wonder whether even a psychiatrist could help him. This “free thinker” doubts the Lord Buddha ever lived, but concedes with an air of conceit that ‘if he ever lived he was probably a much better man than most of his followers.’ Conceit

resolves itself into sheer impudence when he adds: “But we must not forget that he deserted his wife, a fact which does him no credit.” Even fools in this age try at least to know something of what they talk or write. But what really is Herbert Cutner? And what of the “Truth Seeker” which seems not too anxious to seek or respect the truth? If it chooses to seek the truth, say just on one point like the existence of the Buddha, it has only to go to the archaeological records of India which abound with the evidence required. But apparently both the “Truth Seeker” and its unholy scribe cares nought for Truth.

D. N. W.

POYA HOLIDAYS

A CORRESPONDENT suggests a change in the weekly holiday in Ceylon. At present, as it has been since the advent of Western foreign rule, Sunday is our weekly holiday, and by usage it has become an institution. At the time the Government imposed on us the Sunday holiday we had no choice. We had to accept it whether we liked it or not. To the Christian Sunday is the day of rest enjoined by the Bible; it is the day on which he goes to Church. And Buddhists in Ceylon have been obliged to observe it also as a day of rest, while they continue to be employed, by force of circumstances, on poya days on which they should engage themselves in religious observances. It may at first sight appear an insurmountable difficulty for the Government, even though no longer foreign, to provide a weekly holiday for the Buddhists whose poya days are not fixed but vary. However, is this such a difficult obstacle to

clear? Even now there are a number of non-Christian holy days which vary in date from year to year which are calendar-fixed annually by Government and proclaimed as holidays. Here one also wonders whether Sunday is a universal holiday. We are personally aware that in the Unfederated States of Malaya Friday was the weekly holiday, and even British officials had to work on Sundays. And what about Iran, Egypt and the many other Islamic countries? We strongly commend our correspondent's suggestion to Government. It should not be brushed aside lightly but should engage the clear attention of the Cabinet, the majority of whose members do not let the slightest opportunity pass without assuring Buddhists that as long as the Government is in their hands Buddhists need fear nothing. Events in the recent past, however, make us wonder whether our Buddhist Cabinet ministers might not one fine

morning wake up to repent that they had lulled themselves into the belief that any old thing was good enough for the Buddhists. Pampering and placating powerful “masters” might be considered ingenuous political tactics, but it must not be forgotten that the Buddhists, who form the majority of the Island's population, have a right to be heard. If it is democracy we cherish, its exponents should respect not only the minorities but also the majority. In these circumstances we commend to our country's Cabinet the sober suggestions of our correspondent, which, we are aware, reflect the views of a large section of our people. On quite unnecessary matters our legislators often hark back to the past. Here is an instance when they might justifiably do so. In the Lanka that was great and good every poya day was a holiday.

D. N. W.

WORLD FELLOWSHIP OF BUDDHISTS

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS AT SECOND CONFERENCE HELD IN TOKYO

INAUGURATING the Second Conference of World Fellowship of Buddhists in Tokyo on September 25, Dr. G. P. Malalasekera, President said:—

“ Since we last met, surveying the Buddhist scene, we can feel a certain amount of satisfaction with the progress of Buddhism and Buddhist activities. Many Buddhist lands have recently won either complete freedom or a large measure of responsibility in the management of their own affairs. While here in Japan, we celebrate the 1400th year of the introduction of Buddhism, the Buddhists of many lands, especially in South and South East Asia are making extensive preparations to celebrate four years hence the 2500th year of the Parinirvana of the Lord Buddha. The signs everywhere encourage the hope that this event will usher in a mighty Buddhist renaissance. From every part of the world news comes of great activity among the Buddhists desire and a distinct among non-Buddhists, especially among the more enlightened among them, to make closer acquaintance with the teachings of the Blessed One and their practical application to the modern world.

In the sub-continent of India, now free from the shackles of alien domination, the people have re-awakened to the memory of her greatest son, the Sakyamuni, and His Name and Teaching once more occupy pride of place in their hearts. It is significant, both as evidence of change of attitude and also as harbinger of the new dawn sweeping over India's teeming millions, that when the Republic of Free Bharat was inaugurated in the Parliament Hall in New Delhi, it was a likeness of the Blessed One, especially transported for the purpose from the ancient Buddhist centre of Mathura, that dominated the scene. When the curtain opened at the ceremony, revealing the life-like statue of the Buddha, bathed in golden light, so realistic did the Figure appear, holding out its hand to bless those assembled in the vast hall, that the gathering spontaneously rose from their seats in silent veneration. It is the great Buddhist Emperor Asoka's lion-

capital that the new free Government of India uses as its seal. India's national flag proudly displays the Dhamma-Cakka as the nation's emblem, while above the Speaker's chair in the Parliament, are the opening words of the Buddha's first sermon that have been adopted as the motto of the Government's rule.

These events cannot be dismissed as mere coincidences; they are portents of a mighty upheaval in India's destiny, as she bids fair to resume leadership among Asian nations in religion and culture. India was at one time the greatest civilizing influence of the world; from India, over mountain and sea, went the messengers of the Buddha-Word carrying it everywhere into the then known world. Along with it, the fine arts grew and prospered, till Buddhist culture penetrated like a golden thread into the whole web of Asian civilization. Once more in India's learned halls we hear spoken the Buddha's Message and plans are under way for the resuscitation of Buddhist studies and the revival of Buddhist institutions, such as Nalanda of ancient fame.

India's neighbour Pakistan, where the State Religion is Islam, but where, strangely enough, there is at present a greater concentration of Buddhist archaeological monuments and Buddhist populations, is showing keen interest and great enthusiasm in the promotion of Buddhist studies, in a practical manner, by making money grants for Buddhist Conferences, the erection of Buddhist places of worship, and in various other ways. I have mentioned these two countries in particular, because I wish to hold them up as magnificent examples of the enlightened attitude of Governments towards, it is true, a minority religion but, indeed, a Religion which never used questionable methods of propagation even at the very zenith of its power, no, not even when it had kings and mighty emperors to support it.

When I come to think of it, I cannot help feeling that this good Karma of the Buddhists, in that their religion had caused never a hurt to anyone, which is now having this beneficent cumulative effect. Too often, especially in the last four or five centuries, when the world

shrank as it came to be more and more exposed, and countries and peoples, separated from each other by vast distances, drew closer together as a result of scientific invention—too often have we felt the bitterness of intolerance which came along with proselytizing zeal. Here in Japan, too, we have witnessed in recent times the attempts made, often with show of arrogance and power, to replace the old-established religion with a new one. The memories left by such attempts are never pleasant and recoil on their perpetrators.

It is Buddhism's proud boast that it has never sullied its record with inquisitions and forced conversion, with cajolery or corruption, with taking undue advantage of poverty and destitution, or with using fear and intimidation and political superiority, to swell the number of its adherents. It has never been the Buddhist way to compete for converts in the market-place. Well might Dr. Conze say in his recent, very readable book, *Buddhism, Its Essence and Development*: “ Here you have the big bullying empires of history, guarded by hosts of soldiers, ships and magistrates. Scarcely one of them lasted longer than perhaps three centuries. There you have a movement of deliberate beggars, who always prized poverty more than wealth; who were sworn not to harm or kill other beings; who spent their time in dreaming superb dreams and inventing beautiful never-never lands; who despised whatever the world valued; who valued whatever the world despised—meekness, generosity, idle contemplation. And yet, where these mighty empires, built on greed, hatred and delusion, lasted just a few centuries, the impulse of self-denial carried the Buddhist community through 2,500 years.”

It must always be remembered, however, that as Buddhists, we have been charged by the Blessed One with the duty of making known the Sublime Doctrine “ for the good of the many, the welfare of the many, for the happiness and the welfare of gods and men.” This casts upon us the paramount obligation of being acquainted with the Doctrine ourselves before we can convey it

to others. And here we come face to face with a problem of grave import to Buddhists, the education of their children. We learn from history that wherever Buddhism established itself, there it promoted education, because Buddhism is the religion of Enlightenment and education is one of the chief paths to Enlightenment. In Buddhist lands, the monastery and the nunnery served as the school and an excellent education was imparted to the children with little or no cost to the parents. But, in recent times, this system has undergone great change. In some countries, which went under foreign domination, an important part of the process of subjugation consisted in destroying the culture of the people concerned so that they might the more readily submit to the foreign yoke.

