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THE BUDDHIST

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THE PRINCESS AND THE HOLY TREE

(For the first time the Full Moon Day of Unduvap in November-December Commemorating the Therī Sanghamitta, the bringing by her of the Sacred Bodhi Tree which flourishes to this day at Anuradhapura and the establishment of the Bhikkhuni Order, is being celebrated as a Public Holiday in the country's calendar. The following extract from "In Old Ceylon" by Reginald Farrer, published in 1908 by Edward Arnold, London, which is topical, will interest readers with its sweetness and charm, and not so much with historical accuracy.—Ed.).

ALMOST as prominent in Sinhalese history as Mahinda her brother, Sanghamitta stands out in those remote ages a notable and vivid figure. She took the vows at the age of eighteen, a wife who had already borne a son; her learning was profound and her brother's first action on the success of his mission in Ceylon was to send oversea for his sister. Her father, Asoka, would not stand in the way of her wish which unhesitatingly decided to obey the call. "My mother," he said, addressing his daughter with the respect due to the wise nun (even as Baltasar Carlos, "I the Prince," addressed the lowly Maria of Agreda) —"my mother, without you, without my children and grandchildren, what shall I do to heal my affliction?" But she answered: "Great King, the call of my brother must not be refused; there are many there to be ordained, and do it is proper that I should go."

But Sanghamitta was not the only precious thing for which Mahinda had urgently sent. She was to bring with her a rooted cutting of the Bo-tree from Buddha Gaya, that most sacred of all places known to man. Miracles wearisome, terrific, uncounted, accompanied Asoka's dealings with the Tree. Its branch became severed automatically, hovered high in the air, descended upon the golden vase prepared to hold it, and put forth roots in such abundance that they overflowed. Twice did the Emperor "invest the branch with his empire," and on the seventeenth day after its severance it put forth

its new leaves. In the utmost splendour natural and supernatural, was the new Tree escorted to the coast, and there it was carried in state to the vessel by officials of the highest rank, the Emperor himself being its bearer until the water reached his very neck. So Righteous Asoka returned to the shore, and there stood with hands uplifted as the ship set sail, after which, with tears and sobs, he returned to his capital, Pushpapura, the City of Flowers. Meanwhile across a sea of miracles the Bo-tree went, in charge of the nun Sanghamitta. Innumerable gods made offerings, and portents abounded. "The serpents restored to their usual magic arts to get possession of the treasure, but Sanghamitta, who had attained the Sixfold Power, assumed the shape of a "Suppana" (whatever that may have been), and frightened them away." Meanwhile King Devanampiyatissa, having warning of the Tree's advent, had built a stately hall for it on the beach, and, when the vessel was in sight, he and the princely castes all ran out into the water up to their necks to receive the ineffable burden. Having lodged it in the hall, he made his kingdom over to it (here was a chance for later Buddhist Popes, had Sinhalese prelates ever aimed at temporal power!), and all did it honour for many days, after which it set out on a miraculous procession, and arrived at the Northern Gate of Anuradhapura on the fourteenth day.

There, in the Mahamegha garden, dedicated to the Great Abbey, the

Maha Vihara the Tree was deposited, the King himself lending a hand. But the Bo-tree rose straight up into the air like a towering pheasant, and there poised, glowing with the Sixfold Ray. All day the glory continued, and ten thousand converts, absorbed in contemplation, attained sanctity and took the Yellow Robe. At sunset the Tree came down and planted itself, its roots brimming over and so vehemently gripping the earth that it forced the vase in which it stood clean down into the ground and out of sight. After this all Lanka made offering, and then in a terrific storm of rain broke round the Tree. Dense clouds descended, and for seven days enveloped it in their snowy womb. "And this," says the Mahavamsa, "occasioned renewed delight in the populace," though one can imagine more exhilarating miracles. Ultimately, however, all the clouds dispersed, and the Tree once more shone out resplendent with its rainbow of Six Rays before the beautified eyes of Devanampiyatissa, Mahinda, Sanghamitta, and all the people. Immediately after that a ripe fruit fell, which, being reverently sown, germinated at once in eight flourishing young plants. Thus did the Bo-tree begin its marvellous career of reproduction, which in a few years gave every monastery and shrine in Lanka a grandchild of the sacred Tree at Buddha Gaya . . .

As for the lady Sanghamitta, she was lodged in the palace of twelve apartments, formerly tenanted by the Princess Anula before she took

the vows. There also were deposited the relics of the ship that had brought the Tree, and all through subsequent ages the nuns of that foundation retained their residence. But Sanghamitta found the place too noisy, insufficiently retired from the world. "She wished to lead a life of true devotional seclusion, for the better advancement of religion and the spiritual comfort of the nuns. Actuated, then, by these pious motives, this lady, sanctified in mind, and exalted by her knowledge of the higher life, repaired to the delightful and charmingly secluded shrine in the elephant's favourite glade, and there enjoyed her noontime rest."

Thus King Devanampiyatissa, when he went to visit the abbess, discovered that she had removed. So, he followed her, and, discerning her tastes, built for her sisterhood a pleasant convent in the place she had chosen, and there she dwelt with her nuns. And meanwhile grievous things were happening in India. The Bo-tree had come from Asoka in the eighteenth year of that monarch's reign. Twelve years later died his Empress, the noble and excellent lady Asandhimita, who had identified herself with the Faith; and in the fourth year from that the Emperor, "blinded with carnal passions, elevated the Princess Tissarakkha to the vacant throne, and this young frivolous creature, who thought of nothing but her own personal charms," grew bitterly jealous of her husband's veneration for the Sacred Tree of Buddha Gaya. In the third year of her reign her discontent grew to a head, and she thought, "This Emperor neglects me, and devotes himself exclusively to the Bo-tree." So in her rage she tried to destroy that great old Tree with the poisoned fang of a toad. The Mahavansa is silent as to her success or failure—silent as to the after-date of Tree or Empress—but merely records, as an event important over all the East, that four years later "the highly-gifted monarch, the Emperor Asoka, fulfilled the common lot of mortality."

