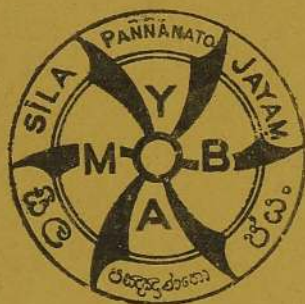


# THE BUDDHIST



AUGUST, 1952  
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“*Sīla Paññānato Jayam*”

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## THE PRACTICE OF PRISTINE BUDDHISM IN THE DAILY LIFE OF LAYMEN

By Ven. C. NYANASATTA THERA

“*By effort, earnest striving, discipline and self-control, let the wise man make an island which cannot be swamped*”

—Dhammapada ii—5

THE following sketch of application of Buddhism as guidance in the busy life of laymen is aimed at dispelling the prevalent wrong view, among beginners in the study and practice of the Dhamma, that it is a pessimistic, melancholy, lethargic, impracticable, sceptical and nihilistic teaching—an erroneous notion introduced by non-Buddhists and used as a weapon for checking the phenomenal appeal and spread of the Dhamma in the West and everywhere. Nothing is more inaccurate than this charge levelled against the teaching that rouses up our energy, gives us self-confidence, and self-reliance and thus induces us to strive to the utmost in leading such a life as will make for our economic, social, intellectual, moral and spiritual progress, and at the same time exercise a wholesome influence on our family, relations, friends, and associates, the community or society we belong to, our nation and the whole human race. No other religious teacher besides the Buddha, evokes in man such determination and desire to strive for conquering all obstacles to progress, and for achievement of one's ideal of perfection.

Buddhism is mainly concerned with the present life, and hence all thought of the past and future receives just as much attention, as may stimulate us to a greater zeal in the striving for the good and progress of mankind, our own present existence being viewed as but one aspect of the whole.

As Buddhism does not teach salvation by proxy, neither by a Saviour nor by an automatic evolution or by a violent revolution, it requires all followers to live and act so as to save others instead of mere praying for deliverance, or expecting it from evolution or revolution. And therefore Buddhism makes us tolerant and forbearing with regard to others; for when we see how slowly we progress on the road to perfection, we cannot be angry with others for not being better than we or they are. Hence our love embraces not only the Buddhists but all humanity, for after all it does not so much matter what a man professes as how he practises his credo.

### OUR DUTIES

We have duties to ourselves, our family and relations, the community or society we live in, our country and the whole world. The progress of others is our progress; the sufferings of others affect us too; and our own progress influences our environment. All these manifold duties we can fulfil only by active service. As soon as our education or training is complete, we have to work, in order to support ourselves; and by supporting our parents and younger members of our family, we have to repay for the care we have received during our studies. Being actively engaged in some profession gives us a feeling of usefulness and importance; while remaining idle we have only the thought of our worthlessness.

To improve our capacity for more and better work, we must have some vigorous recreation, especially

if we lead a sedentary life during our working hours. After recreation we need relaxation in order to lessen the tension of nerves and to make life more than mere eating, drinking, sleeping and procreation, we ought to practise some kind of meditation. As a refined form of relaxation meditation will not only add to our store of energy, and increase our urge to work even harder and better, but it will also qualify us for becoming leaders in all social and humanitarian activities and make us radiant examples of happiness within and a source of inspiration to our environment. For we cannot adjust ourselves perfectly to our surroundings and control every situation effectively, unless there is peace, harmony and clear vision within ourselves.

### PRACTICE OF PRISTINE BUDDHISM AS PERSONAL RELIGION

The practice of pristine Buddhism in the daily life of laymen is possible even without endless noisy drum beatings, “pinkamas,” pseudo-charitable activities—without showy processions, visiting temples; building more statues, shrines, pilgrimages and prayers or invocations.

In these days, when charity has become identical with constructing more shrines and adding another inartistic image to the hundred existing already in a vihare, or building a third devalaya in a temple where one sees two gods' image houses already, and both in excellent condition, or calling five hundred monks from all parts of Lanka to a dana, not because the bhikkhus have not enough food in their temples, but just to gratify the vanity of some



supporters who, in their exuberance of faith not restrained by wisdom, imagine to do something very good, but actually are prompted by a sense of rivalry in order to beat another party who gave alms to a hundred monks,— in these days it is well to bear in mind the maxim that “real charity consists in helping the poor, tending the sick, relieving the distressed, and teaching the ignorant.”

#### WORK AND SOCIAL SERVICE

As soon as our study and training is completed we ought to seek permanent employment, engage in constructive work, and do any work until we secure a post according to our qualifications. By working hard, living within our income, and saving as much as possible, we can repay the sums spent on our higher education, or special training, by supporting our parents, and needy relatives. From our earnings we can contribute our share to social, cultural, and religious activities. To repay our country for the facilities we enjoyed during our studies, we must participate in all kinds of social, cultural, and humanitarian activities, even if it be but an occasional visit to a hospital to inquire if any patient needs our help; to an asylum to help and cheer the old and destitute; to an orphanage to bring a little warmth of heart to those who live without parents, or by training in First Aid Service, or organising a Buddhist substitute for an Institute for Nursing Sisters or the Red Cross.

This is an encouragement to those who cannot spend much money in charity; such persons' charitable actions consist in social work and engaging in the uplift of the poor classes by teaching and advising them and encouraging their social activities. And even when this work is impossible, we may practice pristine Buddhism by training ourselves in perfect observance of Buddhist moral precepts and rules of good conduct by respecting life, property, purity, truth and alertness of mind, the positive aspects of abstaining from violence, theft or fraud, misconduct, falsehood, and intoxicants. This practice we best learn by seeing and investigating all the many evils that result from violating all rules of restraint that are imperative in a civilised society and by knowing the advantages of good moral conduct, such as success in life,

peace of mind, happiness, harmonious adjustment to our surrounding, and enlarging vision of reality, right understanding of self and others; and when we see the right way and the wrong course, we easily create in us the concentrated aspiration, continued effort and sustained mindfulness in following the correct path.

#### RECREATION AND RELAXATION

In order to maintain both mental and physical health, the modern sedentary worker needs outdoor exercises or recreation. Wholesome forms of recreation will greatly increase our capacity for more and better work. Except hunting, using a gun or a hook and line, and all forms of strong stimulants—alcohol after violent exercises—all other forms of sports may be indulged in by a Buddhist. The most profitable and constructive recreation is growing food in one's own garden or on a plot of land. What scope for application of our knowledge of Botany, rural science or other branches of learning opens to a food and fruit-grower who does it for recreation! In the West even a civil servant or professor is not ashamed of using occasionally the hoe, axe, spade, hammer, saw or other tools and implements in building or repairing a fence, building a shed or cultivating a garden.

When no outdoor exercises are possible and no call to social or humanitarian work requires our active collaboration, we may relax at our home. For a Buddhist who is averse to relaxing in clubs, in a cinema, a theatre, dancing hall or some doubtful places of entertainment, a much cheaper, wholesomer and more profitable relaxation is listening to one's radio, reading some useful and interesting literature or spending one's evening with the family. Even a Buddhist wife would feel annoyed or slighted if, after a hard day's work at home, she could not have a good chat with her husband or if she ever lived in fear of being scolded for disturbing or her children's disturbing, her husband in his study of the Abhidhamma or in his writing a treatise or an article on Buddhism or Nibbana. It is a form of charity and relaxation to take a lively interest in the doings of all the members of one's household. Even an old grandmother or grandfather enjoys a little chat with grandchildren and will praise

our Buddhist Metta for not neglecting the old.

But it does not mean that we should waste all our free time in gossiping: we must keep ourselves informed of what happens in the world; read something worth reading, study something to keep young, and use our leisure constructively. Reading too much dulls one's mind and heart; reading too much fiction takes us away from reality; and reading thrillers, crime novels, and detective stories blunts our sense of justice, makes us enjoy crime and then suspect all of evil motives and ends in our becoming involved in criminal offences.

