



THE BUDDHIST

“*Sila Paññāto Jayam*”

Editor : G. P. MALALASEKERA,
M.A., Ph.D., D.Litt.

Assistant: D. N. W. de SILVA

Vol. XX.

JULY, 1949

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

No. 3

THE MAJJHIMA PATIPADA—THE MIDDLE WAY

UNCERTAINTY seems to be the only conclusion that follows from a strict and close review of modern philosophic systems.

Rarely do the fundamental principles of two systems of philosophy agree, in all respects. One philosophy argues for a state of finitude, and another for a state of infinitude; one for a state of individuality, the other for universality; one for freedom, the other for law; one bases itself on the noumenon, the other on the phenomenon, and so on; while last, but by no means least, the skeptic flourishes his standard with the challenging device 'Nothing' in the face of all.

DIVERSITY OF THOUGHT

This state of contradiction in the realm of human thought is one which, though considered natural, nevertheless gives rise to much perplexity and confusion. Since it would be useful and interesting to seek an explanation for this diversity of thought an attempt is made in this short article to discuss some aspects of the question, and if it should serve in the manner of a compass to men lost in a trackless wilderness, it would have served its purpose. 'So many men, as many opinions,' is an oft-quoted Pali text. But why this generalization should be accepted without question is not so obvious. It seems strange that human beings who are so much alike physically should be so different mentally. Moreover, it must be conceded that all human beings owe their origin to a common father and mother, and this is another factor for similarity and not diversity. From the very fact of our common human nature, constantly struggling against hunger and thirst, heat and cold, disease and death, there is, however, sufficient agreement among us as not to make our hopes for a united humanity living in peace and accord entirely empty. In fact it is not the similarities which should surprise us, but the differences.

The problem confronting us is the way to resolve these differences, and if

we can do that successfully humanity will not continue to be divided against itself. The way is very involved and beset with many side-issues which call for individual attention, but there is one all-important pivot on which the whole question is hinged; and that is Truth. There can be no disagreement about that which is true, and so if we succeed in finding out the truth we would have succeeded in arriving at agreement. It is for this reason that

By

N. WICKREMESINGHE,

“*Double Jak,*” *Hunnasgiriya.*

among the several methods devised by philosophers for this purpose the Scientific Method of approach is to be preferred to all others. (Cf. Spinoza, p. 73 below)*.

All philosophers, with the exception of the Buddha and perhaps a few others, consider their philosophies incomplete unless they contain an answer to the enigma of the beginning and end of things. In the attempt to find this—an answer which is of little value in helping man to disentangle himself from the tangle of suffering in which he is entangled—much of his effort is centered, and one might say, wasted. The philosopher, in his conceit, is apt to forget that he is an ordinary mortal, subject to the limitations of all such mortals, and so lacking the equipment essential for solving the problem, he cheats himself with the delusion that he has found a satisfactory answer. This answer not being true he becomes mentally blind, and is unable to see in their proper perspective the connecting links between the beginning and the end.

Such being the case it is not surprising to find most philosophies are of little

help in solving the problem of human suffering. Hence it is no wonder that there is an impasse in the speculative as well as practical fields of thought and action. This impasse would not be there but for an all-pervading delusion by which man is fooled. Remove the delusion and the dilemma will disappear. But this delusion must and can be removed only by oneself—teachers can only shew the way. Therefore, it has to be sadly admitted that for the majority of human beings life will be for many ages a weary and unavailing struggle with sorrow, until with the accumulated experience of many lives they rid themselves of the delusion. Of recent years a man called Marx has been credited with the formulation of a system capable of practical application over an unlimited area for the removal of human suffering, but by the test of experience it will be demonstrated in the end that there are no short cuts to this goal.

ALL HAVE DOUBTS

All thinking beings are bound to be assailed by doubts, or rather, assailing doubts are bound to set all beings capable of thought thinking. This is in the nature of things. Doubts may be compared to the faggots that is food for the fire by which the crude ore which is man is calcined and purified. One by one the faggots of doubt in maintaining the rising heat are burnt out, and as the last faggot is consumed the heat becomes incandescent, and the being at last attains that state of self-enlightenment which has no extinguishing. But here it must be remembered that before a man is able to burn up this wood of doubt he must furnish himself with certain pre-requisites. The man who would do this must make of this human fabric a suitable oven for carrying out satisfactorily this purifying process. It is here that the teaching of the Buddha—his doctrine of the Majjhima Patipada (the middle way)—is of real help to humanity. It explains the mode by which man can convert himself into the desired oven of purification.

* In so far as a thing is in harmony with our nature, it is necessarily good.

Men can differ in nature, in so far as they are assailed by those emotions, which are passions,* or passive states;

and to this extent one and the same man is variable and inconstant.