All this time King Devanampiyatissa in Ceylon, prompted by the Prince-monk Mahinda and the Princess-nun Sanghamitta, was diligently pursuing pious courses, and endowing vihara after vihara, dagaba after dagaba; and godliness abounded greatly in the land throughout this age of saints. But its chief heroes were growing old and beginning to pass from the scene. The first to go

was King Darling of the Gods, who died in 267 B.C., after a reign of forty years, to be succeeded by his brother Uttiya. This sovereign governed righteously, but his reign is principally notable for the departure of the two high sanctities, Mahinda and Sanghamitta. Mahinda died in 259, and obtained his final release on Mihintale, his holy hill, whence his spirit merged in Nirvana. For him the King made lamentation loud and deep for all his vanished virtues. Then the corpse was cremated in front of the Maha Vihara in Anuradhapura, and the sacred ashes being divided and apportioned, half of them were buried on Mihintale, at the scene of the Saint's appearance, where still stands the Ambastala Dagaba, which was built for their shrine. The rest were divided among all the monasteries of Lanka for their better edification. . . .

Thus the Prince-apostle died and was honoured in death. His sister, the Princess-abbess, followed him a twelve-month later into the Perfect Peace, in the seventy-seventh year of her age, and the fifty-ninth of her vows. For seven days, with the utmost pomp and holiness, were kept the funeral ceremonies of the Lady Sanghamitta, and on the seventh day the corpse was carried to the southward of Thuparama Dagaba, and there the King consumed it with fire, and erected a dome over the blest place. . . .

Throughout the history of Lanka the precinct of the Holy Tree is the very nucleus of the nation's veneration and spiritual life: King after King enriched it with statues, gold, jewels, pillars, adornments of every kind. At the end of the sixth century it was covered in with sheets of lead; in the tenth the old soil was made good and the Tree banked up. Then it was under the care of nuns. It was the Holy of all Holies in that colossal abbey the Maha Vihara of Devanampiyatissa—the greatest religious foundation that the world has ever seen; greater than the Potala or the Vatican; whose main edifice was the Great Brazen Palace of Duttha Gamini, with its nine stories and its nine hundred rooms, but whose territory also included Mahapali Alms-Hall and the whole gigantic splendour of Ruanveli Dagaba, with its abbeys and cloisters. And never has its holiness entirely failed. In the darkest days of the Northern Kingdom, through invasion and desertion, the monks

of the Tree; during the long centuries through which Anuradhapura lay lost in the jungle, it was round the Holy Tree that centred the last flickering remnants of the city's vitality; and in the revival of to-day the Tree is still the foremost object of love, visited by thousands innumerable each year from Burma, Siam, China, Japan and Thibet. The high festival is in summer, when the Sacred City is crowded with eager multitudes as in the far-off days of Devanampiyatissa and Sanghamitta the nun. It is characteristic of Buddhism and its effects that that huge mob is the gentlest and best-ordered in the world, so that even the officials, characteristically cold though not unkindly towards all popular demonstrations of religious zeal, are nevertheless glad to admit that no supervision is necessary beyond the ordinary—not a single extra policeman to safeguard the peace. A different scene indeed from the trebly-guarded, yet ever ebullient hatred that rages at Easter through the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. By their fruits, indeed, shall ye know them, and Christianity and Buddhism have each reaped their inevitable reward—the one for becoming a religion of theology, the other for remaining a religion of kindly thought and action, in which animosities have neither place nor justification.

Stripped, though, and shorn is the Bo-tree now of all its bygone splendours. Beneath a tall, triangular gateway of red brick you pass up over the ancient steps into the precinct, guarded on all four sides by its high wall. But the wall is feathery with grass and weed; creepers cover it in places, and small grey squirrels flicker like lizards in and out of its crannies, while wise little pink-faced monkeys peer grievously down at you from the forks of the innumerable great ancient Bo-trees, seedlings of the Holy Tree, that have sprouted all round from the crannies of the wall. Magnificent aged specimens are these now, in the course of years, and made the whole enclosure a forest of shade. Through their fine, sparse foliage the sunlight dapples the bare earth, and quivers and dances as the breeze goes dancing through their branches. The warm twilight of the place is filled with a very pleasant calm. All over the precinct are scattered forests of square stone pillars that originally carried roofs, porches, abbey buildings. Here and there

among them sit or lie prone pathetic black statues of the Most Perfect One, marred and broken, stripped of all their gold and jewels, left tumbled amid the wreckage, or cradled in the roots of some Bo-tree, with the sunlight making streaks and splashes of gold amid the greenery across the dark smiling face that once, gilded and coloured, gazed out through the sacred obscurity of some close shrine.

In the centre of the enclosure rises high the square embankment of the Holy Tree itself. This, by the earthing up of many ages, has now become a walled mass of masonry as solid as a house. You approach it usually, though there are other stairways, by a steep flight of steps, in carved stone, that rises on the left, flanked by serpent-king guardstones, with every step upborne by two or three little fat grinning dwarfs. At right angles to this, against the very wall of the temenos, modern zeal is now building a big church, square and ugly, to enshrine a colossal Buddha, who sits throned against the side of the Bo-tree's enclosure. Devotion here, as ever, is combining with tastelessness to disfigure the holy place. Of the little turrets in the platform far above us, one is roofed with Humphrey's corrugated iron, and a suburban lamp-post stands at the base of the steps.

So, having mounted the steep rise to the foot of the stairway, one climbs up into the precinct itself. Passing through the gate, one finds oneself in a walled square, with pent-house roofing on all sides. The flagged path runs all round, and the centre of the space is filled with the square embankment, like a vast stone box, within which is planted the Holy Tree. A green, calm twilight holds the place, and the scent of offered flowers hangs wavering in the air, for in the middle of each side there is a shrine and an altar of offering for the Holy Thing. A spiked railing of modern European iron guarantees the Tree from approach, and this is hung with continuous sheets of beaten brass, stamped with scenes from Scripture. Clean and swept and tended is the enclosure, and in the guarded space of earth in the midst the Tree still lifts its boughs abroad, and scatters its holy leaves—heart-shaped, immensely long-tailed—over the floor of the pathway, whence the pious eagerly collect them for relics. Only the monks may scramble up over the altar, and so climb to the

railing, and thence into the Tree's plot; we must stand below in the alley, and look upwards at the sacred trunks flickering sparse branches against the sunlight and the blue above.