Instead of devouring all the worthless trash, we all ought to read some good Buddhist literature or reviews, having always at hand a pocket size note book where we write in clear hand quotations or passages that have special appeal to us. This Buddhist vademecum—our companion—will prove useful in writing our own articles or books, but especially at times of illness, dejection, despair, disappointment and every crisis of our life. Perhaps when seriously ill or even on our death bed, either we or another, by reading to us from such a note book, may bring new hope, strength or change for the better.

#### QUOTATIONS FROM BOOKS OF EARLY BUDDHISM

Lest any one should suspect us of modernising Buddhism or teaching a reformed Dhamma, the following extracts from the most popular Buddhist texts, the word of the Buddha himself, with chapter and verse, show that we do not deviate from pristine Buddhism.

#### Mangala Sutta—Things Conducive to Happiness and Progress Are:—

“Avoiding evil company, associating with the wise and good and respecting noble individuals; living among cultured Buddhists, good actions and right aspirations; good education, training for profession, perfect moral conduct and gentle speech; support of parents, affection for one's wife and children and peaceful occupation. Generosity, right living, helping one's relatives, and blameless acts. Shunning evil, abstinence from liquor, zeal in doing positive good. Reverence for saintly teachers, humility, contentment, gratitude and occasional listening to the Dhamma; self-control, pure life, the vision of



reality and the realisation of Nibbana. The person who remains calm in vicissitudes and crises, free from sorrow, stain and worries, who follows this course of conduct, is invincible, lives happy and has achieved the highest."

—*Mahamangala Sutta, Sutta Nipata Cullavagga, 16-259-269.*

#### KARANIYA METTA—PRACTICE OF LOVING KINDNESS

Who wishes to attain perfection, should be upright honest, polite, gentle and humble; contented, fond of plain living, with some leisure, living within one's income, restrained, discreet and unattached. He should abstain from doing harm to anyone, but should cherish love for all living beings, the big and the small. He should not deceive others nor despise anyone, be free from conceit and free from planning any revenge. He should love all and be ready to save others even at the risk of his own life. His thought of love should pervade the whole world, his loving kindness should be boundless, and he should practice it whether he stands, walks, sits or lies down. Practising this disposition of mind and rejecting all vain theories, this virtuous person attains vision of reality, freedom from craving and passes beyond all change and re-birth.

—*Sutta Nipata I.*

#### THE BUDDHA'S INSTRUCTION ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS—

*Vyagghapajja Sutta, Anguttara Nikaya VIII-VI-4.*

A Buddhist layman should achieve:—

1. Accomplishment in exertion, *viz.*, skill and diligence, endowed with genius in finding the right way to perform the duties of his profession.

2. Accomplishment in caution, by preserving his earnings, saving wisely, and investing with security.

3. Good friendship with those who have faith, virtue, charity and wisdom and endeavouring to acquire the good qualities he admires in friends.

4. Regular mode of life within one's income, avoiding all false show of abundance and thus never being in debt or want.

5. Accomplishment in faith, by knowing the good qualities of the Enlightened One and the Dhamma.

6. Accomplishment in virtue by observance of the five moral precepts, *viz.*, respecting and promoting life, property, chastity, truth and ever-present vigilance of mind, by abstaining from violence, theft, misconduct, falsehood and intoxicants.

7. Accomplishment in charity, free from meanness, being liberal, generous, giving gladly what is needed and when asked, cheerful in sharing.

8. Accomplishment in wisdom leading to spiritual growth and penetrating insight and vision of reality that leads beyond all woe and change.

#### HOW TO PRACTICE PRISTINE BUDDHISM

This is the syllabus of our study and practice, the curriculum of the application of Buddhism. Though we at times imagine that we shall never accomplish our course of studies, yet as we try it, we gain more courage. By repeated intention, renewed efforts, directing the mind to the practice, and viewing dispassionately in moments of calm passive or spontaneous awareness the progress or relapses in the practice, we soon learn to be mindful and restrained in thought, speech, and bodily action. The four factors of right endeavour, *viz.*, concentrated intention, sustained energy, thought and investigation are the means to achievement of progress; and anything possible can be attained if we have developed the four links of right endeavour. Then the five moral controlling faculties and forces, *viz.* confidence, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom are the tools we must use in our training in the training school of pristine Buddhism, Right intention to undergo the course of training, effort and sustained energy, accompanied by mindfulness are the most essential points to be applied to the practice of pristine Buddhism in the daily life of laymen. What others call grace we name right effort, and faculties latent in us, only waiting to be discovered, developed, and used. Only by application of such hidden forces do we become genuine Buddhists, the followers of the Perfect One. To practice loving kindness by being always kind, polite, gentle, and ready to help, is the hall mark of a true Buddhist. Even when we are unable to help materially, an encouraging smile, a kind word or patient listening to the complaint

of others is a helpful service, applied loving kindness, Buddhist metta.

#### A B C OF BUDDHIST MEDITATION IN THE DAILY LIFE OF BUSY LAYMEN

The gaps between our routine work or the moments when we would otherwise seek company, and unprofitable gossip, or even worse still, indulge in drinking, gambling, or some foolish and destructive forms of pastime, we can well use for meditation. Buddhist meditation is an essential part of application of the Dhamma, it is an excellent substitute for church-going, prayer or other ceremonies; and no Buddhist is able to live the good life required by the Norm, unless he or she devotes at least five minutes a day to the cultivation of the right type of meditation. Some students of the Dhamma are scared from the practice of meditation by the complicated explanations and the inordinate use of Pali formulae, Pali terminology, uncommon technical terms, and formulae to be memorised by rote. To console such students, we may boldly assure them that not a single Pali term or stanza or formula need be memorised, and that even by memorising the whole of the Pali literature with its commentaries and sub-commentaries, one may not necessarily practise pristine Buddhism: proficiency in Pali is not always a proof of progress in the practice of the Dhamma. No loud mechanical reading or reciting is essential, for none near us should even be aware that we practise meditation, and we should not make a show of our practice.

#### RADIATING METTA—LOVING KINDNESS

Late in the evening or early at dawn, when all is still and silent and our mind is quite fresh, seated in a comfortable position—not necessarily the padmasana, the lotus posture of a real yogi, if one's joints are too stiff—we just radiate loving kindness in one direction or towards a definite person, whom we try to visualise by calling to our mind his or her good qualities and kindness. First of all we should practise metta to ourselves; for though it sounds absurd, in most cases it is quite true that we do not really love ourselves. For do we not often enjoy our suffering, illness and misery, and even expect and welcome them? And this is why Buddhism or our ancient teachers advise us to love ourselves before



radiating love to others and loving all. Let us then begin our practice by thinking or saying to self mentally. "May I be cheerful, happy, healthy, gentle, hopeful and contented." When after sometime of such repeated practice we wish to advance, we take for our subject a person respected by ourselves, our spiritual teacher, for instance, or any living person of our own sex, whom we respect and love. We then radiate our love towards him. "May this venerable one be happy, cheerful, healthy, gentle, hopeful and contented." Who is not satisfied with so much, may practise metta to a beloved person of one's own sex, to prevent sensuous craving from turning real Buddhist love into lust. Or we may choose a neutral person, or even an individual who was once our enemy, we think of his good qualities and wish him happiness. "May he be cheerful, healthy, gentle, hopeful and contented."

To make our love more impersonal, we may penetrate the quarters of the world, taking one direction at a time, and thinking that our love radiates over all equally: "May beings living in this direction be happy, cheerful, healthy and contented." Any direction is good; and when we forget self entirely and the world as well, by being filled by the thought of love, we have well advanced in our practice of Metta.

If we were to spend the best moments of our leisure thus, how happy we should be all day, have calm sleep, enjoy work and make others enjoy living and working with us! Think of how much money we should save on medicines, doctors and hospitals! The right application of metta leads to health, happiness, cheerful disposition, success, popularity and new energy for more work in the service of humanity. What a rank metta occupies in Buddhism is seen from the fact that the future Buddha is expected to be Lord Metteyya, the Buddha of love.