The means most effectively employed for this purpose was the control of education. In most of the countries I have in mind, the Governments concerned completely changed the system of education that had been in vogue in the past and substituted for it a system which was based on traditions and beliefs that were alien to the peoples on whom it was inflicted. Quite often, this meant a total elimination of the temple-schools which had been the nurseries of Buddhist culture and, what was worse, the new system was given in charge of foreign missionaries whose avowed aim was the conversion of the "heather." Quite often, too, grants were paid by Governments for this work of proselytization, which in some cases was openly and unashamedly carried on.

It should not be difficult to realise the immense damage caused by these revolutionary changes. Buddhism and Buddhist culture suffered a definite set-back in Buddhist lands. The prestige of the Sangha, who had for centuries been the custodians of the Dhamma, was undermined and thus the people lost their natural leaders. Men and women grew up, educated in the sense that they were able to pass some kind of examination which would secure for them a job under their Government, but, alas! quite ignorant of the Religion and Culture which their ancestors had cherished more than their lives and which had brought to their lands renown and prosperity, peace and, above all, contentment. Happily, the era of open conversion is now almost over, though the process still goes on

surreptitiously, in orphanages and homes for the destitute, in hospitals, and, to a smaller extent, in schools.

In most countries resurgent nationalism has also meant a revival of Buddhist education and in a few countries, like Ceylon, it has made great strides. But even in these cases, much leeway yet remains to be made and everywhere the need is for more and better Buddhist schools, for boys and, even more so, for girls. The Buddhists cannot possibly remain inactive till every Buddhist boy and girl is provided with adequate facilities for their education, in all its stages, from the Kindergarten to the University, so that they can spend the most formative years of their lives in an environment where they will be imbued with the highest ideals of the Dharma, firm in their convictions, strong in their faith and determined to be radiant examples of their Religion, practising above all else the twin virtues of Compassion and Wisdom, Karunà and Prajñà, which form the bedrock of the Buddha's Teaching. Nor must we forget the education of the adult and physically defective. In some Buddhist countries, Government runs secular schools for children of various religions, but religious education is not included in the curriculum. This is due to a desire on the part of Government to play for safety. Recent events in many parts of the world have shown quite conclusively, however, that a race of men and women, growing up without religious ideals will be a menace to the peace and happiness of the world. It is the bounden duty, therefore, of Governments which have undertaken the responsibility of public education so to fashion their policies that students passing through their schools shall leave with a satisfactory knowledge of, and training in, the religion to which they happen to be born. I am happy to be able to say that this is the policy that is being followed by the free Government of my own country of Ceylon. It is an example well worth the emulation of others who have the welfare of future generations at heart.

In this matter of education, as well as in giving a general lead to social attitudes, the foremost place should be taken by the Sangha. Our ecclesiastical Order is very strongly dependent on the support of the laity, even where rich and extensive endowments exist for the special benefit of the Sangha. Such

endowments, moreover, are few and far between, and most members of the Sangha, at least in the countries within my knowledge, have to rely on the support of the laity even for their daily needs. It behoves us, therefore, to be ever solicitous of their welfare, to be in constant contact with them and to encourage them in their religious activities. It is a duty of which we should be most mindful because we are apt to overlook it in our own preoccupations. Let us remember that it was the members of the Sangha that preserved for us the best of our scriptures, that added vastly to the rich heritage of our religious literature, that guarded the Religion in the darkest of its days. The day the Sangha decays and perishes, that day our very Religion is doomed.

In considering the position of the Sangha to-day, there are several other matters which merit our serious attention. There is no denying the fact that a wide cleavage now exists between the Sangha and the laity, that the Sangha are not the guide, philosopher and friend of the laity, which position they had occupied in the past. Two remedies are urgently needed to mend this state of affairs. One is that training schools should be established for members of the Sangha where they will be taught not merely the old classical texts of Buddhism but they will become acquainted with recent advances in scientific knowledge and acquire proficiency in one or more modern languages so as to have the doors of their minds open to what is happening in the world around them. Without such knowledge, they cannot either command our respect and veneration or provide the effective guidance which they give us in meeting life's problems which we have to face in our daily circumstances. Besides, such training alone can make them fit to carry the message of the Buddha profitably to regions where it is at present unknown and give to the world at large the benefit of their learning and piety and the lessons of their rich experience.

The other remedy is that the laity should keep in close contact with the Sangha who are their spiritual teachers, by visiting monasteries not only on special festival days but also as a matter of routine. The temple should once more become the centre of Buddhist activities and the members of the Sangha their lawful and proper

leaders. It is true, alas! that with most of us, our visits to the temple are rare and even when we do go, it is often to make a vow for our wordly gain and to chant some stanzas or portions of Sutras without understanding their significance. This is deplorable and must cease. Unfortunately for us Buddhists, the days of the week which have now been officially set apart for relaxation have no association for us as far as our Religion is concerned and we, therefore, are tempted to spend them either in idleness or in the pursuit of pleasure. This has prevented us from having days of our own of religious significance to us, which can be served for religious observances. Some countries, *e.g.*, Ceylon, with a secular Government, recognise a few days as being of special significance to Buddhists and these are observed as public holidays, but nothing can take the place of the weekly visit to the temple which was possible under the old state of affairs. This is a matter of much importance and should engage our attention.

The need for places of worship where Buddhists can go from time to time either for individual or communal worship and the use of such places for a dissemination of the Dharma raise the problem of the establishment of such places in countries, particularly of the West, in which the number of Buddhists is at present necessarily small. This matter has long engaged the attention of the Buddhist groups of Europe. Most of these groups cannot afford the expenses needed for the establishment and maintenance of such centres and this provides an opportunity for Buddhist philanthropists of Asian lands to exercise their generosity for the gift of the Dharma which, the Blessed One tells us, "exceeds all other gifts." I would particularly commend the project of establishing a Vihara in London, which will serve as a centre for the whole of Western Europe. The question of providing monks to be in charge of such centres also awaits solution.

It has always been the Buddhist way that in each country there should ultimately be established a Sangha consisting of "sons of the soil," completely independent of any outside control whatsoever, but only conforming to the rules of discipline contained in the Buddhist Vinaya. It is to be hoped,

therefore, that this practice will be followed in Europe and America as well. Till such time as this becomes possible, however, monks will have to be provided from Buddhist countries. It is needless to add that they must be specially selected so that only those possessing the necessary qualifications, both of learning, character and training, will be engaged for the purpose. I do not propose to say anything more about it now because the subject will come up for discussion at this Conference in due course. Meanwhile every endeavour should be made to give all possible support to the little Buddhist groups which are now to be found practically in every country in Europe and America. For the most part, these groups are cut off from one another both for geographical and linguistic reasons, though some maintain a sort of contact with a better-known group here and there. It should be our endeavour to provide a clearing-house for all these isolated groups, to bring them into association with one another. This will be one of the functions of our Fellowship. In these groups are individuals who are keen to be of service. For themselves and as well as for other Buddhists, it is necessary that they keep in regular contact with a central organization, which this Fellowship should provide. It can be said that even while working under various handicaps and at the beginning of its career, the Fellowship has already established contacts and kept in continuous touch with groups and individuals in many parts of the world, some of them very remote. We must assess properly the importance and value of this international correspondence and we must ensure that it increases in usefulness. At present all the work is being done by voluntary workers. To them we are indeed grateful. But the time will soon come, if it has not come already, when a permanent Secretariat is necessary. Funds are needed for this purpose and it is my earnest wish that you should apply your minds to this matter.

One of the most profitable ways of maintaining mutual contact and community of interest is through literature, and I am very happy to be able to record that the output of literature on Buddhism during the last few years has been remarkable. Some of these publications have been sold by tens of thousands — evidence, if evidence were needed, of the tremendous interest in Bud-

dhism to be found in most parts of the world. The literature published falls into several categories. First, there are many periodicals published weekly, others fortnightly, many monthlies, a few quarterlies and a couple of annuals. They are well-known and have wide circulation. They are published in many languages both of the East and West, and contain excellent articles on Buddhism and Buddhist problems. I refrain from mentioning the names of these periodicals lest, in my ignorance, I should omit some. They deserve every support and encouragement because they fulfil a most valuable purpose, and it is a matter for regret, therefore, that several of them should have to make constant appeals for funds. The regret is enhanced when it is discovered that those in difficulties are among the best. It is most unsatisfactory that they should have to depend on sporadic generosity.