The Holy Tree shares its precinct with a younger offspring, and the trunk of the sanctity is but very small and frail—paradoxically so, considering that this is the oldest plant in the world; for, though a controversy rages over the authenticity of the Holy Tree of Anuradhapura, it is hard to resist the conviction that the thing is genuine. Against such a view may be set two facts, of course—the short life of such succulent growths as *Ficus religiosa*, the smallness of the trunk as we now see it—not a quarter of the size of the old trees in the courtyard—and the notorious ingenuity of religious bodies in avoiding anything that looks like a confession of weakness in the death or disappearance of a relic (we have seen this at Kandy, in the Dalada Maligawa). And yet, on the other hand, however much the monks and the abbots might have wished to replace a dead Bo-tree by a younger offset, they must obviously have found the task impossible. A huge ancient tree is not a thing that dies in an hour, and can be replaced overnight without anybody's noticing the substitution of a sapling; nor could one move a full-grown specimen successfully—certainly not without rousing comment. And Anuradhapura has never been so entirely deserted that the fraud could have been successfully accomplished. And the fact that *Ficus religiosa* is not, as a rule, long-lived vanishes in consideration of the extraordinary care bestowed on this particular specimen; it has been earthed up again and again, until there has grown up round it a box of soil the size and height of a big house; and the enclosure which once, of course, stood on the level ground of the precinct has been so banked up that now it stands about 50 feet above it. And this, of course, explains the smallness of the Bo-tree trunk as we see it, and is the strongest proof of the Relic's authenticity. For we do not see the Bo-tree trunk at all; we only see the last topmost branch of the tree; the original trunk lies far down in the earth at the heart of the enclosure having been buried deeper and deeper as they earthed up each successive moribund limb to prolong the life of the remainder, until now

there only protrudes the last branch of the tree-top which alone has life still in it. Nor will this long continue unless banked up once more; and so the Tree will grow smaller and smaller as it gets older.

Everyone, of course, understands the reason of this Tree's superlative holiness. For this, the oldest known of all trees, planted three hundred years B.C., is an unquestioned cutting of offset from that still more Holy Tree of Buddha Gaya. It was at Uruvila, in the kingdom of Magadha, in Northern India, that, having tried asceticism and philosophy and all other paths in vain, Prince Siddharta Sakyamuni, having refreshed himself at last with food (and thereby shocked away all his disciples), sat down beneath the shade of a tree. And there the Prince went through his final temptation, and resisted the onslaughts of the Evil One and his three wicked daughters, the Desires. But Sakyamuni "watched them as one watches children at their harmless games. So Mara was seized with despair, and the flames of hell were turned to pleasant breezes, and the angry thunderbolts became blossoms of the lotus." Then Mara fled away, and the Prince plunged deep once more in meditation.

And there, in that night, befell the Great Miracle. For, in an hour and a moment, the unfaltering purpose of the aeons was fulfilled; all weakness passed away from the perfected soul for ever; passed away was Siddharta Sakyamuni; only remained the Wholly Awakened One, the Supreme Buddha, master of reality, vanquisher of time and space, of life and death. Earth rocked in that hour, and heaven rang with music as the Buddha Gautama grew to the full perfection of His stature. And there, in the absolute bliss that knows no thought of change or sorrow, Our Lord remained for seven days and seven nights, glorious within and without in His contemplation of the Four Noble Truths which cover every field of happiness and experience. And then befell the second miracle, for He put away His own reward in compassion for the world, and came forth from under the tree, and deigned for five-and-forty years, He, the Utterly Perfect One, to linger on earth, diligently expounding the Way of rejoicing to all men. Small wonder, then, that His faithful adored that blessed tree, and built a vast temple around it, and called the place Buddha Gaya. So through

many centuries the Bo-tree was revered, and the date of its destruction and death is not clearly known. There, deep down by the foundations of the desecrated cathedral at Buddha Gaya, were found but the other day its spreading roots. Even now the faithful may walk humbly upon the very spot whence has radiated through so many ages such incalculable happiness for such incalculable millions. And from this tree the Bo-tree of Anuradhapura is an authentic offset, then, severed in the days of its parent's vigour, and now endowed with more sanctity than its mere own, seeing that it receives the worship due, in the death of the original Tree, to the last living memory on earth of the supreme holiness that was the Buddha Gautama.

It is fortunate, indeed, that Buddhism never, despite the devagations of its Church, developed, like Christianity, along lines of theology, dogma, and hair-splitting terminological quarrels. About observance and ritual, and high beds and soft beds, and fringed bed-vallances, and other such vitally important matters of daily rule, the early monks had their quarrels, it is true; and the history of Ceylon, we have seen, contains many accounts of schisms and heresies and condemnation of uncanonical books. These, though, are inseparable from the development of any Church or body of ecclesiastics. But throughout their worst schisms the Buddhists never lost sight of the cardinal fact that the Buddha's revelation is a way of happiness in life and hope in death—a religion of practice and tranquil living, but not in any way a theological battle-ground for the acrimonious definition of the undefinable.

The miracle of the Bo-tree would otherwise have been a sad stumbling-block. In what sense, after the attainment of Nirvana and its renunciation, was the Buddha still mortal? Human weakness had entirely passed from Him; omniscient, omnipotent, what was His nature? Was He perfect Truth, undefiled with mortality, a simulacral embodiment, in pantom flesh, of the Divine Spirit? or had He still man in him, conjoined with the divine? Obviously this is exactly the same difficulty that arose in the train of the Incarnation theory and the deification of Jesus; and if the mystery of the Buddha had fallen into the subtle metaphysical minds of the Hellenistic and Levantine

Bishops who made such internecine war and mischief over their discussions as to the dual nature of Jesus, exactly the same depressing result would have punished the Buddhist prelates for such a desertion of the profitable path of good-living for the unprofitable slough of imaginary knowledge on matters where there can never be room for anything but valueless personal opinion and assertion.

Of course, to the simple early monk, to the plain sensible man and the student of history, the Buddha like the Christ, is simply our fellow-man, and brother to ourselves, but who has attained the highest possible degree of human wisdom, which is divine. There is nothing metaphysical or miraculous to be troubled about anywhere in the whole question. All men, in their way are gods; the perfect man is perfect god. There is no need to subtilize to web a plain truth over with pious myth. Unfortunately, however, the priestly mind is as common as the historical, abounding in both sexes and in every rank or profession. And the priestly mind must have more than this—must have much more—must have visible gods and earthly intermediaries, and miracles and dogmas and definitions, and every sort of picturesque obfuscation for plain prosaic truth. And when you combine the priestly temperament with the subtle disputatiousness of the Greek or Hellenistic mind, the result hardly bears thinking of. So the Levantine priests—Greek, Asiatic, hybrid—seized on Jesus, made Him unrecognizable, and His religion a mere series of disputes about His nature—whether divine or human, or both, or neither, or all, or what. There was no end to it, of course, and no profit. It was the problem of the precedence of owl and egg. But men could die for it, and kill each other for it, and flood their cities with blood and destroy their dynasties and empires and national vitality.