Metta practised to others, especially those who oppose us, will save us all bills of proctors and for litigation. Thinking kindly of others, we shall be loved by all, advance, live in peace, contentment and harmony with our environment; we shall be free from envy, ill-will and all forms of craving and hatred. Hence this practice is recommended to those who are

irritable, neurotic, and who easily flare up and give vent to anger.

#### **MEDITATION ON THE BUDDHA, DHAMMA, SANGHA**

Another student may feel inclined to practising the contemplation of the Enlightened One. At first he or she may have in mind the term or idea "Buddha." Then, being dissatisfied with this cold word "Buddha," we shall use more affectionate terms, such as the "Enlightened One," "All-Enlightened One," "Samma-Sambuddha," "The Perfect One"—"The Blessed One," "The Happy One," "The Accomplished or Auspicious One," "The Holy One." By imperceptible degrees, the student cultivating the contemplation of the Buddha will have a fine picture or a lovely artistic image of the Enlightened One and then gaze at it when falling asleep or rising. Eventually one will dust the picture or statue with a new silken handkerchief and keep it on a fine cloth in a prominent place of one's best room, and later on lay some flowers, and light a small light or candle stick before it. At this stage one feels like having some concrete formula of contemplation. Though we discourage parrot-like rehearsal by rote of unintelligible invocations and prayers, in a language unfamiliar to the student, yet for those who cannot do without a text for meditation we offer these brief and venerable formulae from the time of the Buddha. When kneeling, squatting, sitting, standing, before an image; or in any posture, even lying or walking, one may think thus:—

"Thus indeed is the Exalted One: a Holy One is he, an All-Enlightened One, perfect in wisdom and conduct, a Happy One, Knower of the World, the supreme guide of those who wish to be conducted to perfection, the Teacher of all intelligent beings, the Enlightened One, the Blessed One."

#### **CONTEMPLATION OF THE DHAMMA— THE LAW OF THE BLESSED ONE**

"Well proclaimed by the Blessed One is the law, bearing on the present life, bringing immediate fruit to those who observe it, inviting all to come and practise it, to be understood by the wise man for himself."

#### **CONTEMPLATION OF THE SANGHA— THE ORDER OF BHIKKHUS**

"Well are they trained, the Order of the Blessed One's disciples even

the four branches thereof, *viz.*, the eight classes of holy individuals, well trained in uprightness, in principles and courtesy. The Order should be respected and revered, gifts should be given it and homage, for it is the world's unsurpassed field of merit."

If we often meditate on such noble objects and practise loving kindness by radiating metta in all directions for two or five minutes only, at moments when we have withdrawn, we shall use our leisure properly, we shall not worry about politics or other people's wrongs: instead we shall see goodness everywhere, and thus become perfect and good ourselves.

#### **CONTEMPLATION OF BREATH— PRANAYAMA-ANAPANASATI**

Those who do not need any external objects for their meditation may practise the contemplation of breathing. Seated comfortably, if possible crossed-legged, on a well padded seat, without leaning with back against anything, to ensure free unobstructed blood circulation one fixes one's whole attention on the process of respiration. If one's mind and body are agitated one may calm down by preliminary contemplation of the Buddha or by metta radiation. Then one observes the air strike the nostrils or simply the fact of breathing; without forcing breath to be longer or shorter, one just is aware of breathing. Then one begins to feel the air pass through the nostrils, one consciously, calms the process of breathing feeling pleasure, interest and happiness in this meditation, after eliminating all intruding irrelevant thoughts.

#### **CONTEMPLATION OF MIND REALITY**

When respiration has become so refined that one does not feel it at all one may meditate on the nature of the process, and then on one's body and mind, the base of respiration. One contemplates arising and passing of material and mental processes, their impermanence, suffering and the conditioned nature of all phenomena. Then a vision of reality opens to us when we are thus concentrated. These moments of unforced, spontaneous or passive awareness of what are the really creative moments. They transform and mould our character, without our forcing a change. We advance in understanding, peace, happiness and thus have the unshaken confidence in



our progress on the right path to Enlightenment. We always emerge from such meditation, refreshed, strengthened, as if new born into a world of understanding, love, peace and harmony.

No church-going or visiting tem-

ples, or merely reading books on Buddhism yields such a sublime happiness as this practice of pristine Buddhism. Every layman or laywoman is able to devote a few minutes to this genuine practice. May we all persevere in this noble practice of pristine Buddhism in

the daily life of laymen and monks until it yields to us the fruit of Enlightenment, and the vision of the ultimate reality of Nibbana!

“*Sabbe satta sukhita bhavantu*”

May all beings be well and happy!

## A BUDDHIST VIHARE IN LONDON

AT the outbreak of war, the British Maha Bodhi Society, or Buddhist Mission, suspended activities. The Bhikkhus returned to Ceylon, the members were scattered. Soon, however, it became evident that there was need for renewed Buddhist activity. The “Buddhist Lodge” (now the Buddhist Society, London) under its Founder-President, Mr. Christmas Humphreys, was considered too theosophical-Mahayanist in character to satisfy those who longed for the pure Buddha-word without any Western interpretation or foreign admixtures. For a time, an abortive attempt was made to run a study and discussion group, the “Buddhist Circle.” But this again failed to satisfy the existing need for plain, authoritative exposition of the Dhamma. The teaching of the Buddha was treated too much as an academic subject and too little as a guide to conduct and outlook. The Buddhist Circle petered out, and Mr. Humphreys’ Society alone remained.

Those who could not agree with Mr. Humphrey’s views and strong inclination to Zen, felt that it was high time for the pure Dhamma to be expounded to the West by men who were competent to do so, *i.e.*, by *learned* Bhikkhus from the East. (Here, incidentally, the words “pure” and “learned” must be emphasized, for the need was, and still is, for the Dhamma in its purest form as it is found in the Pali Canon, and for truly learned monks to expound it, Bhikkhus deeply versed in the Scriptures and with a good working knowledge of the English language and Western mentality).

To quote from the first Annual Report of the *Buddhist Vihara Society in England*: “On January 18th, 1947, a handful of people gathered together at the instigation of Mrs. A. Rant under the Chairmanship of the Venerable U Thittila to consider the possibilities of founding

a permanent Buddhist Centre in or near London. They were conscious as other Buddhists had been before them, of the great and pressing need for such a Centre comprising not only a Shrine for worship and meditation but also suitable accommodation for members of the Sangha—in other words, a Vihara where Bhikkhus could live in accordance with their monastic discipline. For the propagation of the pure Buddha-Dhamma the presence of well-instructed Bhikkhus is essential, but no Bhikkhus can live in the West in complete accordance with Vinaya rules unless proper provision is made for them. At that memorable meeting on that bitterly cold day in January, 1947, the foundation was laid for the ‘Buddhist Vihara Foundation Committee’ which little more than a year later,

By

D. N. W. de SILVA

on February 12th, 1948, was enlarged into the present Buddhist Vihara Society in England . . .”

Miss G. C. Lounsbery, the President of “Les Amis du Bouddhisme” in Paris, and Miss I. B. Horner, Hon. Secretary of the Pali Text Society, became the new Society’s first Vice-Presidents, and the Venerable Nārada Mahā Thera became its President. Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, Minister of Finance, Ceylon, agreed to act as Hony. Treasurer for the Society in Ceylon.

This is not the place to relate the Society’s activities during the four years it has now been in existence. These can be found in the reports issued at the end of each year, which have been published in *The Buddhist* and other journals. But a few of the salient

points in its history will have to be memorized, as these have a bearing on the present position of Buddhism in England.

One of the first actions of the newly constituted Society was to inform Mr. Christmas Humphreys of its existence and to invite him to accept the Vice-Presidency. Mr. Humphreys declined the invitation.