One remedy seems to be to increase their circulation but it often happens that the actual cost of a copy is greater than the sale price, so that greater circulation might mean more financial loss. Perhaps, the solution would be a central fund for publications, from which subsidies could be given from time to time to those most in need. There will, of course, be administrative difficulties and the problem of making discrimination in favour of one or other publication, but these are not insurmountable. Apart from the periodicals which are definitely Buddhist, there are many others which publish occasional articles of great importance to Buddhism and Buddhists and the question thus arises of efficient Buddhist bibliographies. This furnishes an additional argument for a permanent Secretariat for the World Fellowship of Buddhists.

It would be most useful if such bibliographies could also contain indications of the value of the articles listed for authentic information on Buddhism. For, it often happens that writers both of books and articles on Buddhism are guilty of serious misrepresentation, sometimes even deliberate, especially when the writer's motive is to prove the superiority of his own religion over the teachings of the Buddha. In the absence of some guidance, people interested in Buddhism are often misled, both to their own disadvantage and to the detriment of the Dharma. Books

and booklets on Buddhism are, as I have said already, being increasingly published but there are some countries, *e.g.* Spain and the countries of Eastern Europe, where they cannot be made available. In Eastern Europe there are difficulties of communication but no such difficulty exists in Spain, where interest in Buddhism is frowned upon by those in a position to proscribe literature for their countrymen. It is contrary to the liberal spirit of the 20th century to levy taxes on knowledge especially where such knowledge is concerned with spiritual matters and this, then, becomes worthy of attention by such bodies as UNESCO. I very much hope that it will be taken up.

I would draw your attention to a proposal that has been made for the establishment of a central Buddhist Academy where scholars from many lands can meet together and co-ordinate the work of textual edition and translation. The idea has already received support from many quarters, including the last sessions of the Oriental Conference at Lucknow where its President, Professor Nilakanta Sastri, warmly sponsored it. It seems to be generally agreed that perhaps Ceylon, because of its age-long traditions and its comparative peacefulness, would prove to be the best site for its location. I am confident that the Government and the people of Lanka would consider such a proposal with the utmost sympathy.

The Buddhist must also learn to use the radio and the cinema increasingly in the service of their religion. Whereas in the past we confined ourselves to spreading the Buddha-Word each in his own country, now we must make organised efforts to do so through international media. That is to say, we must deliberately set ourselves out to spread the Dharma wider afield and with ever-increasing intensity than has ever been before. For this purpose every available means of propaganda must be used, but with wisdom and foresight. The drama, for instance, which in other spheres of education, has proved so effective a medium, should be used with caution, because there are many Buddhists who strongly hold the view that sacred personages should not be represented on the stage by those whose only claim to do so is their histrionic ability. It is undoubtedly a point of view that has to be respected.

In the successful accomplishment of these and the many other tasks that awaits us, the primary need is unity, solidarity and co-operation among the Buddhists of the world. Indeed, one of the primary aims of the World Fellowship of Buddhists is to create a consciousness of oneness among Buddhists. For too long have we remained estranged in our little groups, hugging pretty differences which, on examination, are found to be unimportant. The so-called cleavage implied in the nomenclature of various "Schools" of Buddhism has been accentuated beyond all justification. These variations are, as it were, different dialects of the same main language. Nowhere do we find amongst the Buddhist "Sects" anything like the differences in matters of doctrinal import between, for instances, the various Christian denominations. The three (sometimes four) Characteristics of Buddhism, the Four Noble Truths, the Noble Eightfold Path—these are accepted equally by all Buddhists everywhere.

Let us not, therefore, be unduly influenced by differences of outward ritual and ceremonial and allow them to prevent us from forming ourselves into an organic whole for the good of the world, to banish distress in society, to increase the beauty of the, mind to add to mankind's moral stature, to influence world-peace, to promote human happiness. Let us sink our petty prejudices in our attempts to build the brave Buddhist world abjuring violence, adhering firmly to the Dharma, united in our homage to the Blessed One whom we all regard as our Teacher and Guide. The fellowship of Buddhists is a necessary prelude to the fellowship of Man.

In our endeavour to achieve this Fellowship of Buddhists we shall inevitably come across many enemies of harmony who will attempt to divide us. Their tactics will not be new. They will attribute to our plans, purposes we do not hold. This will be done partly in malice, but chiefly through ignorance, which in Buddhism is the source of all evil. Let us pay them no heed; let us have confidence in the sincerity of our aims. We ask no one to give up any of his convictions. There is no thought of a super-Buddhist "Church" with a Buddhist "Pope," and the paraphernalia that goes with such a conception. We have only one object in view—to seek to follow the Good Life laid down

by the Buddha, so that we ourselves and the whole world may reap the benefit thereof. We can here only start the flow of the general currents of harmony, but we must preserve till these currents grow and surge into a mighty flood, carrying all obstacles before it. We are now merely planting the seeds of co-operation. They must be nourished with the food of our inner spiritual lives, made to grow, propagate and spread. Our unity must be broad-based and buttressed on the spiritual power of the Dhamma. Let us go forward, conscious of our great ends, strong in the strength of another, with a passion to understand.

"Wide open are the doors to
Immortality,
Let those who have ears put
forth faith."

The unity we thus hope to attain will be used, not for the purposes of power but for the attainment of peace and happiness for all humanity, by helping to build a moral solidarity and a collective conscience of the people of the world against war and the possibility of war. Mankind is unhappy, desperately miserable. Science has failed to find the secret of happiness. The "conquest of nature" has not succeeded in achieving either plenty or peace. According to our ideals, that was inevitable. It has never been the Buddhist way to regard nature as something to be conquered, something to be subjected to the service of man to satisfy his selfish desires. We have been taught that happiness is to be found by living in harmony with the Dharma, *i.e.* with Nature, with its beauty and grandeur.

We have also been taught that the only way to achieve peace is by eliminating the root causes of war—greed, hatred and stupidity. Today the world is divided into power blocks who devote all their energies and their minds to the sterile, negative, stupid business of war. Mankind lives in an atmosphere of fear and hysteria, unable to think clearly. The world cannot have peace till men and nations renounce selfish desires, give up racial arrogance, and clean themselves of the "colonial spirit," the egoistical lust for possession and power. Wealth cannot secure happiness. The building up of a show of force will never remedy wrong, for force can only add to and multiply wrong.

Pacts and treaties by themselves are worthless. Some there are who

say that disarmament is vital for world-peace. If by that they only mean the abolition of the weapons of war they are as wrong as those others who foolishly imagine that peace can be secured by building up ever bigger and better weapons of attack. These things will avail nothing till we learn to develop the heart that shall make it impossible for civilised men to resort to the arbitrament of wholesale carnage. The world is sick of Peace Conferences and Treaties and Proclamations of Freedom, which are followed by massacres and wholesale destruction of peoples and countries.

It is religion alone that can effect the necessary change of heart, religion which consists not in the performance of rites and ceremonies but in a life of holiness and inner tranquillity resulting in the disarmament of the mind, which is the only real disarmament. Religion is primarily a matter for the individual. We can only convert society to peace in so far as we convert ourselves by ceaseless moral and personal effort. We must not only love others but also live justly ourselves. It is you and I and not Governments that make peace.

The conditions which today face humanity and threaten the very structure of humanity demand from us a supreme effort, in humility of spirit, but in great magnitude of hope. Let us have no illusions about the difficulties, but let us take courage from the words of the Blessed One: that all unhappiness can be overcome by effort, which has wisdom as its concomitant, and that Earnestness is the path to Life and Heedlessness the way of Death. According to the Buddha, this world is a man-made world. Its joys and sorrows are all the result of man's activities and if men will only work steadfastly and determinedly for happiness and peace there is no god or devil that can prevent their achieving the goal. The time is now and the place, our own personality. The beginning must be made in our individual lives and in the lives of our families. The need for this is distressingly urgent. Everywhere we see the corruption of morals, and the fruits of depraved morality in public and private life. Moral degradation is rampant in every sphere of activity. It is for each one of us to fight against this state of affairs. We are men of peace but in a sense we must also be warriors. "Warriors are we," says the Buddha in a

famous Sutra, "warriors fighting against greed and lust, hatred and ill-will, stupidity and ignorance." We must fight against poverty and starvation, against oppression and prejudice, against hypocrisy and falsehood of every kind. With Determination which conquers all difficulties, let us fight this Battle of Righteousness, each a True Warrior, armed with the Cuirass of Love, riding the Steed of Energy, with the Sword of Wisdom in one hand, bearing aloft the Banner of Deliverance, with Truth as our Battle-cry.