But the priestly mind has never been able to make such complete prey of Gautama—for one reason, because Gautama's revelation is so much wider, so much more complete, so impregnably logical and coherent that you cannot weave in fantasies without breaking them on the sharp rocks of the Buddha's own spoken word. For it must never be forgotten that Gautama's ministry of five and forty years has given Him and His religion an advantage over all other

reformers. He was able to answer every question that occurs in experience, to show how His truth extends eternally over every field of life; He had time to state very definitely what did and did not belong to His creed, what His Church was to do, and what it was not to do. And thus His Church, abound though it did in minds of the fatal priestly tinge never had the latitude of invention and theologising and subtilizing that the premature death of Jesus left to the men who then took up His uncomprehended, incomplete work and twisted it into something that its founder would never have recognized or borne with.

HOW TO BE HAPPY

There was once a Bhikkhu
Who lived in a wood,
And the way to be happy
He well understood.

Now, I wanted to know—
The true secret of bliss,
So I sought the old Bhikkhu
And I said to him this :

Oh, please, Holy Bhikkhu,
I've something to say,
I wish to be happy,
Pray show me the way."

The Bhikkhu he smiled,
And his saintly old face
Seemed beaming all over
With Tathagata's holy grace.

And he said. "To be happy
Is a gift from above,
To those alone given
Whose hearts are all love.

You must love the Good Dhamma,
And do all that you can
To show you wish well
To each dear fellow-man ;

You must think less of self,
And of others think more
Then will joy and delight
Soon enter your door."

KYAW HLA,
Mandalay, Burma.

LIGHT OF THE THREE WORLDS

A certain sense of emptiness—
And we come across the path
In the depths of stillness
A tranquil soul across.

Lighter of the three worlds
We adore Thy light
All homage to Thy munificence
Just Thy heavenly might.

RITA FERNANDO.

BUDDHISM IN NEW CHINA

By The Ven. NARAWILA DHAMMARATANA,

(Leader of the Ceylon Delegation to the Peace Conference of Asia and the Pacific Regions in Peking).

CHINA'S population today is nearly 500 million. Buddhists from the majority constituting about sixty per cent. of the total population. There are about 2½ million Buddhist monks and nuns in about 500 thousand monasteries. I was told that there are more nuns than monks and their monasteries number more than half the total.

Though it is difficult to say exactly when Buddhism was introduced into China, it is generally believed that there was regular communication between India and China from the time of Emperor Asoka. According to history Buddhism was established for the first time in China in the year 67 A.D. Indian historians, too, agree that Fa Hien's visit to Ceylon in the 4th century helped to strengthen the cultural links not only between China and Ceylon, but between China and India as well. From that time onward there were regular exchanges of visits—Chinese travellers coming here and Buddhists from Ceylon going there.

According to Chinese history, Buddha's teachings reached China by two routes; by land and by sea from India and Ceylon respectively. There was no Bhikkhuni Order in China until the 5th century. Chinese history mentions the story of eight Ceylon bhikkhunis visiting China to propagate the doctrine. When they reached China they were invited to establish a Bhikkhuni Order there, but as there were only eight of them, and hence no quorum, three more bhikkhunis were got down from Ceylon. As I remembered that late Sir D. B. Jayatilaka mentioning at a meeting of the Vidyalankara Pirivena that some bhikkhunis from Ceylon visited China, I asked them whether they had any evidence in support of this. Rev. Chu Shen, Chief Incumbent of the Kwang Chi Monastery in Peking, turned the pages of a book on the history of the Buddhist Order in China and showed me the place where this was mentioned.

It is possible that though it was laid down that a congregation of five monks was sufficient for conducting higher ordination in a remote area, it was still thought desirable

to get down three more bhikkhunis. The visit of twenty Siamese monks led by Upali Thero for the last Upasampada ceremony under the Sinhalese kings lends support to this view. Three hundred Chinese bhikkhunis are said to have received their ordination, and higher ordination from the Ceylon bhikkhunis. Even today, the Vinaya rules and observances of the Chinese bhikkhunis have great resemblance to those in Ceylon. We learned that the only rules and observances were the same with regard to everything we asked them. Observances and practices relating to Vassavasa the season robes and the alms-bowl are, for example, the same. The bowl has to be black in colour and is made of clay. Though it has the same colour and shape the Chinese alms-bowl is slightly smaller than ours. When I expressed a desire to see one of them, they very kindly presented me with one so that I could take it with me to my country. The Chinese Buddhists have shown a great respect for Ceylon and, today, continue to do so because of their awareness of the religious and cultural links that have, from a very long time, existed between the two countries.

China is a vast country with a history of over 5,000 years. It was the Chinese who first found out how to make paper and gunpowder. They invented the compass. They also invented printing that has contributed so much for the progress of modern civilisation. But at no time within this long history of 5,000 years could China live in peace without a war being fought somewhere or other in her large territories. The Western imperialist nations forced the Chinese to eat opium and made vast profits out of it that resulted in what is called the opium war. From the time of this forced introduction of opium, the Chinese nation was going down the path of national degeneration. The Kuomintang government dragged China still further down this path. No religious or cultural awakening could have taken place under those conditions. Some learned monks at present resident in two Ceylon temples had a most disheartening experience when they visited China

seven years ago for the propagation of the Dhamma. They told us that apart from the lack of opportunity for the preaching of the Dhamma they were in danger of losing their lives. The only advice given them by a Chinese Head Priest was, "There is no difference between Buddhism and Christianity. If you desire to get back to your country without losing your life, you should not say a word against Christianity. While you are in China, you should listen to the advice of the Christian priests, or else, it is advisable for you to get back right now." They were sent there with public funds to preach Theravada Buddhism, but they had to return without doing that work. They told us that in those days a large number of Buddhist temples were turned into barracks by Chiang-Kai-Shek troops. Such was the situation in China before the present People's Government came into power.

Three years have passed since this government was established on October 1st, 1949. Today, there is a great Buddhist revival in China. The present government has become the greatest guardian and supporter of the Buddhasasana which before China's liberation, neither enjoyed governmental support nor had a regular laity.

Even the very small temples in China are bigger than the largest temples here. We visited four temples in Peking. One of them is about four times the size of the largest temple here. All these four places had been used as barracks by Chiang-Kai-Shek troops. Eyewitnesses told us how they drove out the monks and occupied these temples desecrating their sanctity in various ways as, for example, by using Buddha images as shoe stands and clothes racks. We saw how these places of worship have been restored. Today, they have got back their air of sanctity and tranquillity. We not only heard from Buddhist monks that vast amounts of money were now being spent on repairing these temples destroyed by Kuomintang troops, but also saw some temples that have been completely restored. In one place alone 10 billion yen was spent

on restoration work. We were told by officials of the new government that they were at present going ahead with a plan that aims at the complete restoration of all temples throughout the length and breadth of China. The government seems to be concerned not only with the welfare of the workers and peasants, but with the welfare of all sections of the population. It is working for the good of all, for the prosperity of all.