Contact was also made with the Maha Bodhi Society of Ceylon, and proposals for amalgamation with that body were discussed with Mr. Raja Hewavitane and, by correspondence, with Mr. Devapriya Valisinha. But these negotiations came to naught! In 1949, the Venerable Nārada Mahā Thera came to England for six memorable weeks, during which he gave many lectures to packed audiences. At the Vesak meeting, at which he was present, two resolutions were adopted, namely:—

- (a) “That this public meeting of Buddhists of various nationalities, resident in London, resolve to establish in or near London a Buddhist monastery for the common use of all Buddhists, and an appeal be made to His Majesty’s Government for a grant of suitable facilities and to all representatives of Buddhist countries in England and all sympathizers for their co-operation in the fulfilment of this resolution”;
- (b) “That the Executive Committee of the Buddhist Vihara Society be given powers to co-opt representatives from the various Buddhist countries represented in England and such persons as it may deem desirable to form a Vihara Fund Committee.”

As a result of resolution (a), an appeal was made to H.M. Government, which so far has produced no tangible results. Resolution (b)



resulted in the formation of the Vihara Fund Committee.

Particularly during the first two years, the Buddhist Vihara Society had a great deal of support from individual co-religionists in Ceylon. In England, during the last two years, the Burmese community in London was specially helpful. The Burmese Kappiya Group, which in 1949 established the Venerable U Thittila in a flat at 29, Belgrave Road, which they called the "Sasana Kari Vihara," allows the Buddhist Vihara Society in England to use these premises for its meetings. Here it is that the Venerable U Thittila gives Pāli, Abhidhamma and Meditation classes under the auspices of the B.V.S.I.E., and the Society's reference library of Buddhist books is also housed here. Although the premises are far from ideal, the "Sasana Kari Vihara" has become a centre of pure Buddhist activity, with the generally loved Bhikkhu U Thittila as the focal point around which London's Theravadins are grouped.

But... this is now to come to an end, at least for the time being. The Burmese Kappiya Group is short of funds, and although for some ten months in 1951 financial assistance for the Bhikkhu's maintenance was sent from Burma to the Hon. Secretary of the Buddhist Vihara Society in England, who, in turn, passed it on to the Hon. Treasurer of the Kappiya Group, this support has not yet been resumed in 1952. The Buddhist Vihara Society in England sends the donations given by its members for its "*U Thittila Fund*" to the Kappiya Group, but these contributions are insufficient. On

June 10th, the Venerable U Thittila returned to Burma for a period of six months in order to demonstrate his modern method of teaching Abhidhamma at the University of Rangoon, to study new meditation practices in Burma, which he hopes to introduce in England upon his return to this country, and, above all, in order to arouse fresh interest in the project of establishing a Vihara in London. Owing to the lack of funds, the Kappiya Group is forced to close down the premises at 29, Belgrave Road. The effects of the B.V.S.I.E. will have to be removed and the Society will be compelled to seek another place of meeting. It cannot be denied that this appears to be a sad defeat for those who wish for the propagation of the pure Dhamma. All this is the more regrettable because, in the Bank of Ceylon, there is a large fund lying idle, a fund which had been collected specially for the establishment of a Buddhist Vihara in London by members and sympathizers of the Maha Bodhi Society. The Trustees for this fund refuse to co-operate or pool resources with the B.V.S.I.E., though many of the members of the latter organization are former members of the British Maha Bodhi Society. For at least six months there will be no Bhikkhu in England to preach the Buddha-word, and when the Venerable U. Thittila returns, what will the position be then? Where will he be accommodated? Will the Navayana planned by those who consider the Buddhism of Burma, Ceylon and Siam to be "narrow" and "limited," find a footing in the West?

In the midst of all this confusion of thought, the Buddhist Vihara Society in England will endeavour

to hold aloft the torch of pure Dhamma and to spread the Buddha-Word. But will Ceylon Buddhists not come forward and help? Something *must* be done, and that quickly, if the West is ever to hear the pure word of the Blessed One. The Dhamma was meant not for the East alone, but for all the world. "Go ye, oh Bhikkhus..." said the Lord, and He sent his well-trained, well-disciplined monks in all directions to help those whose eyes were but slightly covered with dust. There are those in the West, who can be helped, from whose eyes only little dust has to be removed, but there is a threat that very shortly not only dust, but sand will be thrown into them. This is the position in England today, and if only the Buddhists of Ceylon, Burma and Siam would co-operate with their Western co-religionists and give financial and material support, the Vihara would become an established fact by the year 2500, and there would be a Sangha in London, competent to teach Dhamma, to spread Metta and Karuna in this troubled Western world. Instead of obstruction and petty personal pride, can there not be a joint effort for this lofty project?

The Venerable U Thittila will go to Burma to appeal for help; this article comes to the Buddhists of Ceylon with the same appeal. May it be successful, may a Temple arise in London, a Temple worthy of the Lord Buddha and His Dhamma and Sangha! Thus may all beings be happy!

(Note by Editor: It may be of interest to our readers to know that in London there are two Mosques and two Hindu temples).

## BUDDHIST THOUGHTS

By S. F. de SILVA

### TREASURE

"IN a deep dug pit a man buries a treasure thinking—in time of need it will be of help to me if I have to pay my debts or when food is hard to get, or when ill luck befalls. Yet all this treasure will conceal in its deep hiding place will not profit the owner, for either it may be stolen from its hiding place or his wits may go wandering and so he forgets where it is laid.

But by charity, by righteousness, by self-restraint and taming of the self—there is a treasure well laid for man or for woman. It is a treasure which robbers cannot steal—let a wise man do good deeds—this is the treasure that follows after one."

These words of the Blessed one should make us pause and reflect on what we shall begin this week

and perhaps continue every week till the end of our days. We use all our powers, all our strength of mind and body in laying up for ourselves *one* kind of treasure the treasure that thieves can steal and rust can corrupt. I do not suggest that such treasure is useless—it is necessary for our daily life and for those who depend on us. But this kind of treasure is *not* enough. It is the other kind of



treasure not tangible or visible, but ever so much more valuable than all things visible and tangible, that we *must* if we are wise, lay by. In our Worldly wisdom we accumulate treasure which will benefit us only in this world-life—but the more lasting treasure which will be with us and go with us and be our solace and support when we most need them, we fail to gather. Such a treasure, says the Blessed One, is gained by *Charity*, by *self-restraint* and by *taming of the self*. We practice an external form of Charity when we give of our plenty to the poor, very often because they are unfortunate. But 'giving' should clean us too—for giving is good if there is goodwill in the heart. But harder still is self-restraint and the taming of the self. Even these we can achieve if we only try. Today we face a world calamity. The finest minds have devoted their powers to conquer, as they proudly claim, Nature but as the two world wars have shown, they have failed to conquer themselves. We have achieved a mastery of the technique of bending Nature to our uses, but we have failed in the technique of shaping ourselves. The fletchers of the modern world have shaped all manner of arrows—arrows as swift as thought, but they have failed to shape themselves. Here lies the tragedy of life today both individual and collective. If we devote a fraction of the time we spend in shaping the world to our needs, to the shaping of ourselves, we shall have developed a power ten times more powerful than the Atom bomb, namely the power of Goodwill which will flow to all creatures from a heart that is good.

Let us therefore make it our effort this day to extend in some measure some degree of goodwill to those who are first near to us. And let this goodwill radiate out to ever widening circles of beings around, above and below.

"Auspicious, festive, happy  
blessed dawn  
Fair day, glad time is that  
when alms are given  
To worthy ones, when goodly acts,  
words Thoughts,  
Right aspirations, bring auspicious  
gain  
To those that practise them  
happy are they  
That win such gain and prosperous  
in the way.  
So be ye also prosperous in the  
way,  
Free from all disease and happy  
with your kin."

#### THE TONGUE

Now, housefathers, said the Blessed One. What are the four unrighteous practices in speech?