Let each one of us strive our utmost. Let us, if nothing else, lay the foundation stone for a structure which, under the hands of present and future builders, will rise as the Temple of our Dreams—a world wherein all creatures "will abound in weal and peace, all blessed in peace always, all creatures, weak and strong, all creatures great and small; none cajoling or flouting his fellows anywhere, none wishing harm to to others in dungeon or in hate, but filled with an all-embracing love all the universe, in all its height and depth and breadth—unstinted love, unmarred by hate within, not rousing enmity."

The Buddha assures us that the highest happiness is to be had here and now, not in some future life, behind or above the clouds. Let us seek it.

As a modern poet has sung:

"We men of earth here have the stuff

Of very heaven. We have enough!

We need no other things to build
The Stairs unto the Unfulfilled—
No other ivory for the doors,
No other marble for the floors.
No other cedar for the beam
And dome of man's eternal
dream.

Here on the paths of every day

Here on the common human
way—

To build heaven . . .

Ours the stuff sublime
To build eternity in time."

May the blessings of the Enlightened One, His Noble Doctrine and the Community of the Perfect Disciples be on us all. May all beings be happy."

The *Maninichi*, a Tokyo newspaper writes:—

The Second World Buddhist Conference opened on September 25, at the Main Hall of the Tsukiji

Honganji Grand Temple, with 75 delegates and 100 observers from abroad, and 450 and 175 Japanese delegates and observers respectively.

After the solemn ceremonies and the opening address by the Rev. Rosen Takashina and an address by Dr. Makoto Nagai, Chairman of the executive board of the convention, congratulatory messages were delivered by H.I.H. Prince Mikasa, American Ambassador Robert D. Murphy, and by the new Indian Ambassador Dr. Mohammed Abdul Rauf.

A grand ceremony for the due reception of the Holy Relic into this country was held in the afternoon, after which Dr. G. P. Malalasekera, President of the World Fellowship of Buddhists, took the chair as speaker of the day. A message from each nation sending delegates was read by the respective leading representative from Cambodia, Ceylon, the Republic of China, Britain, France, Hongkong, India, Laos, Nepal, Pakistan, Penang, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, the United States and Viet Nam.

After a 10-minute recess, names of the presiding officers for the three sub-committees to start the six-day discussion sessions from September 26 were read out and unanimously approved.

Dr. G. P. Malalasekera and Prof. Shoson Miyamoto, of Tokyo University, were elected the presiding officers of the First Committee which will be concerned with the sphere of Buddhist ideology.

His Excellency Sanga Nilakamhaeng, Thai Ambassador in Japan and Dr. Chitoku Morikawa, President of Ryukoku University, Kyoto were elected for the Second Committee to discuss proposals on Education and Enlightenment in the light of Buddhist thought.

For the Third Committee to discuss the practical side of Buddhism, the Hon. U. Win, Burmese Minister for Religious Affairs, and Dr. Seiichiro Ono were chosen as presiding officers.

The opening day of the Second World Buddhist Conference finally culminated in a long and enthusiastic presidential address by Dr. Malalasekera, marking the spirit and enthusiasm in which the following conferences would be conducted.

The hour and a half fervent oration practically outlined all the main points, purposes and significance of the sessions to follow.

AN ATTACK ON BUDDHISM

By AN IGNORAMUS

[We reproduce this article from August, 1952, issue of the "Truth Seeker," the official organ of the National Liberal League, to emphasize the impudence of ignorant writers. It is entitled "Buddhism and Free Thought" and has been written by one Herbert Cutner.—Ed.]

IT is a minor tragedy that so many Rationalists, after giving up Christianity, continue to defend "Jesus of Nazareth" as a supreme Teacher of mankind, or rush to the defense of a similar "Teacher," the "Lord" Buddha, merely because he is said to have taught, as Dr. Prynce Hopkins states in the June number of this journal, "that all appeal to the gods was futile," and that, therefore, Buddha was an Atheist, and should command the admiration of Rationalists. Here in England there is a strong Buddhist movement, and some of our English Buddhists are quite certain that in Buddhism we Rationalists may find a religion which will appeal not only to our emotional nature but to our logic and reason.

Let me make it clear at the outset that at least some of us who have discarded Christianity have thrown off the shackles of all religions. We do not want a religion at all. We do not want a religion like Freudism with its patient's revelation to a psychoanalytic priest, which appears to us to be fundamentally the same as a penitent's "confession" to a Roman Catholic priest; and certainly, we do not want a "religion" which is supposed to have been founded in Asia some 2500 years ago and which, however well suited to people then, must be completely out of place in the Western World of 1952.

I have no wish to attack the Buddha (born, it is said, about 520 B.C.), who, if he ever lived, was probably a much better man than most of his followers. But we must not forget that he deserted his wife, a fact which does him no credit. He spent five or six years leading an "ascetic" life—what is, he went into the forest, sat for hours and days and weeks no doubt on prickly shrubs, and contemplated his navel. Of what earthly use it was, the Lord may know, but a simple-minded Materialist like my-

self finds this kind of thing nauseous.

Gautama (or Gotama) as this particular Buddha is named, appears to have thought the same himself and got fed-up eating weeds and drinking water; for after wasting away almost to a shadow he gave up the "ascetic" life and began to eat much like a blatant Atheist. With increased strength and with five disciples—who were no doubt as sick of "asceticism" as he was—he began to "expound" many of the "deep" things he had meditated while an ascetic. And what were these?

It seems incredible that so many people have fallen for many of the precepts taught by the Buddha which are nearly always referred to by devout believers under their Hindu names as if that made them any better. In England writers on Buddhism love to sprinkle their articles with such terms as Dhammika Sutta, Paribrajakas, Mahavagga, Vinaya-pitaka, Cullavaga, Majjhima Nikaya, Kalyano-dhammo and similar words, the idea being that they make the "Lord" Buddha something far and away above the ordinary run of mankind. It is precisely the name with pious Christians and reverent Rationalists who refer to "Christ Jesus" or "Jesus of Nazareth" in hushed tones, for was he not the greatest Being that ever trod this earth—except perhaps the Lord Buddha?

Just as the "gospel" of Jesus is woefully exaggerated—for example, you are enjoined to "love" your enemies—so you will find the so-called "perfect" way of life as taught by the Buddha mostly undiluted nonsense. He tells us, for instance, that when we come "to a royal assembly or gathering" we should not lie; but lest anyone should imagine that a "royal assembly" means a royal assembly, that great Buddhist authority, Dr. Rhys Davids, hastens to explain that it does not, for it means "any official inquiry." And what the command really amounts to is "not to bear false witness." We seem to have heard this before, without Buddhism.

No one, of course, disputes that religious leaders stumble upon a few excellent precepts, but these, as

in Christianity, are mixed up with undeniable rubbish. One of the "eight precepts" taught by Gautama is "one should not wear garlands or use perfumes"; another is "one should sleep on a mat spread on the ground." The idea that wearing a flower or two or using some scent or sleeping in a bed is morally wrong shows as stupidity hard to fathom. And surely to tell us that "a wise man should avoid married life as if it were a burning pit of live coals" is the last word in sheer impudence. If there is a joke about it, it is that confirmed Buddhists marry just as much as confirmed Christians—in spite of the fact that in the case of Christianity, Jesus recommends a drastic mutilation "for the kingdom of heaven's sake."

In Buddhism there are ten "sins," one of them being "vain conversation" (a sin which everybody falls into everywhere) and another is "skepticism." "Skepticism" here does not mean skepticism, according to Rhys Davids, but the denial of everything—which is quite a different matter. In any case, it is a mortal sin to deny the Buddha and the law. Throughout history it has always been a mortal sin to deny a "fuhrer." Jesus, Jehovah, Hitler, Mussolini, Marx, Lenin, Stalin, Mrs. Eddy, Joseph Smith and many others should be obeyed unquestionably. The Buddha no doubt had many fore-runners and we are constantly having new ones thrust upon us. For my part I insist that skepticism is the most necessary quality for progress. It is skepticism that has demolished credulity, superstition, and humbug.