No temple properties or any other properties belonging to the Buddhist Order have been compulsorily acquired. On the other hand, I understood, provision has been made to feed and clothe Buddhist monks at government expense if the income of the temple properties or support from the laity was insufficient for the purpose. In my speech at a meeting held in connection with the presentation of Chinese Tripitaka and Buddha images to Buddhist delegates from other countries, I invited the foreign delegates to tell us if there was any government anywhere in the world so keen in helping the Buddhists. As I had known the Burmese Buddhists to have great religious fervour, I asked whether the Burma government was ever so helpful. No one delegate from Burma, Siam, Cambodia, Vietnam, Korea, Japan or Malaya present at that meeting could say that his government spent so much money or had shown such solicitude for Buddhists as the Chinese Peoples' Government was doing.

One might think that the Peoples' Republic of China has Buddhism as its State religion. But that is not so. The Chinese government does not believe in a particular religion. It is a truly Peoples' Government set up in the interests of the people. One who knows conditions in China is not surprised if Buddhists think it is their own government and Christians and Muslims think it is their own. Religion is not taught in State schools because the government thinks that such a policy would vitiate their principle of equality of opportunity for all. Temples, churches and other religious institutions have become centres of both religious and adult education. The government gives every support to these institutions.

There is nothing preventing monks or members of any clergy from taking part in political work. Actually many Buddhist monks are members of organizations like the Political Consultative Conference,

Municipal Councils, Urban Councils and Education Committees. They can be elected as office-bearers as well. Generally speaking, I have found both Chinese bhikkhus and bhikkhunis living very simple, kind, compassionate and exemplary lives. Whatever they might have been in the pre-liberation days, today, all members of the Order are very happy about what is going on around them. They do not have any selfish motives of accumulating wealth. They live on a high moral plane and devote some of their time to social work.

Sometimes we proudly speak of Ceylon as the country of pure Buddhism. What a self-deception such a belief would be can be seen if we examine the moral transformation that has taken place in China during the last three years. Today what some of us preach here—plain living, honesty, equality, kindness, compassion, desire for service—are, in every sense of the word, practised in China.

The Chinese people are all proud of the fact that there is no stealing among them. Is this not a most surprising thing in a country that was but three years ago a haven for thieves, bandits, pick-pockets and racketeers?

I saw evidence of this on two occasions. My fountain pen was a somewhat new Parker pen I bought in Ceylon. In China, such a pen would cost a great deal of money because articles of this sort are taxed very high to protect the local industries. I had probably lost this pen while getting down from the car in Peking. I gave up all hopes of finding it and bought a new pen without informing anyone of the loss. But, three days later our interpreter brought the pen and asked me whether it was mine. It helped me to understand the vast change the ordinary Chinese citizen has undergone for he thought it improper to keep even what he had picked up on the road. Then there was the case of a European lady who had lost her hand-bag. It is said to have contained money equivalent to about Rs. 50,000 besides other valuables. The lady, on her way to the Peking Peace Conference had got down at several stations and travelled by a number of trains to see the country. The railway officials came across the hand-bag, found a name written on it, and sent it to the Hotel assigned to the delegates of the Peace Conference. She was most surprised to

find her hand-bag lying on the table in her room when she came to the Hotel two weeks later. Examining the contents she found everything as she had left them.

We used to go out without closing the doors of our rooms keeping thousands of yen lying on the table or in suit cases. There was ample opportunity for the hotel workers to steal money without being discovered, but nothing was lost. Nowhere did we see a fight, drunkenness or hear any abusive language. Bloodshed, murder are not even to be heard of. Can we not think that the Chinese people have absorbed the best ideals of religion? It was possible for New China to achieve such a high standard of social and mental health only because of the peace their people have enjoyed for the last three years, *i.e.*, since the country was liberated from the Kuomintang. Peace is what China needs most to carry on her constructive work.

In China it is not the leaders alone who seem to have understood this. Children, men and women, literate and illiterate, all ardently desire peace. We saw, wherever we went, the picture of the dove of peace with the following words inscribed: "Ho Ping Wen Swe" (May Peace prevail for a hundred thousand years). This kind of decoration, like at Vesak, in Ceylon, is seen in every home, street, railway station, bus stand, factory, hotel, school, temple, church or farm house.

The Chinese Buddhist monks take a very active part in the Peace Movement. They told us that they hoped Ceylon, as in the past, would continue to be the centre for the propagation of the peace message of the Buddha. They hoped that peace that could stop war would spread from here. They expressed their firm belief that their brethren here would courageously go forth and take a leading role in spreading peace and driving out the fear of war that has plunged the world into so much suffering. They requested us to do our best to prevent our beautiful little island from becoming a base for military operations against peace-loving peoples of Asia. This was their only request. To my mind, only a Devadatta, not a disciple of the Buddha, is capable of saying that such a request goes against the tenets of Buddhism.

Buddha came here from India to bring about peace and tranquillity

between Chulodara and Mahodara in their war with each other. He visited the Sakyas and the Koliyas to preach the value of peace and emity in their dispute over water. He went forth to meet Prince Vidudabha who was marching with his army to fight the Sakyas and his intervention prevented bloodshed.

Buddha said :

“ Jayan Veran Pasawati Dukkhan
Seti Parajito

Upasanto Sukhan Seti Hitva
Jayaparajayan.”

(Victory breeds enmity, the defeated live in sorrow. The peaceful live happily, giving up both victory and defeat).

That the Peace Movement is Buddha's words translated into action would be obvious to all sane persons except the blood-thirsty warmongers and their miserable henchmen. It is not China alone that needs peace. The whole world needs it. It is the pre-requisite for world progress. Hence, it is the duty of every right-thinking man and woman to help this noble cause.

CRIME IN CEYLON—ITS CAUSES AND MEASURES TO ABATE IT

By A BUDDHIST OBSERVER

THE Inspector-General of Police, in his latest Administration Report, has given figures for crime in this country which cannot be passed over with complacence. The Inspector-General of Police has also suggested that every effort should be made by religious and social organisations to contend with this state of affairs.