"In this matter, a man is a *liar*, or he is a *backbiter*. What he gathers here he spreads abroad to cause disruption there. Thus he is a breaker up of fellowship, no reconciler of those at strife, finds pleasure and delight in quarrels, revels thereon and utters words inciting to quarrels. Or else he is one of *harsh* speech. His words are insolent and rude, bitter to others or else he is a *babblers*, speaking out of season, of things non-existent and irrelevant. He is a speaker of things unrighteous and unrestrained. Such housefathers are the four unrighteous practices in speech."

Society is greatly afflicted by these four types. They harm themselves and harm others. At some-time or other we may have been one or more of these types. We may have borne false witness, spoken ill of others behind their backs, or else in anger or insolence we may have been rude and harsh of speech, and finally the itch of talk has led us to babble and cause hurt to others. The tongue can be our bitter enemy and however much we have resolved to do well, we may have failed. But let this not deter us in our struggle against this cruel foe. We may fail a hundred times we can yet conquer. "We will not shrink back but will struggle on" said the Blessed One. "Those who are willing to train will attain the goal." So the struggle must be kept on and just as a swimmer who struggles on shorewards will, after toil feel the shallows and then the ground under his feet and so to final safety, we too, if we are earnest and will keep up the fight, shall find the ascent becoming easier and easier until triumph comes

to us. "Faith is best for us mortals"—faith in the Blessed One, faith in our own efforts, and faith in the progress on the Way.

The evils caused by misuse of the tongue are both individual and social. The liar injures himself because speaking the untruth makes him day by day feeble in character. It saps his moral strength because the fear that the lie may be discovered leads to an inner conflict. One lie leads to another in his efforts to cover up the first and the strength of one's character is weakened. A person becomes secretive and seeks refuge from the discovery of the lie uttered and his moral nature becomes like a haunted creature seeking refuge now here and now there. The stability and confidence that comes of truth-speaking will never be his, nor will he ever gain that inner calm and peace without which life may be a nightmare. The liar is also an anti-social person because he makes a stable society impossible. He is like venom injected into a body causing corruption within and in the end, ruin falls on all. The liar is not a true citizen—whether of the simplest society namely, the family or the larger ones of his kith and kin, his country and the world at large. As the Blessed One declared, when such a man goes to a court of justice or an assembly or goes amidst his relatives or the folk or royal ministers, the liar is a disintegrating, disruptive force. Even so are the backbiters. Out of the abundance of his evil he speaks evil and rejoices in it, forgetting the fact that *he* is sowing a harvest of folly himself. He is daily undermining his own character bringing pain and sorrow on himself. Like the liar, the backbiter is no citizen—he is like a cancer in his body politic and an enemy to himself and to others.

"They who talk angrily, full of wrath and pride carp at each others failings when they meet, and take delight in blame and finding fault and in their rival's fall. But Ariyans will never follow practices like these."

"But wisely speaks fair speech, welcomes the kindly word, rejects the cruel, knows no resentment, does not carp at faults. Does not retort nor crush his rival down—thus Ariyans speak, such is the Ariyan talk. And knowing this the wise should humbly speak."



THESE are the volumes, so far published, of the large collection of Buddhist Manuscripts found in the region of Gilgit in

the Kashmir State in 1931. As observed by Dr. Nalinaksha Dutt, the learned editor of the volumes, these unique MSS were written in the 5th or 6th century of the Christian era; and, as such, they are some of the earliest so far discovered in India.

Buddhism was introduced in Kashmir in the days of Asoka, sometime in the third century before the Christian era; and the earliest texts of the Mahayana Sanskrit canon, to a section of which the Gilgit MSS belong, were in all probability composed in Kashmir itself; so that what we get in these 5th or 6th MSS are, in all likelihood, some later variants, perhaps the actual originals, of the earliest Sanskrit compositions made in Kashmir.

The Sanskrit of the texts as preserved in the Gilgit MSS—like the Sanskrit of several other canonical Mahayana texts—is rather peculiar; in many instances it is un-Paninian, besides being mixed up with various Prakrit dialectical forms. This would seem strange, specially in view of the fact that Kashmir had been so closely associated, from early times, with the neighbouring Gandhara, which was the home of Panini. (This was Shalatura, now the village Laur, where there is still an inscription of Asoka cut into the living rock).

This apparently strange linguistic phenomenon requires an explanation. Such an explanation has no doubt been attempted in one of the learned introductions to the volumes, but perhaps the problem requires still further elucidation.

There are other problems, too, such as racial, historical, religious, philosophical.

One racial problem is concerning the 'Nagas,' who were most certainly not 'serpents' but were a people and a predominant element in the population of Kashmir when Buddhism entered the valley and for long centuries previously.

There is the old legend, noticed in the excellent introduction to the first volume of the published Gilgit MSS, to the effect that it was the Nagas who were the first in Kashmir to accept the teachings of the

# THE GILGIT MANUSCRIPTS

PUBLISHED BY THE RESEARCH DEPARTMENT  
OF THE KASHMIR GOVERNMENT

Buddha, brought to them by the zealous missionary Majjhantika. This is no doubt about the significance of the legend, despite the miraculous element in it. There is nothing strange in this: in early Buddhist literature there are other references to Nagas as paying homage to the Buddha.

In so far as Kashmir itself is concerned, one of the earliest and greatest followers of the Buddha was Nagarjuna, that is Naga-Arjuna, the famous man of science. He was most likely a 'Naga' by race, as the first part of his name suggests; according to some scholars Nagarjuna lived much earlier than generally believed.

Similarly, another and a later Buddhacharya, Naga-Bodhi, mentioned in the Trika tradition, must have been a Naga by race.

Now, Naga-Arjuna is always referred to as a 'Siddha,' and so is Naga-Bodhi. Indeed 'Nagas' and 'Siddhas' are often associated together in ancient Indian tradition. This undoubtedly means that, besides Naga-Arjuna and Naga-Bodhi, there were many other Siddhas among the Naga people,—the Siddhas of whom Kapila, the reputed founder of the Sankhya system, was, as indicated in the Bhagavad Gita, the greatest; equally as Kapila was, in all likelihood, a Naga by race; and that is why in the tradition of the Purana, he is represented as practising Tapasya in Naga-loka.

This should be evident also from Kapila's close association with Patanjali, who was unquestionably a Naga. This is the only meaning of the legend that Patanjali was the Shesha Naga incarnated, and composed not only the Yoga Sutras, the Mahabhashya on Panini and a treatise on medicine, but also the Paramarthasara, which is such a beautiful synthesis of the Sankhya and the Vedanta.

All this means that not only were there many 'Siddhas'—that is masters of science, Yoga-concentration and consequent Siddhis, or psycho-spiritual powers,—among the Nagas but the Nagas generally were a highly intelligent people and much given to the cultivation of knowledge. [www.jaavananam.org](http://www.jaavananam.org)

This would account for Taxila having been such a famous seat of learning from quite early times. For Taxila must have been a city

of the Nagas, like the neighbouring country of Kashmir, which had a large Naga population. Despite the Buddhist Jataka interpretation—which is after all legendary—of the name Taxila, (or as it is in Pali, Takka-sila, rather Takkasira), there is truth in the Mahabharata legend of the Naga Takshaka, who was of course a human being, and his connection with Takshaka-Sila, which is the Sanskrit form of the name Taxila. 'Takshaka' was the name of not only the leader of the Nagas, as we are told in the Mahabharata story, but very likely of a whole tribe or section of the Nagas which are referred to in the Digha Nikaya (Vol. II, p. 250), and it is these Nagas who formed the main population of Taxila; and being given to learning and science and Yoga, they made their city the seat of a university, with many Siddhas in their community.

Taxila was thus the cultural centre of the whole of the Gandhara country, with which Kashmir was so closely allied.

In these circumstances it is not at all unlikely that the Gandharian Panini—residing in Shalatura, not very far from Taxila—was also a Naga; equally as Patanjali, author on the great commentary on Panini's own work, was a Naga.

It is in Gandhara again that, in an earlier age, the Chhandogya Upanishad—at least the section of it expounding the famous doctrine of 'Tat-tvam-asi' and mentioning Gandhara therein—was composed.