In so far as men are assailed by emotions which are passions, they can be contrary to one another.
In so far as men live in obedience to

reason, do they always necessarily agree in nature.

The highest good of those who follow virtue is common to all, and therefore all can equally rejoice therein. Spinoza; Arnold Zwoig. Pp. 72 and 73.

Thus hath the Master Architect taught :

"These are the two extremes and the middle path: Being intent upon luxurious living in sensual pleasure is despicable, vulgar, ordinary, and ignoble, leading to no good; being intent upon self-mortification which is painful, is leading to no good. Not approaching both these extremes the middle course which produces insight and knowledge, that leads to tranquillity, perfect knowledge, enlightenment and deliverance was realised by the Perfect One." (*Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*).

There are eight noble observances to which one must adhere in order to become a successful traveller along this middle path. They are:—(1) Right understanding, (*sammā ditthi*); (2) Right intention, (*sammā sankappo*); (3) Right speech, (*sammā vācā*); (4) Right action, (*sammā kammanta*); (5) Right living, (*sammā ājeeva*); (6) Right effort, (*sammā vāyāmo*); (7) Right mindfulness, (*sammā sati*); (8) Right concentration, (*sammā samadhi*). These eight characteristics of righteousness may be likened to the material, direction, left edge, right edge, gradient, camber, width, and length of the middle path to emancipation.

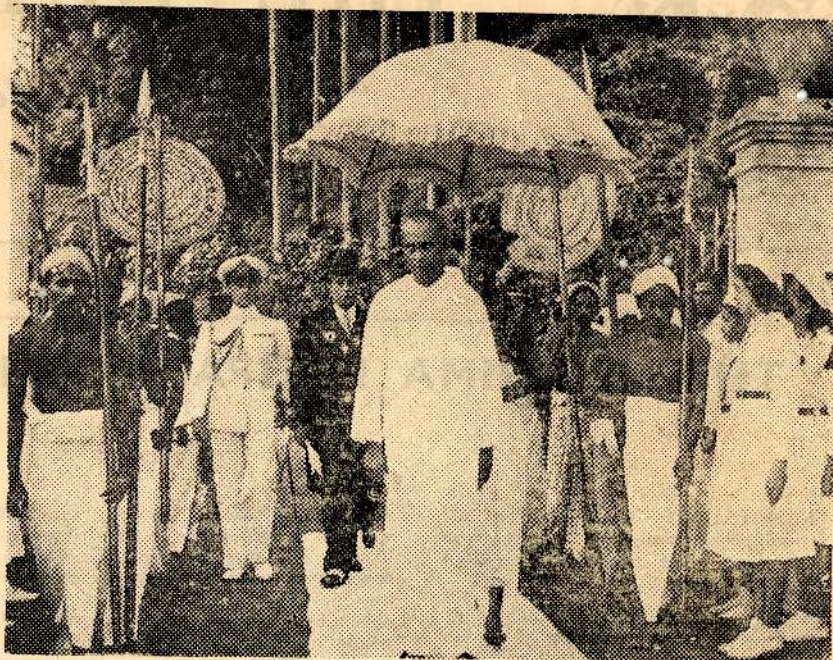
The faggots of doubt which must be burnt to develop that incandescence which creates that clear light to illumine this noble path are these: (1) Have I existed in the past? (2) Have I not existed in the past? (3) What have I been in the past? (4) How have I been in that past? (5) From what previous state did I pass into that which I have been in the past? (6) Shall I exist in the future? (7) Shall I not exist in the future? (8) What shall I be in the future? (9) How shall I be in the future? (10) Into what next future state shall I pass from that future state? (11) Am I existing now? (12) Am I not existing now? (13) What am I now? (14) How did I come to be at this 'now'? (15) From where has this 'I' come? (16) Where will this 'I' go?

And these are the six wrong views comparable to the seed from which arise the forest of doubts:—(1) I have a soul; (2) I have no soul; (3) I perceive myself with my soul; (4) I perceive what is not my self with my soul; (5) I perceive my self with that which is not my soul; (6) This self of mine which can speak and feel, and experience the results of virtuous and evil actions,—now here, afterwards there—this self of mine, then, is permanent, constant, eternal, not subject to change, and enduring for ever like the everlasting earth, sun, moon, and stars.

A close and correct analysis of the above will show the earnest seeker after truth that in these words spoken by the Buddha nearly 2,500 years ago lie the elements which give rise to all the philosophic—and sociological—conflict of the ancient and modern world.

FETTERS OF ERROR

This is how the All-Wise One speaks on this subject of conflicting views: This O monks, is the full, complete teaching of fools. This, O monks, is called, gone astray in the jungle of error, writhing in error, knotted in error. And because he is bound by these fetters of error, O monks, the uninstructed average man is unable to find release from birth, decay, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair. (Majj. 2).