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 majority of the people of Ceylon have been heir to a great tradition of sobriety, of calm reflection, of tolerance, and an abhorance of violence and the taking of life. Many thousands of people can be found to-day who, let alone take human life, would not take the life even of a dangerous animal or reptile or of a harmful insect. This great tradition has been due to the Buddhist way of life which has held sway in this country for the last twenty-three centuries. The Buddhist way of life enjoins on the layman the observance of pan-sil or the five precepts in his daily life, thus abstaining from taking of life, from thieving, from indulgence in excessive sensuous pleasures, from untruthfulness and from taking intoxicants. The Buddhist way of life has also encouraged the layman to observe ata-sil or the eight precepts on poya days. The observance of

the eight precepts is calculated to bring about a greater degree of self-discipline.

The righteous conduct of the layman had been promoted by the constant and close association with the Buddhist priesthood—a priesthood which has discarded the worldly way of life and taken on vows of abstinence, celibacy and righteous conduct and dedicated themselves to teaching the laity the Buddhist way of life. The constant and close association also had a beneficial effect on the priesthood as it kept them from taking to worldly forms of life. The association between the laity and the priesthood was regular and close on account of the school being located at the temple with the priests as the teachers and the universal observance of the poya days with the consequent religious practices at the temples.

With the imposition of British rule in Ceylon, the new rulers, very largely through political motives to keep the country and its people in subjugation, devised every means to destroy the close link that existed between the laity and the priesthood, and efforts were made to make both the laity and the priesthood degenerate. The poya days were no longer treated as holidays. People were summoned to attend courts or government offices on poya days with consequent punishment or loss for non-attendance. Temple schools were abolished, and in their place, Government encouraged foreign religious missions to start schools where foreign religions were taught and students weaned from national customs and habits and made to follow foreign ones. While the

foreign mission schools were mostly confined to the towns and provided some education for the townfolk, there were no schools in rural areas and in these areas illiteracy and ignorance became rampant.

The Government also, largely as a means of earning revenue, opened taverns and liquor bars and encouraged the drinking habit. A people who had regarded drinking as an abominable vice were made to regard it as a habit of the socially great. A person who did not keep drinks in his house, or who did not take drinks or who did not offer drinks to visitors, was looked down upon. No social function or party or wedding was complete without liquor flowing. No club was respectable unless it had a fully stocked bar. A vice was made to look a virtue and an innocent people made to succumb to an evil with the tragic results we are now faced with.

It has been stated that a great deal of the violent crime of this country can be attributed to ignorance, impulsiveness and effect of drink. These factors can be eliminated by a reversion to the Buddhist way of life as was practised earlier in this country. The following steps have to be taken to achieve the purpose.

The poya days have to be declared government holidays. There is no difficulty in declaring the two major poya days—the full moon and new moon days of the month as holidays without loss of working days. Now Saturday is a half working day in government offices and in most commercial offices. If Saturday were to be made a full working day normally, the two full working days per month thus saved would enable

the full moon and new moon days to be treated as holidays. The two atavaka days, *i.e.*, first quarter and last quarter 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 where with most Buddhists the observance of a poya day is a full day affair with the observance of ata-sil, with Christians religious observance on Sundays is a matter of short duration, *i.e.*, attendance at church service. So that if Sunday were made a half working day, church services could be held during the non-working half of the day.

In the case of public holidays now given on certain full moon days, the holidays could be given on the day before, and, in the case of Wesak the day before and the day after, the full moon day, as these days are major religious festivals.

In order to spread literacy and discipline rapidly in areas where sufficient schools are not already available at present, some procedure should be worked out to enable schools to be held in temples, with, if possible, Buddhist priests as teachers. In order to get a sufficient number of Buddhist priests with suitable educational qualifications to be teachers, pirivena education has to be strengthened and aided.

Grants have to be given to enable sufficient buildings and equipment to be provided at the major pirivenas. There should also be suitable courses for training student bhikkhus as teachers. Grants should be paid to some responsible body rather than small amounts to individual pirivenas so that the grants could be usefully spent to effect the greatest improvements to the pirivenas.

The eradication of the drink evil is more difficult. It should be a gradual and long term programme. The manufacture, distribution and sale of locally made alcoholic drinks should be carefully controlled with the aim of gradual reduction. Similarly, import, distribution and sale of foreign liquor should be carefully controlled. The opening of new liquor bars and taverns should be discouraged if not stopped altogether. Liquor should not be served at any Government function. Drinking habits among public servants should be discouraged. Drinking habits should be a bar to advancement in the Public Service, particularly in such branches as the Judiciary, the Police, Excise, Customs, Provincial Administration. Free issues or issues under favourable prices, of liquor to the armed forces should be stopped. A method of issuing licences to consumers of

liquor should be investigated as in the case of consumption of opium.

Therefore, to summarise, early steps in the following directions should be taken in order to lessen and eradicate the present figures for crime in the country.

(a) Poya days should be made government holidays by making Saturdays full working days ordinarily, and Sundays half working days ordinarily. This step will encourage people to take to the Buddhist way of life with consequent improvement of their standard of self-discipline.

(b) Pirivena education should be encouraged and the starting of schools in temples with Bhikkhus as teachers wherever possible should be fostered. An adequate grant should be made to provide pirivenas with suitable buildings and equipment. This grant should be paid to some one responsible body so that some useful work may be done.

(c) The drink evil, should be doggedly combating by careful control over the distributors and sale of liquor. The question of issue of permits to consumers should be carefully studied. Drinking habits should be a bar to advancement in the public service. No liquor should be served at Government functions. No free liquor or liquor at concessional rates should be issued to the armed forces.

THE ARHAT MAHINDA

By "DAMA TISA"

(In view of the adoration of the recently identified Mahinda Relics this article has a special interest.—Ed.)

WHO is this exalted personage whose sacred relics are being venerated by thousands of devoted Buddhists in the Island of Lanka which is known to the Buddhist world as the Dhammadipa?

The story of the Arhat goes far back into time even before historians of the West adopted their reckoning we use today.

At the time we are speaking lived a young Prince of North India who was called Asoka. His father sent him to the province of Avanti and on the way he tarried awhile at the fair city of Ujjain. Here he saw the pretty damsel Devi, the daughter of a Setthi named Deva, and fell for her great beauty. He

espoused Vedisadevi and of this union were born Mahinda and, later, Sanghamittā. Where these two saw the first light is known today as Besnagar, which is a ruined city close to Bhilsa in Gwalior. Then its name was Vedisa.

Asoka, after his father's death, seized power and in his journey to the capital was accompanied by the two children. Devi, however, remained behind. We all know how Asoka's wicked ways were changed by his acceptance of the Buddha Dhamma. Under the good influence of Moggaliputta Tissa, the Arhat, he acquired such a name for good work that we today call him Dhammasoka. Even so, this Arhat

told the questioning king that his work for the Sasana, great though it was, could not be complete until a child of his has been gifted to the Sangha. That was how not one, but two of them, entered the noble Order.