In our Gilgit Manuscripts, too, we are told how Jivaka Kumara-bhrita had to travel all the way from Rajagriha in distant Magadha to Taxila to learn how to perform a very difficult operation of the brain by opening the skull.

All this shows that Gandhara had been a land of highest possible thought and science from very early times; and this no doubt because its population consisted predominantly of the Nagas.

It is also quite possible that Naga-Sena who held those brilliant conversations on the Buddha's teachings with King Milinda in or near the latter's capital city,



Sagala, somewhere in the neighbourhood of Gandhara or in Gandhara itself, was a Naga by race.

It is thus that the Nagas of Kashmir, too, being neighbours and kins of the Nagas of Gandhara and equally intelligent as the latter so readily could and did accept the teachings of Buddha—the teachings, which, as the Buddha himself emphasises so many times, are most difficult to comprehend for any but the truly learned (*nipuna, dur-anubodha, pandita-vedaniya*) so much so that he at first refused to preach his Dharma altogether, since there would be so few, if any at all, who could comprehend it.

How difficult the teachings are will appear at once from a consideration of the two 'theses' which constitute the very foundation of his Dharma, as the Buddha himself declares.

It is by these that the Buddha would rather be judged, and not by his ethical code which, however lofty and however indispensable, is only the first step in his discipline, and so is characterised by him as 'just inferior teaching' (*ora-mattakam*: *Brahmajata Sutta*).

One 'thesis' (Pali 'thana,' Sanskrit 'sthana') is the Pratītya-Samutpāda. This is the doctrine that the whole range of experience affecting us as happiness or misery,—that is, the whole universe,—is nothing but a ceaseless succession,

one after the other, of 'Pratyayas,' that is to say, firm notions, convictions. Even that which appears as the most solid and hardest of things is only a Pratyaya; it is the Pratyaya of 'Nāma-Rūpa,' Name-and-Form, Concept-and-Percept. And it succeeds, follows unerringly, the Pratyaya of a personal consciousness, that is to say, the consciousness of, and as, a particular 'Cgo,' (*Vijñāna, Ahankāra*).

None but a highly intelligent and properly instructed person can possibly appreciate this.

And, if Pratītya-Samutpāda is so difficult of comprehension, the other 'thesis,' which is Nirvana, is far more difficult. A still greater misunderstanding has prevailed and still prevails about Nirvana even among the learned.

And yet both these 'theses' were, as seems evident, quite readily understood and accepted by the Nagas of Kashmir because, no doubt, of the high level of intelligence prevailing generally among them; and because there were so many 'Siddhas' in their midst.

This is also the reason why the Mahayana form of Buddhism, prevailing in Kashmir, developed such a profound philosophy.

Not only did the ancient Nagas of Kashmir readily understand and appreciate the very difficult teachings of the Buddha, but they have left as a most valuable legacy

both the fundamental doctrines,—Pratītya-Samutpāda and Nirvāna—of the Buddha to the teachers and followers of the shaivaistic Trika.

In the Trika, Pratītya-Samutpāda appears as the doctrine of Unmeshā, and Nirvāna as Parama Shiva, whose state is spoken of not only as the most supremely general consciousness (*Chaitanya*)—corresponding to what the Buddha speaks of as the consciousness which is realised in Nirvāna and is described by the Buddha as consciousness without a perceptible sign, infinite, with access everywhere. (In Pali, *Vijñānam anidassanam anantam sabbatopaham*)—but also as *Maha-Shūnya*, Mighty Emptiness, being 'empty' absolutely of all objective reference and content, and yet capable of being 'hood-winked,' with the result that nothing can be kept hidden from it, as the Buddha also graphically illustrates (in the story of Baka Brahma, who, with all his power to conceal himself, could not keep himself away from the all-searching gaze which is the consciousness of one who has realised Nirvāna. (See *Majjhima Nikaya, Brahma-nimantanika Sutta*).

This is how, as may also be noted here, there is such an intimate connection between, on the one hand, the original teachings of the Buddha, and, on the other, what come to be revived later as the *Trika* in Kashmir.

## UNDERSTANDING HUMAN WEAKNESS

By Ven. SHANTI BHADRA

PATĀCĀRA was the daughter of a millionaire in Savatthi. Being the only child, she was brought up in the lap of luxury. As she grew up a kind of restlessness—a mental "acedia" which is a disease peculiar to the rich and to those without intellectual interests—began to wear her away. Her plumpness and cheer gradually departed from her. She was like a trapped bird yearning for the freedom and sweet air outside her castle. She longed for love and companionship as much as she despised the jealous parental care and the round of mechanical amusements.

Her father could not understand the needs and wishes of the growing girl; he could not trace the cause of her melancholy disposition. Thinking as many foolish rich men think that wealth alone could bring comfort and happiness, he surrounded her with all the comforts that wealth could command, but with all his contrivances the girl never regained her health and cheer. It was clearly manifest that her body and mind were daily wasting away.

One early morning the father was disagreeably surprised to find his loving daughter had eloped

with the page-boy. The trust and love he had for his daughter melted away. It dawned upon his slow understanding that restrictions and things that money could buy cannot by themselves discipline the mind and control the expanding desires of youth. He gave her up for lost and pined away in solitude.

Patācāra and her companion went to a remote country and built up a house and family. Having been brought up in cosy comfort she found her day to day work for a living a drudgery, rather hard and painful, but as time rolled on she got accustomed to it



and accommodated herself comfortably to the new mode of life. In a few years time she was the mother of two young ones. She was now in the rosiest period of life. Her home was a very happy one with children and an ever-loving husband, but earthly happiness is fleeting and is often-times the precursor of sorrow.

Living, as she did, in the midst of a happy life, one day she found herself in the presence of death, for her dear husband had been struck dead by a venomous snake. She was dazed, for death was a new experience to her. Death, though a constant visitor to every home, is easily and conveniently forgotten by all Putthujjanas (worldlings) until it actually makes its appearance. When it does appear it has its sorrows and slings. After a few days she recovered from the shock and looked about her to start life anew.

Her thoughts naturally went back to the comforts of her old home and her loving father. Knowing that her parents would readily forgive her past mistakes she bent her steps towards the home of

her childhood with one child in her arms and the other trotting behind. It was a rainy day and the journey was made doubly difficult as many rivers in spate had to be crossed, while crossing the river Achiravati a strong current swept her away with the children. With great effort she managed to save her life and found herself all alone, thoroughly spent and crest fallen, on the bank of the river.

Now she continued her journey alone weighed down with deep sorrow almost bordering on madness. Life had become to her a weariness, a burden. When she had entered the precincts of the city of Savatthi, she learnt that the storm in the previous night had hit her old home into smithereens and had killed her parents. The news drove her completely insane. She ran wild through the streets of Savatthi, while the people hissed, hooted and stoned her. She made her way to Jetavanaramaya where Lord Buddha was preaching to a large gathering. On seeing her there was some commotion among the people, but the Lord Buddha quietened them and brought back Patācāra to her senses. It was a happy

accident that she came to the very spot where she met with love, sympathy and understanding. Finding no more attractions for a worldly life she was admitted into the Order of Nuns and before long became an Arahāt.

In one of the sermons Lord Buddha has pointed out that all worldlings are insane—"Sabbe putthujjana ummattaka." If we go through a day with calm and serenity and try to understand the hearts of men and women we meet it will clearly disclose to us that we are all in some stage of lunacy. All are tossing about restlessly eating their hearts out in striving to achieve something. Constant quarrels and bickerings among men, in society and nations are signs that all is not well within us. Living, as we do, in such a whirlpool and on a revolution it is with love and understanding as taught by the Lord Buddha that we could solve our day to day problems; it is with alert wakefulness alone that we could hope to attain the first stage on the path—Sotapanna—and thus become a true Buddhist and a true son of the Lord Buddha.