Whatever Gautama himself thought and taught, the fact remains that Buddhism is a religion. Rhys Davids in his Hibbert Lectures points out:

One of the most curious facts in the whole history of the world is that Buddhism and Christianity have both developed, in the course of fifteen hundred years, into sacerdotal and sacramental systems, each with its bells and rosaries and images and holy water; each with its services in dead languages, with choirs and processions and creeds and incense, in which the laity are

spectators only; each with its mystic rites and ceremonies performed by shaven priests in gorgeous robes; each with its abbots and monks and nuns, of many grades; each with its worship of virgins, saints, and angels; its reverence to the Virgin and the Child; its confessions, fasts and purgatory; its idols, relics, symbols, and sacred pictures; its shrines and pilgrimages; each with its huge monasteries and gorgeous cathedrals, its powerful hierarchy and its wealthy cardinals; each, even, ruled over by a Pope, with a triple tiara on his head and the sceptre of temporal power in his hand, the representative on earth of an eternal Spirit in the heavens!

Perhaps Dr. Prynce Hopkins wants all this, but I trust that he will allow some of us to oppose both Buddhism and Christianity and not be afraid to say so.

There is still another point. Leaving aside the truth or untruth

of the question whether there were many, many Buddhas before Gautama (which hard-headed Materialists like myself laugh at) we must first ask, was there ever such a person as Gautama at all? Let the reader consult a number of encyclopedias on the Buddha and he will find that no one really knows when he was born. The dates given are even vaguer than those given for Jesus. Moreover, Reinach, in his well-known history of religions, "Orpheus," admits that even Indian authorities have questioned his existence.

Gautama himself never wrote a line, nor did his immediate disciples. Buddhists claim, however, that a council of five was called immediately after his death and his teachings sung by them—a council which Reinach characterizes as a myth. It was the famous King Asoka who first, in 244 B.C., got together something of what the Buddha is supposed to have

taught and laid the foundation of Buddhism. And it is not surprising that soon Gautama was, as Rhys Davids points out, "regarded as omniscient and absolutely sinless." It must be disconcerting to both pious Christians and reverent Rationalists to find him such a strong rival to "Jesus of Nazareth" in these qualities.

Space forbids me to go more deeply into the matter. Readers should study chapter 29 of Doane's "Bible Myths" and they will learn more about the mythology of both Christianity and Buddhism in half an hour than by studying for a life time the thousands of works available on Gautama. Perhaps I can persuade Dr. Hopkins to do likewise—and he will then see how his chivalrous defense of Gautama is really a defense for the perpetuation of a myth. Not only has the Buddha been made into a Christian saint, but he is, according to a "beautiful" legend, also the "Man in the Moon."

THE TRUTH

HERE is a picture of the inscription in Brahmi on the pillar which the Emperor Asoka of India (3rd century B.C.) caused to be raised to mark the birth-place of the baby who later on became the Buddha. Dr. A. A. Fuhrer discovered the pillar in 1896. An eshampage supplied by him enabled Dr. G. Buhler to edit the inscription in the *Epi-graphia Indica*, Vol. V, 1898-1899. The following is the translation which appears in Vol. I of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum* (New Ed., 1925):—

"When King Devanampriya Priyadarsin had been anointed 20 years, he came himself and worshipped (this spot) because the Buddha Sakyamuni was born here.

"(He) both caused to be made a stone bearing a horse (?) and caused a stone pillar to be set up (in order to show) that the Blessed One was born here.

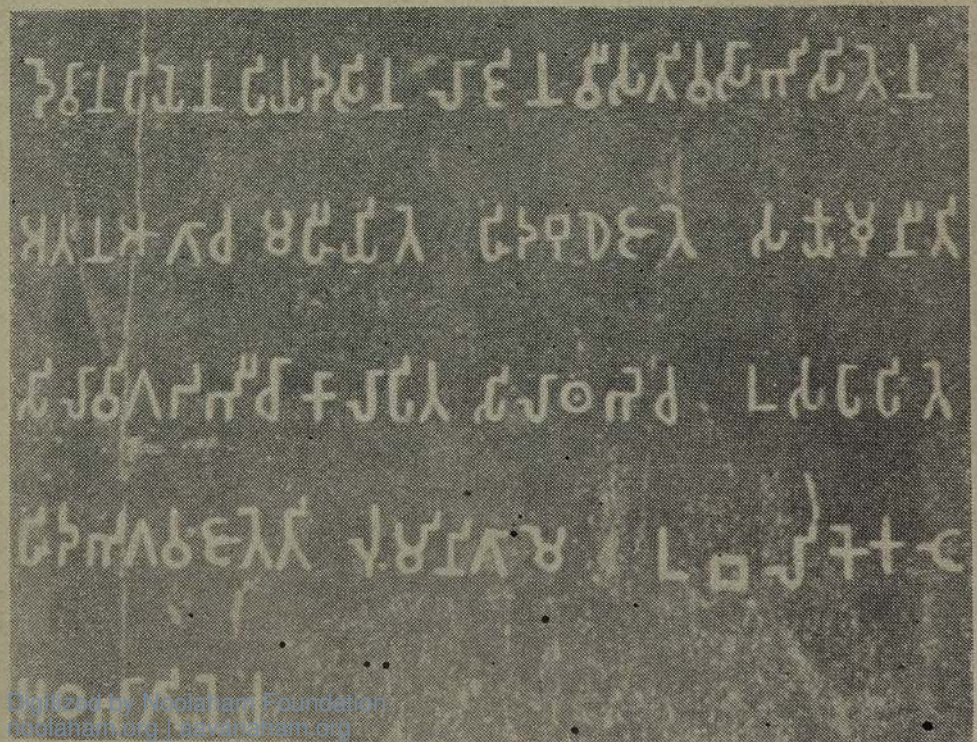
"(He) made the village of Lummini free of taxes, and paying

(only) an eighth share (of the produce.)"

In the 7th century of our era the Chinese pilgrim, Hiouen Tsiang, saw the pillar and left on record that the upper part has been struck

by lightning—which may be seen in the photograph at a vertical line at left.

Lummini or Lumbini is known today as Rummidei and is in Nepal.



CAKHU PALA—THE BLIND SAINT

By The Ven. SHANTI BHADRA

WHEN the Lord Buddha was residing in Jetavana Vihare many people listened to His doctrine and realised its highest point—Nibbana. Amongst those who were drawn to the Lord Buddha by the magic of his magnetic personality and the singular attraction of his message particularly to unfettered and enquiring minds were two brothers of Savatthi named Maha-Pala and Culla-Pala. In the course of time as Maha-Pala's mind began to ripen he realised that the household life with its legion of cares and "busyness" was not very congenial for the practice of the Dhamma of the Lord Buddha in all its purity. Knowing fully well that

"A den of strife is household life,
And filled with toil and need;
But free and high as the open
sky,
Is the life the homeless lead."

He gave over all his possessions, which were quite considerable, to his brother and was admitted into the Order of the Bhikkhus.

For five years he lived a quiet and cloistered life learning and practising all the precepts and rules of a Bhikkhu. Then one day he came to the Lord Buddha and received full instructions on a subject of meditation and accompanied by sixty other like-minded monks went to a remote village where

"Far from the maddening crowd's
ignoble strife
Their sober wishes never learn'd
to stray;
Along the cool sequester'd vale
of life
They kept the noiseless tenor
of their way."

At the termination of the rainy season Maha-Pala was able to realise his "sober, noiseless wish." He attained Arahathood. He dropped all the "leaden weights" of life and became free and liberated in mind. But simultaneously with the kindling of his inward light which burnt away all the dross within him he became blind as a result of the inscrutable force of Kamma and continuous physical strain. From the time he became blind he was called "Cakkhu Pala."

The life of this great blind saint teaches us many valuable lessons which we need in this age where only the show of civilization remains without any of its realities. One fact that his life drives home to us very forcibly was his sincerity of purpose and his capacity to take immense pains to achieve the object recognized by him as a mighty one. The other is his teaching that the Buddhas cannot be pleased by cunning and craftiness. "Buddhacānāma na sakkā saṭheyena ārādhetaṇ." Today we see that many Buddhists are trying to win this and the next world by ways and means diametrically opposed

to the teachings of the Lord Buddha. In all their doings they have an eye on public opinion which is after all nothing but "a vulgar, impertinent, anonymous tyrant" than on the purifying Dhamma of the Lord Buddha.