Mahinda was ordained at the age of 20, in the sixth year after the consecration of his imperial father. The Emperor and the king of Lanka, Devanampiya Tissa, were friends and the former had suggested that the latter accept the Buddha Dhamma, the greatest gift which he had to offer. He sent it by his own son. The sending of Missions to many lands at the same time are found recorded on stone and this particular

one is mentioned in the 13th record. Not one other, however, bore such fruit as that borne in Lanka.

On his way to Lanka, the Arhat paid a visit to his mother at Vedisagiri. She received him with the greatest joy and accommodated him in a magnificent building that she had constructed. Indeed, even today we may see the ruins of the works of piety of this pious Buddhist lady.

At the time of his arrival in Lanka Mahinda was 32 years old. Six others accompanied him and of them one was a nephew, Sumana the son of his sister Sanghamittā, and another, Bhanduka, the son of a maternal cousin. Lanka's king met the Arhat on the same day at Mihintale and, after being questioned in regard to his ability to grasp the Message of the Sakyamuni, heard from his reverend visitor, the first sermon which had probably been preached in the land.

The rest of the story, how the Arhat was honoured, how this king and all his successors built noble edifices in the name of the Buddha, how they worked for peoples' welfare, impelled by the Teachings of the Buddha, all these are known and do not require repetition.

But this is the story of the Thera himself.

Devanāmpiya Tissa died in the course of time but Mahinda lived on well into years, preaching and serving without letting a day pass idly by. The king his friend was succeeded by Uttiya, who was also a very great friend of the Dhamma. In fact, in a cave inscription of the Princess Sumanadevi who lived at the time, the new king is called *Dama-Mita*. The king looked after the Thera and the religion as zealously as his brother had done.

About 200 B.C., in the 8th year of the reign died Mahinda during a *Vas* season. As he would have desired it, death took place at Mihintale where he first gave the word of the Tathagata to the land. He was the 80 years old and had lived a life of wonderful action and holiness.

The remains were brought to Anuradhapura the royal city and, in the midst of a vast gathering, were cremated with every mark of respectful honour.

The ashes were enshrined and a splendid monument built over them in the city. Where it is, we do not know today. Part of these ashes were enshrined at Mihintale itself.

In the year 1949 an ancient *stupa*

to the west of the Mahaseya at Mihintale was cleared by the Archaeological Department. Excavation work was done in it with the kind permission of Walahahengunuwewe Ratanajoti Adhikarana Nayaka Thera of Mihintale Rajamaha Vihara. In the course of this work was found a relic casket of very ancient workmanship, as Dr. Senarat Paranavitana, the Archaeological Commissioner, has well described in his Annual Report for 1951. This is of polished black earthenware and of a type so far not known in India and Ceylon. Formed of three compartments, the topmost forming the cover and the other chambers, all fitting one into the other, the casket is considered not only a most important piece of pottery, but the oldest so far found in the Island.

In the compartments were found, well enshrined in a small gold stupa of the most ancient shape known in all the Buddhist world, that is the Sanchi shape, tiny fragments of bone and ash.

"It is reasonable to assume," says Dr. Paranavitana, "that those who fashioned this reliquary reproduced the form of the Stupa current in their times, which may, therefore be surmised as the third or second century B.C. This tallies with the early type of Brāhmī letters incised on the bricks found in the debris. The original *stupa* and the reliquary may be taken as belonging to the same date, and the funerary remains in the casket must have, found therefore, been of a highly venerated personage of the time, considered worthy of being honoured by the erection of a *stupa* to enshrine his remains."

The learned writer now goes on to identify the important Dagabas at Mihintale. He sums up as follows.

"The *stupa* of the Mihintale Vata-dāgé, being the Silācetiys founded by Kutakanna, cannot possibly be the monument built in Uttiya's reign to enshrine a portion of the relics of Saint Mahinda, as is generally accepted at the present day. Then, what is the *stupa* in which the Saint's ashes were enshrined? The only possible monument which can come in for consideration is the dagaba that has recently been brought to light by the Department . . . If our identification is found acceptable, we may be having before us what Time has spared of that portion of the bodily remains of Saint Mahinda enshrined at Mihintale. In the absence of a categorical

statement to that effect in an inscription on the casket, or on or near the *stupa*, this cannot be taken as conclusively proved, but there is a strong case for it so far as circumstantial evidence can establish it."

What are the results of the religion which the Arhat whom we worship and adore now, preached to the king and people of Lanka?

Buddhism brought us unto cultural kinship with India and her great civilisation which influenced us, much more than any influence of today by another nation can ever do. Buddhist monks brought us learning, the art of writing, conducted schools where was gathered the knowledge which sustained us for centuries and centuries, which made us a race of kindly and hospitable and tolerant people who have, despite shortcomings, earned the praise of good men. Art, architecture, sculpture, painting, music, all of these were inspired by Buddhism. The grandest buildings, the most pleasing of artistic work, in fact whatever the discerning foreign visitor has learnt to appreciate and praise, have been due to Buddhism. Buddhism kept the Island a home of the religion, especially after India had given up the teachings of the Tathagatha. To this Home of the Dhamma came visitors from many lands to drink of Buddhist lore. Some 1,500 years ago Buddhist women went to far China taking, as nuns, the Buddha Dhamma and they established the Bhikkhuni Order in that country and gave the women of China a self-respect they had not then known. Our women, even as are their sisters in Buddhists Burma, were never kept segregated, but had a large freedom which they never learnt to use wisely. Our kings looked after the sick, crippled, vagrants, even sick animals, giving protection to animals long before the West got such ideas of them. We gave our Buddhist world all we could give, keeping nothing secret to ourselves. In modern times, we struggled under every possible disability but kept the message of Buddhism bravely in the dark years a hundred years ago. Bereft of influence and power, of financial and other means, we, both the great Sangha and the laity, together kept up the spirit we first imbibed from the Arhat we have worshipped today.

May the Devas aid us to remain steadfast and true to serve the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha, as long as our race remains on earth.

THINK IT OVER—DO NOT FORGET!

By MARTIN STEINKE—TAO CHUEN

EVERYBODY seeks for happiness. Everybody feels and knows: this is my main task during life-time, to be happy. Unhappiness is darkness, an iron curtain. But why is it so difficult to fulfil this task? There are so many and differing answers to this question as man himself is different from his brothers and sisters. And yet the case of "man" is simple enough.