## THE ETHICAL TRIO

By JAYANANDA RATNAYAKE

**S**ILA—morality or Right Behaviour comes in the second group component of the Eight-fold Path. This, in turn, is divided into Right Speech, Action and Livelihood. This Ethical Trio has particular significance in its universality of application to all of us—to the monk and the householder—to the Teacher and to the pupil. In teaching this the real motive for doing "good" and shunning "evil" is certainly not the procuring of happiness and material possessions for self but instead it is the wish, and aspiration to contribute nothing to the stream of cause and effect which will be liable to breed unhappiness and misery. It should be compassion and fellow-feeling and not selfish, self-regard that should motivate such action.

There have been instances when ill-will, hatred and envy have caused even responsible people to publicly toss slander at each other. Do we realize what almost irreparable damage this does to the minds of our people? Toleration is an essen-

tial constituent of any civilized society. It is a symptom of understanding self-possession and power. To be tolerant is to be humane. To be intolerant is to confess a weak and trivial spirit. Intolerance has crowded the earth with carnage. The desire to regulate other peoples' lives by our own tastes and opinions—to dominate their personalities and individualities is dastardly and, I think, a freak outcome of a complex of possessiveness, fear, jealousy and impudence. To persuade others of one's own views is right: to penalise them if they cannot agree is a crime. We do not want fanatics. We have seen what dangers are wrought on humanity by such people. The great means to reduce fanatics is not to incite them but to submit that dread disease of the mind to the calm treatment of reason. Reason suppresses discord and irreconcilable hatreds and strengthens virtue. Should this be a time of strife and chaos or should we use our reason to convert this into an epoch of public and individual

tranquillity. It is in the interest of the State and the people. Humanity demands it. Politics need not fear it.

If we analyse ourselves without hypocrisy we will often find that we speak ill of others as a cover against our own short-comings. We pretend to be shocked at the very ill-actions we ourselves are guilty of. By this we will only succeed in building up our own store of wrong action in a vicious circle.

Even when others abuse and insult us why do we react in exactly the same low way as those who abuse us? Do we not remember how the Lord Buddha always acted with loving kindness every time he was insulted? If what people accuse us of is true then what we should do is to reform and correct ourselves rather than get angry and re-abuse. What they say is not true, then who cares? Only a cheap and valueless pride will be hurt.

The master has repeatedly said "As I am so are these"—This



remarkable recognition in thought and deed that others are as oneself is at the bottom of all Buddhist morality.

When we refrain from lying, slander, frivolous speech, and practice the kind sensible and truthful word we will be progressing steadily along the Sacred Path and will be making ourselves and all those who come in contact with us happy and cheerful.

#### RIGHT ACTION

The inculcation of harmlessness and humaneness in all action—of Body or Mind, is a fundamental quality of the Teaching. This harmlessness is to include the whole gamut of existence—not the Brotherhood of man alone but all that lives. In our multifarious existence where each member seeks eagerly to appropriate for his own selfish ends before another does so such a fundamental quality of the Teaching will of course be very difficult to be put into practice. But does that mean "Never mind the Teaching?" Even if we could not live up to it in its entirety as followers of the Buddha we have to narrow inevitable infringement to the closest possible limits. *Samma Kammanta* or Right Action has been viewed from this stand point and it amounts to living up to the Five Precepts as far as a layman at least is concerned. These are not bogies to frighten childish minds nor are they threats—they are only reasonable recommendations fashioned out of the experience of the Buddha and made to grow up minds. By keeping to these the Master has demonstrated that we would avoid adding any more to the already too great morass of pain in the world.

The First Precept is that we should refrain from taking the life of any living creature—whatever position the creature occupies in the scale of evolution.

I think this is a very decisive principle if we strive to live up to it especially in our suspicion-ridden era of preparation for and talk of War. We have been fortunate that this lovely little Lanka was not subject to the horrors of last war but even here we saw the damage it did to our people. We saw the fear, the panic, the uncertainty, the soaring prices. But in those unfortunate lands where man went out to kill his fellow beings with utter callousness we saw the real damage. We saw the atom bomb blowing up Hiroshima and tens of

thousands of human beings—all indiscriminately blasted out of existence leaving behind a barren desert of tumbled buildings and ashes and irreparably broken hearts and minds. We were aghast at the inhuman cruelties at Belsen Horror Camp and we reminded ourselves that when man was animal he was worse than an animal. And after all this unconditional surrender—and what did we see? Hordes of soldiery emotionally repressed and thwarted through the war suddenly let loose on the victim-countries and very soon poverty and disease were stalking around with begging palm—not human beings anymore but bundles of bones in withered bags of skin and rag. Yes we saw the Venereal Disease curve soaring shy-high. We saw the malnutrition and Tuberculosis curves follow close and overtake it—and this my brothers and sisters—the glorious reward of war. Why is it that glancing through History we have not been able to realize that we cannot overcome evil with evil but with good? Why is it that people who still remember the scars and wounds—with the memory of blood clinging on them like dried sealing wax—still allow themselves to be led by the nose into further wars? We who observe the First Precept have to stand firm and say *no* when it comes to killing and injuring fellow beings—whatever be the path we trod. There are people all over the world of various faiths who have joined refusing to do anything with war or re-armament. We on our own could do our bit. If we have the backbone—the religious conviction, no government—no group of industrialists—no prejudiced newspapers could lead us to war and murder. No doubt we may be persecuted but in persevering

in spite of this in what the Lord Buddha has taught us to be the Truth we will strengthen our wills and our minds in our struggle against all forms of suffering.

We Buddhists do not stop at this. Our practice of compassion extends beyond the human being. One is ashamed to know that several professed Buddhists in the name of "sport" go out to hunt and slay animals. Perhaps they do so to gain the valueless praise of their comrades by showing themselves to be broadminded and devoid of narrow religious principles. No body but the unworthy will praise that. Surely we all have our urge for self-preservation and will do our best even go mad in an attempt to prolong for a moment this life of ours when the time of departure comes. We all shun pain and suffering. Why then is it that we fail to recognize the same urge in other forms of life? How can we humans with our far superior intellect deny these lesser brothers the life which is as dear to them as to us?

In a Society that keeps this Precept human beings would be really humane without artificial and invidious bars or limits being placed to the scope of their fellow feeling and humanity—and who knows—following this breaking down of Man's unhappy reputation among his lower brothers as being the most ruthless on the surface of the earth, what joyful relationships may arise not only between ourselves but also between us and our humbler brothers on the scale of evolution. Instances have not been too uncommon when hermits have lived in the wilds in perfect harmony even with the most ferocious of the beasts that roar in them.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor,  
*Buddhist*,  
Colombo.

Dear Sir,

I shall be much obliged if you will kindly publish the enclosed copy of letter received from the Secretary to the President of India for the information of the Buddhist public.

Thanking you.

Yours faithfully,

General Secretary,

Maha Bodhi Society of India.

Digitized by Noolaham Foundation.  
14th June, 1952.  
noolaham.org | aavanaham.org

*Copy of letter referred to*

Rashtrapati Bhawan,  
New Delhi. 9th June, 1952.

Dear Sir,

The President has asked me to inform you with reference to your letter of the 31st May, 1952, that the question of the management of the Buddha Gaya Temple is still under active consideration of the Bihar Government.

Yours sincerely,

D. N. MITRA,

*Secretary to the President of India*

The General Secretary,  
Maha Bodhi Society of India,  
4A, Bankim Chatterjee Street,  
Calcutta, 12.



# COLOMBO Y.M.B.A. NEWS

## ENGLISH LITERARY ACTIVITIES BRANCH

### LITERARY

The following magazines are available for reference from the Library clerk:—

"The Middle Way"—Journal of the Buddhist Society, London; "Mahabodhi"—Journal of the Maha-Bodhi Society, India; "Golden Lotus"—An American Buddhist Monthly; "Advent"—Journal of Sri Aurobindo Ashram Pondicherry; "Readers Digest"; "World Digest"; "Geographical Magazine"; "Scientific American"; "World Review"; "Health and Strength"; "Vigour"; "New Lanka Quarterly"; "Ceylon Economist"; 14. "Ceylon Historical Journal"; "Loris";—Journal of the Ceylon Society of Wild Life.