The greatest honour the Buddhists could pay to this blind saint—the only one in the recorded history of Buddhism—is to help make the lives of those who are handicapped through blindness happy and pleasant. It was recently reported that there are about 10,000 blind in Ceylon. Of them only about 250 are fairly adequately cared for; the plight of the rest pitiable. Sir Clutha Mackenzie—a blind expert on the blind—said in Ceylon recently "the blind here tell me that the public, their relatives and their fellow-villagers treat them with kindness—but not always with intelligence." Sympathy alone is not sufficient. Buddhists should translate this divine quality into intelligent action and see that institutions based on modern lines of blind treatment be established in Ceylon and in all Buddhist countries where the blind could study Braille and read the Dhamma in Braille. To provide facilities for the blind to learn the Dhamma would mean giving to them an unfailing source of comfort. Thereby the giver would be doubly blessed, for the gift of Dhamma excelleth all other gifts.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POYA DAYS AS GOVERNMENT HOLIDAYS

The Inspector-General of Police, in his latest Administration Report, has given figures for crime in this country which cannot be passed over with complacency. When we consider that almost 75 per cent. of the population of Ceylon profess the Buddhist religion—a religion which inculcates temperance, abhors violence, and teaches tolerance and universal love,—the existence of so much crime in the country calls for a great deal of concern, and it becomes necessary to examine the causes of the evil so that the problem may be attacked at the root.

It can be stated without fear of contradiction that the present state of affairs is due to the gradual weaning of the populace from the Buddhist way of life. The Buddhist way of life enjoins on the layman the observance of *ata-sil* or the eight precepts on poya days and of *pan-sil* or the five precepts on other days.

The observance of *ata-sil* is calculated to bring about a great degree of self-discipline and it is the lack of this self-discipline which is contributing to much of the present day crime.

With the imposition of British rule in Ceylon, the observance of poya days as holidays was abolished. People in government service could not observe *ata-sil* on poya days; they could hardly find the time to go to temple regularly on poya days for religious observances. People not in government service found that they were summoned to attend courts or government offices like *kacheris*, and for fear of punishment or of suffering loss for non-attendance, gave up their religious activities and attended the courts or government offices. Almost a century and a half of this state of affairs has weaned the majority of the Buddhists from their normal religious practices and to-day very few know which day is a poya day because so few observe the poya days.

It has, therefore, become urgently necessary to afford opportunities to the people to get back to the Buddhist way of life by observing the poya days. It is very necessary that poya days should be government holidays. The two major poya days of the month—the full moon day and the new moon day—could be given as holidays very easily and without the loss of any working time by making Saturday which is now a half working day into a full working day. The four half days per month so gained are equivalent to two full days thus enabling the full moon day and the new moon day of each month to be treated as holidays. The two *atavaka* days can also be given as holidays without the loss of working time if Sunday were made a half working day. In favour of this, it has to be said that whereas with most Buddhists the observance of a poya day is a full day matter with the observance of *ata-sil*, with Christians religious observance on Sundays is a matter of short duration,

i.e. attendance at church service. Where certain full moon days are now treated as public holidays, the days to be so treated in the future can be the day before full moon day, and in the case of Wesak the day before and the day after the full moon day.

If this is done early, it will be a great step forward in the reduction of crime and the making of a disciplined and law-abiding people.

Yours, etc.,
D. J. P.

THE TASK AHEAD OF US

The Second World Buddhist Conference in Japan affords us an opportunity of asserting ourselves as Buddhists and of making this little Island truly the Dharmadweepa that we claim it to be of making this country permanently neutral and free from all international entanglements which under any manner or circumstance may go counter to our faith.

In this matter the cosmopolitan nature of our country has to be taken into account but not allowed to stand in our way. The natural and realistic approach of Buddhism to all human activities and its tolerance towards the other faiths and creeds are among our greatest assets. To these we have to add a firm determination to achieve success through our own suffering because as history shows us success achieved through the suffering of the others will not last. Thus armed and provided we have that single-mindedness of purpose and no ostracism towards any, there should be no insuperable difficulty in our first step, namely, that of winning over the leaders of thought and other faiths in this country to our side.

The reasons for such a move need no explanation at a time when religion is being assailed from all sides. We find that Christianity is beginning to lose ground. At first this was said to be due to the atheists and now the blame is levelled against the Communists. But the intrinsic value of any religion ought to be above all these. Let us also remember that if the "survival of the fittest" is a natural phenomenon, religion is no exception to it. Therefore, we have to look into our own shortcomings and remedy them if possible, because man will soon learn to bury the religion that cannot hold its own.

Going further, we find that Christianity and Islam both have aimed at creating and maintaining an understanding and fellow-feeling each among its own followers. In the past there was nothing wrong in it. But not so to-day when the world has been made much smaller by means of modern communications. An understanding and fellow-feeling among all men have become the most pressing needs.

It is religion and not science that could bring about such a consummation. Though these two may stand poles apart their relationship and interdependence are obvious. Religion begot culture and culture gave birth to science. The severance of these ties will be most disastrous on the last two because religion can always exist independent of them.

The repercussions of this assault on one religion are bound to hit the other religions as well because it is that balance of power between religion and irreligion, morality and immorality which all religions have been trying to maintain that is being attacked. One redeeming feature, however, is that religion is attacked because it has evidently failed

to inculcate in man that amity and concord without which he can no longer hold on. Can we fill up this void is the question that should engage your minds?

Before embarking on this tremendous task it is well to take stock of our own position as Sinhalese Buddhists. Since we attained freedom some of our top-most leaders appear to have become afraid even to call this a Buddhist country. That most unfortunate controversy about Buddhist and a State Religion is one sign of this fear. On the other hand, while our path is beset with well-concealed pitfalls of a new order the earth is being cut under our very feet.

The present outcry about the raising of the standard of living may well be one of these pitfalls. The standard of whose living and to which level, are questions worth asking. That the vast majority of us is semi-starved is beyond dispute. But let us, not even because of this, overstep the path that has been laid down for us and remember that that Middle Path should apply to all our activities and not only to few of our choice. The treading of this path does not mean that we have to submit all the time to wrong and oppression. If we do believe in Buddhism we have to believe that the power of truth and compassion is still greater than the power of their opposites. It is to harness this power for the good of all beings that we have to free ourselves from these entanglements. If we fight the cause, instead of the symptoms, we shall certainly have less to fear.

Signs that we are overstepping the path abound in all our activities. The ever increasing craze to follow the West in every thing and our ready acceptance of its attendant evils are the commonest. The artificially-created necessity for girls to work for their living pave the way to their moral degradation and the loss of home-life. While the heads of some of our premier Buddhist schools have not even heard the words "ඉපි මධ්‍යම," talks are afoot to entrust the sex-education of children to them. This blind imitation of the West which has done us greater harm than 500 years of invaders' misdeeds has to be stopped. Have we anything better to-day to show the outside world than the spectacle of our readiness to barter even our religion for sensuous living? Yes, the great ruins are being rebuilt with great vigour. Our Ministers of State, clad in white, enter the temples. But can we with all this make the modern man take the shadow for the substance?

The local Buddhist workers, the entire laity and the great majority of the Sangha are only part-time workers in every sense of the word. Can any vast permanent undertaking be run all the time with such men? Are not our women being gradually estranged from the correct path?

A SINHALESE BUDDHIST.

Pannipitiya.

CRISIS IN DEMOCRACY

Education, if it means the acquisition of knowledge in relation to one's living in an established society, is a continuous process, to which there can be no crisis. However, an important phase of national reforms instituted by the Government will have to face a crisis if heed is paid to the bickerings that have started over this change to national languages.

For four hundred years, the people of this country were subjected to successive

foreign dominations of varying degree, during which the education system as understood to-day was foisted on us, resulting now in the 6.3 per cent. literate in English dominating over the vast majority of those not so "educated." With the advent of the National Government, action is being taken to change the system and the teachers and replace them with substitutes which are more in accord with the natural aspirations of the people.

Government being understood to mean the "Voice of the People," it is indeed a crisis for the People when this act of national regeneration is opposed by persons who claim to be believers in Democracy. The tragedy of the situation is made more manifest when it is realised that in a country where 66 per cent. of the population are Sinhalese Buddhists, and 20 per cent. Hindu Tamils, the most vociferous in their protests are a Christian Englishman at Kandy, an Anglican Burgher at Mount Lavinia, and a Catholic Tamil at Colombo, however eminent they may be in their own circles.

The situation is therefore a crisis for democracy and not for education.