Leaving Colombo for Kandy soon after being sworn-in as Acting Governor-General, on June 30, 1949, Sir Arthur Wijekewardene went in procession from King's Pavilion to the Dalada Maligawa, where he offered flowers. Behind Sir Arthur, (dressed as an "upasaka"), are Lt. Hildon Sansoni, (C.R.N.V.R.), extra A.D.C., and Mr. R. Woutersz, Private Secretary. Giri Guides line the King's Pavilion exit. He later visited the four Devasales and on the following day gave a *dāna* to bhikkhus at the King's Pavilion.

Man continues to live in this world of sorrow bound to it by the bonds of a mind full of the belief in individuality or universality. He dwells, assailed all round by doubts, enslaved by rituals, besetted by sensual lusts, and blinded by ill-will. And if these doubts are allowed to remain without being gradually removed, they will imprison him for ages in this dungeon of dire distress.

The Buddha as he so clearly explains in the parable of the arrow-wounded man always considered the present more important than the past or the future. And his views are evidently the most practical and sane propounded with regard to the ills of humanity. 'If there is a view, O monks,' the Tathagata declared, 'that this world is eternal, still there is in it birth, decay, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair; and the removal of these even in this very life I proclaim. Or, if there be the view that this world is finite or infinite, even so, there is in it birth, decay, death, etc.; and the removal of these I, the Tathagata, proclaim.' (Majj. 3).

This sovereign cure for the ills of man, the great Physician, in his loving kindness, proclaimed to all beings. The prescription is contained in the middle path of emancipation. This *Via Media* of the Buddha would at first sight seem easy and simple, and by that very fact give rise to misgivings in men as to its complete efficacy. But if they do so, such men forget that as in most other things the simplest is the most difficult. In truth, the middle path, as laid down by the Buddha, is arduous in the extreme, and most exacting in its demands upon the wayfarer. This is a direct consequence of its being the middle way, tending neither to the extreme nor that—being neither harsh asceticism nor

soft epicureanism, neither a painful course of stoic pessimism nor of easy optimism.

This is an aspect of the Buddha's way of deliverance on which the utmost emphasis must be laid—the untiring patience, the continuous vigilance, and fine intelligence with which he who aspires to fare successfully on this path must equip himself. Not only in religion and philosophy, but also in every line of human activity strict adherence to a middle course entails the utmost thought and greatest care.

EVEN BALANCE

This difficulty arises from the fact that in a middle course an equilibrium, an even balance, has to be maintained; and everybody who has handled a pair of scales knows how hard it is to weigh an exact quantity of gold or medicine equivalent to a given weight. Experience would show him that even with the maximum care, the most delicate handling, and the finest balance he can never actually weigh out the stuff so that it is exactly equal to the required weight. And the finer the pivot of suspension, and the longer the arms of the balance the greater is the difficulty of maintaining the pans in equipoise. On the other hand, it is obvious how easy it is to put a heavy weight in one pan and little or nothing in the other and make the heavy pan sink to the very bottom and the light one tilt up in the air. It is even thus with life. The difficulties which must be surmounted by a traveller on the middle path are infinitely greater and vastly more complicated; for the future and the past, the self and the neighbour, and the right and the wrong each pair of which corresponds to the arms

(Continued on page 40)

HISTORICAL VALUE OF THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE MAHAVANSA

TIME is just as important as place and incident to the historian when he sets out to explain the evolution of human society. Any author of a historical work will find it not only convenient but also essential to deal with his subject in chronological order. But the difficulty in assessing the historical value of the Mahavansa is that it was first begun in an age when people did not keep an account of dates. Very often the author dealt with a previous age whose facts and material had been handed down, often orally, and whose correctness had become warped by the passage of time. Invariably the authors could at the best give only approximate or even probable dates. Besides, the Mahavansa, being the story of the Mahavihara and Buddhism was written in a monastic strain and style and would obviously have begun with the Buddha, in actual fact the death of the Buddha.

Unfortunately there is much controversy as to the exact date of the death of the Buddha. The general view places the death of the Buddha either in 543 B.C. or in 483 B.C. The date 483 B.C. is calculated from the Mahavansa line of Indian kings which states that there were 218 years between the reigns of Ajatasattu and Asoka. The dates in Asoka's reign are certain, and if the list of kings is accurate then the death of the Buddha could be put down as 483 B.C. But the various records in the Puranas, in Ceylon, and in North Indian accounts do not agree with each other. In the Indian list Susānaga is listed before Bimbisara, while in the Mahavansa it is the other way round. The date 543 B.C. too involves a discrepancy of 60 years which makes Asoka live 60 years ahead of his time.