The following Journals and Magazines were added last month:—

"Harijan"—Founded by Mahatma Gandhi; "Loris"; "Ceylon Economist."

### LECTURES

#### "An Evening with Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy"

An evening with Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy will be presented on the 22nd August, at 5.30 p.m., with Symposium, when Mr. Jayantha Padmanabha (Chairman) Editor, "Daily News," Mr. D. B. Dhanapala, Manager, "Lankadipa," Mr. Martin Wickremasinghe, well-known writer and Mr. S. Durai Rajasingham of Malaya will

contribute papers on different aspects of the late Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy's Life and Works.

#### "THE MESSAGE OF TAGORE"

Mahakavi Rabindranath Tagore will be remembered on August 8th, when Mr. Devar Suryasena will deliver a talk on "The Message of Tagore," at 6 p.m.

#### "AUGUST LECTURE OF THE MONTH"

The third lecture in this series will be delivered by O. H. de A. Wijesekere, M.A., Ph.D., Professor of Sanskrit, University of Ceylon, on August 20th, at 6 p.m.

### NEW MEMBERS

16.6.52 : D. M. S. Karunaratne, 60/1, Cotta Road, Borella; Mudaliyar P. Ranasinghe, "Taksala," Gotami Road, Borella; K. S. S. Karunatileke, 44, Horton Place, Colombo.

23.6.52 : R. A. Vairamuttu, "Nazareth," Gampaha; S. S. Segaram, No. 5, First Lane, Gotham Road, Borella.

8.7.52 : C. de Vas Gunasekera, National Savings Dept., Colombo 7; F. E. Corteling, 7/1, Galpotta Road, Nawala, Rajagiriya; A. Sothinathan, C/o J. J. R. Ambrose, Batalande, Ragama; K. B. Wickremasinghe, 23, Stag Place, Timbiri-gasyaya, Colombo 5.

14.7.52 : Marcandan Vipulanathan, 26, Kamata Watte Road, Rajagiriya; A. M. J. Pragnaratne, Kaluvairippuwa (West), Katana; A. P. E. Galappatti,

41, Mt. Mary Road, Maradana; R. Vandebona, Kahawa, Telwatte.

21.7.52 : K. T. Perera, 10/11, Distillery Road, Kalutara; A. A. D. Perera, 92/2, Campbell Place, Maradana; N. C. Vitarana, 41, Campbell Place, Colombo 10; D. S. H. Colonne, 206, Old Kolonnawa Road, Colombo 9; Dr. A. Wijesinghe, Maternity Hospital, Castle Street, Colombo; H. M. C. Dissanayake, "The Tower," 61, Baseline Road, Colombo; T. B. Amunugama, Rikillagaskada; and D. S. Obeyesekere, "Lauries Cottage," 15, Lauries Road, Colombo 4 (Life Member).

### RESIGNATIONS

D. Kulasekera and S. F. Casie Chetty.

### FILM SHOWS

Under the auspices of the Canadian Government Trade Commissioner, the following films were shown, at the Association Hall on 20th June, 1952:—Bronco Busters, Birds of the Seashore; Ski in the Valley of the Saints; A City Sings; Barbara Ann Scott; Men of Lunenburg; Winter Carnival; Red runs the Fraser; and Jasper National Park.

The Indian High Commissioner in Ceylon has kindly consented to give a Film Show on the 15th August at 6 p.m.

### OBITUARY NOTICE

We record with regret the deaths of Messrs. P. D. S. Jayasekera and D. D. Ranawaka.

## NEWS AND NOTES

### DHARMACHAKKA DAY AT SARNATH (ISIPATANA)

THE Dhammachakka Pavattana day was observed at Isipatana Mula-gandhakuti Mahavihara, on the 7th July, 1952, with great enthusiasm. At 4.30 p.m. a public meeting was held in the temple. In the unavoidable absence of Acharya Narendra Deva, the Vice-Chancellor of the Banaras Hindu University, Dr. V. S. Agrawalla, Professor of Indian Art and Archaeology, Banaras Hindu University was proposed to the Chair. Then "Mangala song" was sung by the students of the Mahabodhi Primary School. Panchasila was administered by Ven'ble M. Sangharatana Thera. After this the Dhammachakka Pavattana Sutta was sung by the Sangha. First speaker was Rev. H. Saddhatissa Thera, who was followed by Bhikkhu K. Dharmarakhita, Prof. Jagannath Upadyaya of Queen's College, Banaras; Sri A. C. Banerji, Curator, Sarnath Museum, Prof. Sri Dharmdranath Shastri, Sri Godbole of Nagpur Buddhist Society. Then the President closed the proceedings after "Mangal Charana" by the assembled Sangha. The president's speech was remarkable for lucidity of thought and clarity of expression. He started by giving a historical background of the origins of Buddhism, its fundamental tenets, and how they were consistent with the contemporary conditions, Lord Buddha's chivalrous treatment of other religions, the significance and meaning of the four great truths, eightfold path, Abhidhamma Philosophy, and symbolism of

the four *Mudras* found on images of Lord Buddha and by ample quotations from the *Upanishads* and *Gita* supported the extreme humanism of his teachings. In the evening the Vihara was illuminated, the Bhikkhus chanted the Dhammachakka Pavattana Sutta, and vassa was observed. Both the meeting and all the functions were extremely successful.

### DHARMACAKRA FESTIVAL

#### Anniversary of Lord Buddha's First Sermon

DHARMACAKRA festival, in commemoration of the first sermon of Lord Buddha, was celebrated at Dharmarajika Vihara, Calcutta, on the 6th and the 7th of July. The programme of the first day included worship, paritta and sermons. On the second day a public meeting was held in the Maha Bodhi hall with U. Nyun, Consul for Burma in Calcutta, in the chair.

The proceedings of the meeting started at 6.30 p.m., with the administration of the five precepts by Ven. N. Jinaratana. Sri J. C. Ghose, explaining the great significance of the occasion, welcomed the guests. The following speakers addressed the gathering:—Bhikkhu Silabhadra, Bhikkhu Ananda Kausalyayana, Bhikkhu U. Dhammaratana and Pandit Vishwanath Shastri.

Bhikkhu Silabhadra gave a life sketch of the Lord Buddha and explained his fundamental teachings. He appealed to the audience to be worthy of the glorious heritage of India. In the course of his speech Bhikkhu Ananda Kausalyayana explained the inner significance of the

Dharmacakra, the wheel of law, which has been adopted as the national emblem of free India. It is symbolical of the dynamical nature of the path of righteousness. Referring to the present state of the society, he said that it should not be an excuse for any individual for his own lapses. After all, society is composed of individuals. So the quality of the society depends upon the quality of the individuals. Without individual effort nothing can be achieved and he gave the supreme example of the Buddha. Bhikkhu U. Dhammaratana observed that with the first sermon the Buddha laid the foundation of a great movement that was to change the course of human history. It let loose the forces of liberation in many directions. It brought freedom for man from social, intellectual and spiritual fetters. In consideration of this fact the Buddha had characterised his doctrine as the doctrine of emancipation. Pandit Vishwanath Shastri explained the significance of *triratna*—the three jewels. In course of his Presidential remarks U. Nyun referred to the importance of the occasion and how it was celebrated in his own country. He pointed out that those who took a one-sided view of Buddhism called it a pessimistic doctrine. On the contrary it was a realistic doctrine based on facts and open to all for verification. He also emphasised on the necessity of cultivating *maitri*—the universal love as taught by the Buddha. Mr. B. R. Barua gave the vote of thanks. The meeting closed with devotional songs by students of Surajmull Jalan Balika Vidyalyaya and Miss Santana Barua.



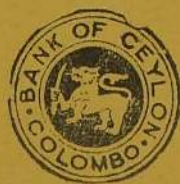
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