Yours, etc.,

W. A. De SILVA,
Irrigation Engineer.

DHARMAPALA DAY CELEBRATIONS

FOUNDER'S Day was celebrated at the Bahu Jana Vihare of the Maha Bodhi Society, in Parel, Bombay, on 17th September. A pooja ceremony was performed with Buddhist religious rites and merit was offered to the late Sri Anagarika Dharmapala, the Founder of the Maha Bodhi Society and the great benefactress the late Mrs. Mary E. Foster. The founder's photo was garlanded. Rev. Bhikkhu D. Sumangala explained the significance of the occasion to the gathering. Mr. M. A. Albert and Mr. Dantanarayana also spoke of the noble work done by Sri Anagarika Dharmapala. The celebration concluded by entertaining the gathering to light refreshments.—*Cor.*

IN CALCUTTA

TRIBUTES were paid to the life and work of the late Ven. Anagarika Dharmapala, the founder of the Maha Bodhi Society and the greatest Buddhist Missionary of modern times, and to Mrs. Mary E. Foster, the generous benefactress of the Society, at a meeting held in observance of their birthday anniversaries in the Society premises in Bankim Chatterjee Street.

The proceedings began with the five precepts (Panchasila) administered by Ven. M. Sangharatana Thera. The speakers were Sri Keshab Chandra Gupta, Sri Santosh Kumar Basu, Ex-Minister and Mayor of Calcutta, Lt.-Col. Malliya, retired I.M.S., Mr. K. S. Sitaram, the Ven. Sangharakshita, Ven. Jagadish Kasyap, the Ven. Ananda Kausalyayana Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee, who presided.—*Cor.*

IN CEYLON

Similar meetings were held in different centres in Ceylon, the chief being at the Mahabodhi College Colombo, the Ven. Dr. Paravahera Vajiranana Thero presiding. The chief speaker was the Hon. Mr. A. Ratnayake, Minister of Home affairs.—*Cor.*

COLOMBO Y.M.B.A. NEWS

WANTED—BLOOD

The Hony. General Secretary of the Colombo Y.M.B.A. has sent out this appeal to the members:—

You are perhaps aware that the Blood Bank at the General Hospital is now at a very low level owing to the increased demand for blood transfusions.

Despite the repeated appeals of the authorities, we find that the response from the general public is not satisfactory.

We feel that this may be due to the want of an organised campaign to enlist donors. We have, therefore, resolved to organise such a campaign, primarily amongst our members and through them amongst others.

We are aware that blood is taken only after a medical test; and that medical opinion is unanimous that an approved donor will suffer no ill-effects. You can, therefore, be sure that you will not be called upon to donate blood if the preliminary test shows that you are medically unfit to do so.

We feel certain you will agree that the donating of blood constitutes one of the highest forms of "dana." As such every Buddhist should be glad of this opportunity of contributing in a very effective way to the saving of human life.

We, therefore, appeal to you to give this matter your earnest consideration; and if you are willing to join our band of blood donors please perfect and return the appended form as early as possible.

Transport facilities will be provided, if required; and the date and time for your attendance will be fixed to suit your convenience.

(We do trust that there will be a ready response to this appeal.—*Ed.*)

SUNDAY SERMONS

Regular Sunday Bana Preaching is held at the Colombo Y.M.B.A. Hall from 9 to 10 a.m. on stanzas from the

DHAMMAPADA

PROGRAMME FOR NOVEMBER, 1952

1st Sunday: The Ven. Piyadassi, of Vajirarama

Subaddaparibbaya Katha Vattu.—There is no path through the air: a man is not a Samana outwardly. No creatures are eternal, but the Awakened Ones are never shaken.

2nd Sunday: The Ven. Kottigawatte Sri Saddhatissa Thera

Vinicchayamahamatta Katha Vattu.—A man is not just if he carries a matter by violence. He who distinguishes between right and wrong, who is learned and guides others, not by violence but by the same law, being a guardian of the law and intelligent, he is called just.

3rd Sunday: Bhikkhu P. Vipassi, of Vajirarama

Chabbaggiya Katha Vattu.—A man is not learned because he talks much, he who is patient, free from hatred and fear, he is called learned.

4th Sunday: Pandit Ampitiye Rahula Thera

Ekuddanathera Katha Vattu.—A man is not a supporter of the law because he talks much; even if a man has learnt little but sees the law bodily, he is a supporter of the law, a man who never neglects the law:

5th Sunday: Kotte Sangharatana Thera

Lakuntabhaddiyathera Katha Vattu.—He in whom there is truth, virtue, pity, restraint, moderation, he who is free from impurity and is wise, he is called an elder.

WORLD FELLOWSHIP OF BUDDHISTS

Dr. A. Simon Silva, who represented the Association at the 2nd Conference of World Fellowship of Buddhists held in Japan, has returned.

LITERARY ACTIVITIES (SINHALESE BRANCH)

LECTURES

A lecture on "Canada and Its People," was delivered by Mr. D. F. E. Panagoda, Principal, Musaeus Training College, Colombo, on October 16, 1952.

The lecture for the month of November will be delivered by Mr. Gunapala Senadhira, Secretary, Victoria Memorial Eye Hospital, Colombo, on Thursday, November 20th, at 6 p.m. The subject will be "Our Folk Cult."

VERSE COMPETITION, 1952

The entries for this competition which is to be conducted on a revised syllabus closed on September 30, 1952. Nearly 250 Candidates have entered. It is proposed to hold this contest during the course of December, 1952.

W. P. DALUWATTE,
Hony. Secretary,
Sinhalese Literary Activities.

READING ROOM

"World Buddhism," the monthly journal of the World Fellowship of Buddhists, is available for members in the Reading Room.

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

Mr. Daya Hewavitarne, who was elected a member of the Committee of Management and Hony. Secretary, Social Service Branch, is ill and Mr. T. B. Dissanayake is acting for him.

NEW MEMBERS

15.9.52: D. H. Jayawardene, "Islington," Rajagiriya; D. H. A. Weerasinghe, 22, Old Road, Walana, Panadura; R. Weerasingham (Jr.), 29/1, Mt. Mary Road, Baseline, Colombo; S. Kumarakurunathan, No. 8, Nathanielsz Place, Maradana; M. E. T. Fernando, "Sukagara," 60, Cotta Road, Borella.

29.9.52: L. C. P. Perera, Thumbovila, Piliyandala; K. Kandappa, 40/2, Joseph Lane, Colombo; P. Stanley Perera, 19/2, Pathimbarama Road, Kalubowila, Dehiwala; M. Subramaniam, No. 116, Ward Place, Colombo 7; Lakshman Seneviratne, Bentota; D. A. Perera, "Sarasavi Niwasa," Hikkaduwa; N. H. de S. Wijesekere, 9, Kensington Gardens, Bambalapitiya; K. Don Vincent, No. 32/1, Dutugemunu Street, Bala-pokuna, Dehiwala; D. F. E. Panagoda, 11, Siripa Lane, Havelock Town, Colombo 5.

6.10.52: N. D. Bandula Samaranyake, 2, Samaranyake Road, Kolonnawa, Wellampitiya; S. M. T. B. Somaratne, No. 20/7, Meetotamulla, Wellampitiya; K. B. E. Perera, 108/1, Mart Place, Dematagoda, Colombo 9; Chin Shwing Chang, 211, Norris Road, Pettah, Colombo 11; M. D. S. Goonatileke, Vanata Road, Gangodawila, Nugegoda; Gordon Harris, 106/1, Wekanda Road, Colombo 2; D. A. D. Wijesena, No. 2, Mc Carthy

Road, Colombo 7; U. G. Jayasinghe, 22, Tichborne Passage, Colombo 10; P. K. Dissanayake, No. 195, Baseline Road, Colombo 8; P. M. Turin, 81, Narahenpita Road, Borella, Colombo 8; H. P. Gooneratne, 153/5, Campbell Avenue, Colombo; Gladwin Fernando, 25, Upatissa Road, Colombo 6.

13.10.52: S. B. Attanayake, "Nalanda," Kammanacoda, Badulla; J. M. Fernando, 25 Mill Bank Place, Maradana, Colombo.

20.10.52: P. R. S. Perera, No. 2, Bawa Place, Borella, Colombo; Dr. D. W. Amarasinghe, No. 26, Collingwood Place, Wellawatte.