Come to the shore! Without interruption wave after wave are rolling towards the coast, at stormy or calm sea. You may look at this play with different feelings. You may enjoy its beauty by day and night, by sun or moon rising and sinking. Its murmuring may make you feel happy. But something is lacking in such way of looking at this grand play of nature. And you cannot get rid of the idea: there must be something in it that has more to say than giving a mere touch to our feelings. But what is that "more"?

Shortly summarizing, I answer: it is the lawfulness of this simple play of the rolling waves. The conditions for it are given every moment with wind, water, movement. These are only part of the conditions, not all of them. Nobody can know them in their total. Nobody knows too why this play exists, or he be the creator of the universe. But still it is there.

We can determine some of the conditions. We can observe: the water moves according to the wind or: according to the motion run the waves; we can observe the atom of hydrogenium; we can experience the mighty power of the circulating electrons, protons, neutrons, the mighty effect of the atom fission. But nobody can say *why* it is so. Terrible is such ignorance! says one. It is the divine grace, says the other, and we need not trouble our mind by such thoughts; looking up to the Almighty is the best and

easiest way of living. Both points of view are personal. There is the other still, according to man's lawful nature.

Important is the fact that we cannot but look at the wonderful play of the rolling sea *just as we do*. We can experience this phenomenon only by our sense organs, working in sixfold direction (as seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, thinking), by that sense organism of ours we call our body. Nobody can say why it is so, but still everyone *must* live this way and there is little difference whether we regard the waves with serene or sad eyes.

But let us look further! Do you know the real essence of the waves? Is it the wind? Surely not! Is it the water? Not alone. Motion? Not alone. What then, is the essence of the "wave"? *It is the moving of our own consciousness.* That means: the acting if your sense organism. If there is no moving of consciousness there is no waving sea.

And let us take another look! Perhaps you know what consciousness means? The light which brings clearness to the sense organs by sense contact. Perhaps you could experience this springing up of light after some long and deep sleep. More important, more helpful for overcoming grief and sorrow is: clearly to recognise the different energy in the physical and the living processes. Every physical energy is *without* consciousness. But the whole physical power can never destroy consciousness. Consciousness alone can lighten up the physical energy. Only consciousness is able to regard even this living body of yours in its state of death. This is the noblest kind of a meditation, to get enlightenment by practising the four satipatthana, *i.e.*, the four kinds of attentiveness—over the body, the sensations, the thoughts, and the conscious processes—, described in Majj. Nik. 10 a.o.

And further! Do you know the crown of consciousness? It is "I," I—or self-consciousness being the most subtle kind of knowledge we can obtain. Regard the child! As long as there does not exist the balance of power for it cannot say "I": though from this very moment, man cannot live without saying "I." But it is the wrongest of determinations to think and say "I am," with regard to this our personality. The practice of the four satipatthana or the fourfold attentiveness will teach us: the lawfulness of this our personality is: arising and passing away. The idea of "I" is fathomable, is bound, is a crux for our thinking; for "I" is, on the contrary, boundless, deep, unfathomable. "I" is only a medium of understanding between men. It is a mere conception.

And finally: even in Buddha's time there existed the opinion: Consciousness, that is the wandering soul, the agents of rebirth. Little by little or immediately we obtain, with the help of the four satipatthana—that is by clearness, attentiveness, mindfulness—the affirmation of what consciousness means. There we shall experience the mighty power of our eternal essence as a part of the "ens realissimum," and all thoughts of rebirth shall fade away like shadows.

But do not forget: As long as we stand against the law of karma, "karma," as cause the effect, acts darkening and leads to ignorance. That will say, as long as you act *inhuman in thoughts, words, and deeds*. For you must consider: "Crime doesn't pay."

Joy and happiness are part of the wonderful results of mindfulness. Joy brings tranquillity. Tranquillity brings gatherings of the life forces. And to be tranquil means to be even-minded.

Igersheim-Bad Mergentheim,
US-Zone of Germany.

THIS COMES FROM HELSINKI

By MAUNO NORDBERG

Cleanse thy heart.

This is the teaching of all the Buddhas.

I consider that the ethical teaching of the Buddha and his tolerance have no equals, as not a drop of human blood was ever shed when the teaching spread over the greater part of Asia, thanks to its mild reasonableness. It is a message of peace if only suffering humanity would listen to it. And once it was listened to—the great Emperor Asoka of India applied Buddhist principles to the administration of his vast empire, and during his reign and that of his followers India enjoyed peace for over half a millennium, a fact unknown in the bloodstained history of Europe. As a teetotaler it is important to me that the Buddha proscribed the use and serving of alcoholic drinks. The law of Karma and rebirth gave my life quite a new background. The three signata of life are—everything changes, even the mountains, life is full of suffering from birth to grave, and there is no unchanging, deathless "I" or soul in anything living.

Man is only a causal structure of physical

and mental phenomena. On this point the doctrine of the Buddha, which is a logical and coherent ethico-philosophical system, anticipated by 2,500 years the last findings of our youngest science, psychology. There can never be a conflict between the sciences and the doctrine of the Buddha. I have realized the four noble truths, the noble truth of suffering, the noble truth of the cause of suffering, the noble truth of the destruction of suffering and the truth of the noble eightfold path leading to the destruction of suffering, to Nibbana, even in this very life, open to each and everybody. The doctrine of the Buddha requires from me ever so much more effort than the religions based on grace and vicarious salvation, as it forces me to think. Man is alone responsible for his acts, he is the master of his fate, or, as it was *later* said in the Bible: "What man sows, that shall he also reap," which is purely a Buddhist teaching.

These are, in short, the reasons why I am a Buddhist.
Mariankatu 17A,
Helsinki.

ON October 26th, for the first time, a broadcast on Buddha was sent over the Finnish State Radio. The talk was by Mr. Pentti Aalto, Lecturer in Oriental languages at the Helsinki University. It was the first of a series on non-Christian religions and is to be followed by others at short intervals. As an introduction to the talk Mr. Mauno Nordberg, Chairman of the Friends of Buddhism, was asked to declare why he was a Buddhist. He replied:

Because the original doctrine of the Buddha is not a religion which requires from its followers a blind belief in unprovable dogmas. It lacks all the characteristics of the religions, from the story of creation to the sacraments, meditation replacing prayer. Prince Gautama who became Buddha, was a man like you, and he told his disciples not blindly to believe any authority, not even his own teachings, unless they could themselves ascertain their validity.

To my mind the core of the teaching is contained in four lines:—

Cease doing evil,

Do everything good,