RESIGNATION

C. P. S. Goonetilleke.

"LORD OF THE THREE WORLDS"

THE Colombo Y.M.B.A. gave four performances of the play, 'Lord of the Three Worlds', by Maurice Collis before appreciative audiences. The success of the play was chiefly due to the efforts of Mr. Dick Dias who worked unsparingly in training the actors and directing them in their difficult roles. Credit is also due to Mr. I. D. A. Weerawardene whose stage settings were, as stated by an art critic 'in some instances an improvement on Feliks Topolski who illustrated the original play.'

The net proceeds of this play amounted to Rs. 3,812.15, after contributing a portion to the Kalutara Vidyalaya and the Panadura Recreation club for whose benefit two performances were given in their respective towns.

The following extracts from two letters received from Mr. Collis will be read with interest by all lovers of serious drama.

"Thank you very much for your letter of the 26th May, enclosing two press cuttings. From what you say, and from what I gather from the "Ceylon Daily News," it would seem that the critics considered both the play and the acting good, but that some part of the audience was not perhaps quite competent to follow the drama. Since you are giving two further performances, it sounds as if you were very satisfied with the general result.

"I note that you are sending me a copy of the programme and some press photographs, taken at the dress rehearsal, which I look forward to receiving in due course. Should you have any more press cuttings I would be very glad to get them also.

"I was interested to notice what the critic U.D.W.S. said about Mr. Weerawardene, the artist who did the decor. The photographs, will no doubt, show some of the decor. It would give me great pleasure if Mr. Weerawardene would send one of his drawings used for the decor; I would place it with my collection of drawings and show it to artists in this country. If the drawings are as good as the critic suggests, this might have the effect of introducing him to the London public in a favourable light; even if his drawings are not quite on that level, it would be of great interest to me to have one as a record of your production, and would help to

preserve the memory of the occasion, which, after all, was rather an unusual one.

"I was much struck by the account of Mr. Dick Dias's acting, and only wish that I could have been there to see it. He seems to have had a real feeling for the strange part." . . . (Sgd.) Maurice Collis 2nd June, 1952.

"I received today the seven photographs you kindly sent me of your production of my play, 'Lord of the

Three Worlds,' together with the programme and a further cutting. I am much obliged to you for these things. I would like to congratulate you very heartily upon the costumes and decor as disclosed in the photographs. I am sure that you were not able to spend much on the production, and it just shows how excellent an effect can be obtained by simple means if the producer has taste. Our theatres here have much to learn from you in this respect. I only wish that I could have seen the performances though, as I have been to

Colombo I can imagine it." . . . Sgd. Maurice Collis 7th July, 1952.

I would also take this opportunity of thanking the actors and musicians who had sacrificed a good deal of their leisure in attending the rehearsals, and Mr. P. F. A. Goonetilleke, Proctor S.C., for entertaining the party on their visit to Kalutara.

V. S. NANAYAKKARA
Hony. General Secretary
(Organiser).

NEWS AND NOTES

INTERNATIONAL BUDDHIST CULTURAL CONFERENCE

Diamond Jubilee of the Maha Bodhi Society of India and the Opening of Sanchi Vihara

Mr. Devapriya Valisinha, General Secretary, Maha Bodhi Society of India, writes:

AT last we are glad to announce that the Diamond Jubilee celebration of the Society which was postponed last year will be held this year on November 29th and 30th. The venue of the celebrations has been shifted to Sanchi where the construction of the Vihara to enshrine the sacred Relics of Sariputta and Moggallana Arahans has been completed. Sri Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India, has kindly consented to open the Vihara on the 30th while Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, the Vice-President of the Republic of India, has agreed to preside over the Cultural Conference. Hence the Governing Body has decided to have all the functions held at the same time at this historic site. Sri Jawaharlal Nehru's and Dr. Radhakrishnan's participation in the celebration will be welcomed by the entire Buddhist world and we extend a most cordial invitation to all members and friends of the Society throughout the world to join us on this happy occasion.

Intending visitors and delegates are kindly requested to write to the General Secretary as soon as possible so that arrangements may be made for their accommodation at Sanchi where no hotels or resthouses are available. Tents and huts will have to be put up and a restaurant opened where visitors can have their meals. The Government of Bhopal is doing everything possible to make the event a success. There is likelihood of the Railways giving concession tickets to delegates attending the Cultural Conference. An announcement will be made in this connection in the next issue of the Maha Bodhi journal.

The sacred Relics will be conveyed from Calcutta to Sanchi by train. Those who wish to accompany them should communicate with the undersigned.

The following is the tentative programme:—

27th November, 8.45 p.m.—The sacred Relics leave Calcutta by train for Sanchi in Bhopal State.

29th November, 7.50 a.m.—The Relics arrive at Sanchi or Bhopal.

29th November, 2 to 5 p.m.—International Buddhist Cultural Conference

under the presidency of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, Vice-President of the Republic of India.

30th November, 10 a.m.—Opening of Sanchi Vihara by Sri Jawaharlal Nehru and the installation of the sacred Relics.

30th November, 3 p.m.—Diamond Jubilee Celebration of the Maha Bodhi Society under the presidency of Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee.

HELSINKI BUDDHISTS APPEAL FOR VIHARES IN EUROPE

The delegates from Burma, Ceylon and Siam to the Olympic Games at Helsinki was accorded a reception by the friends of Buddhism in Helsinki. Addressing the gathering, the President, Mr. Mauno Nordberg said:—"It is to-day a great day in the annals of our society of Friends of Buddhism, now five years old, quite a baby yet, to have at one time delegates of the three Theravada countries present among us. In the name of the society I wish to offer you our heartiest welcome and to ask you to convey to your Buddhist Societies our best greetings.

I have been asked by some of you in what way you could, on your return home to your respective countries, promote the Buddhist work here, where difficulties are numerous and greater than you ever could imagine.

Taking a wider view of the Dhamma-duta work in Europe, my reply would be that you should stress the importance of a permanent Buddhist Vihara in London—and why not later also some other European locality Paris, Berlin or somewhere in Switzerland. There is a temporary Vihara in London with one Burmese Bhikkhu, or perhaps two, but it would need own premises where five or six Bhikkhus could live observing the Vinaya rules, so difficult to follow under European conditions. There English people and other Europeans could go to stay for shorter or longer periods for direct tuition. It appeared to me during 15 years of Buddhist self-studies that there is a very serious gap to fill and we can look only to your three countries for support. I have been only to Ceylon in 1950 and could satisfy myself that it is a blessed and prosperous country with natural resources greater than ours. I also have an idea that the other two countries are rich beyond what we can imagine and if you three unite to start a vigorous missionary campaign in the active spirit of the great Emperor Asoka, Buddhism will spread rapidly in Europe where you will find devout and energetic auxiliaries in many countries.

There are many thousands of Europeans whose "eyes are only covered by a thin veil of dust" and who would accept the message of the blessed Dhamma if it were presented to them in the right way. And what is, to my mind, the right way?

It is to present it as what it is, a doctrine of spiritual liberation, an ethico-philosophical teaching with deep psychological implications and not a religion as this word calls up numerous associations of ideas in the minds of people who have discarded the dogmas of various religions, all of Semitic origin. In articles to the "News Letter" of the World Fellowship of Buddhists and last in Vesak Sirisara of 1952 I have been vigorously combating the use of *all* such words as give a false idea of the character of the Dhamma, which has nothing common, except the moral code, with the theistic religions. Both Eastern and European writers on Buddhist subjects frequently make this psychological mistake. It is a real dis-service to the cause of the Dhamma and though it may look as juggling with words to insist on this point, I am availing myself of the opportunity to stress the necessity to give up the use of words denoting theological ideas and dogmas.

On the material plane, your assistance would be needed where there are new Buddhist groups in formation. Naturally the greatest care and discrimination should be observed in the choice of the people who should receive such support and you would have the means to exercise it through the representatives of your countries in the country in question.

Now, as for Finland and the other Northern countries, I shall give you a special memorandum with necessary details as it would take too much time to expose the question now. You will take it with you, submit it to the proper authorities at home and give it the consideration you may think it merits.

You came to this far away country inspired by the Olympic ideal, which partly is in accordance with the Buddhist ideal of goodwill and concord amongst mankind. I venture to hope that, when home, you will do your utmost to promote collaboration with European Buddhists who mostly, though far from the source of the doctrine, have realized it for what it is, a universal and *modern* teaching applicable at all latitudes and times. In the daily practice it means a way of life which during many centuries has moulded the character of your nations to what they are, tolerant, gay and smiling.

"Verily, Dhamma is timeless speech."

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