Mr. Mendis, in spite of the undiluted opposition from Barua feels that it is more likely that the Buddha died about a 100 years before the accession of Asoka, *i.e.* roundabout 365 B.C. In this Dr. Mendis was going on Sarvastivada tradition which states in two of its works that Asoka reigned a 100 years after the death of the Buddha. Barua points out that the Sarvastivada tradition confused Kala Asoka or Kāka-varna Asoka with Dharma Asoka. But Dr. Mendis finds further support for his view in the Dipavansa which mentions something to this effect. It is obvious that Dr. Mendis too is somewhat shy to make a definite statement and is content to say that there is better evidence for placing the Parinibbana about 365 B.C., a 100 years before the con-

secration of Asoka, but that if he were to choose between 543 B.C. and 483 B.C. he would rather choose the latter.

The oldest period from Vijaya to Devanampiya Tissa is unreliable. The attempt of the author to make the landing of Vijaya coincide with the death of the Buddha must necessarily arouse suspicion. Besides the early reigns are calculated in easy round numbers. It would be unfair to say that the authors were attempting to deceive but it seems plainly obvious that they were trying to fill in the gaps. Pandukabhaya ascended the throne when he was 37 years and he is given a reign of 70 years which would bring him to an age of 107 years. Mutasiva has a son born to him long before he ascends the throne, but he too is given a reign of 60 long years. His sons cover a period of 92 years which is impossible. Thus we cannot take the early reigns seriously.

By

L. S. JAYAWARDENA

The Mahavansa gives a few definite dates:—One thing they seemed certain of was that Buddhism came to Ceylon in the reign of Asoka whose contemporary in Ceylon was Devanampiya Tissa. Mahinda came to Ceylon in the 19th year of Devanampiya Tissa's reign. Asoka came 218 years after the death of the Buddha. Panduvasadeva reigned for 30 years; Pandukabhaya for 70 years, Mutasiva for 60 years. But was there then a Vijaya? The stories of Pandukabhaya and Panduvasadeva are to be found in the Indian Krishna legends. The Mahavansa gives 236 years as the period between Vijaya and Devanampiya Tissa.

From Devanampiya Tissa the chronicles found there were too many kings and each was given a reign of ten years. Elara reigns for a slightly longer period. Up to the contemporaneous reigns of Asoka and Devanampiya Tissa the Ceylon chronicles found support in Indian tradition. But after the death of Asoka this confirmation is lacking and it is obvious that the chronology from Devanampiya Tissa to Vattagamani

If the Sinhalese chronology from the time of Parakrama Bahu I is worked backwards we reach 543 B.C. as the beginning of the Buddhist era in Ceylon. Indian dates are reliable and, therefore, Devanampiya Tissa's accession according to the chronicles will fall in the time of Chandragupta, 40 years before Asoka. This has got to be rejected. Then where did this error of 60 years occur? It couldn't be before Devanampiya Tissa because if it was it would upset the Indian chronology.

The only way to ascertain the accuracy of dates is to find support in foreign accounts. From Sena I to the Cholian conquests we find support in South Indian accounts. Before Sena I there were a number of Chinese synchronisms. Chinese accounts confirm the Culavansa which dates Kirtisri Meghavarna from 302-333 A.D., and was a contemporary of the Indian king Samudragupta. Support of this fact is found in Chinese records too. Thus it is obvious that the discrepancy of 60 years must be before Kirtisri Meghavarna. We also get a number of inscriptions from the reign of Vattagamini Abhaya, the son of Sadha Tissa which are reliable. Hence the error of 60 years probably falls between the reigns of Devanampiya Tissa and Dutugemunu.

On the whole the chronology of the Dipavansa and the Mahavansa at least up till the reign of Vattagamini is unreliable. But two other dates are uncertain: From Dutugemunu to Vattagamini there is said to have elapsed 217 years 10 months and 10 days. This total can be reached only if Sena and Guttika are given a reign of 22 years. But the Dipavansa gives them 12 years. However, the Mahavansa (Ch. 27, verse 6) says that Lovamapasada was founded 136 years after the Mahavihara. On this basis Sena and Guttika are given 12 years. Since the Mahavansa contradicts itself it is very probable that the Dipavansa dates are correct.

Thus the Mahavansa chronology leaves us guessing as to its accuracy. Being such an old work we must necessarily be cautious about what we accept in it. But on the other hand we must not be too cautious or supra-scientific in our treatment of the chronology. The fact that the Mahavansa in parts rests only on its own tottering feet does not necessarily mean that we must disregard its contents wholly. Nor is it any argument for its acceptance. But in dealing with the early part of the Mahavansa we are forced to confine ourselves within the realm of probability and not certainty. Views expressed have been many and varied. Men like Franke condemned the chronicles outright. But Kern, being of a more sober temperament, is of the view that though you may get some historical fact from the time of Devanampiya Tissa onwards the chronicles are reliable only from later times, say the reign of Vattagamini.

THE CONVERSION OF ANGULIMALA, THE MURDERER

BHARGAVA was a minister of the King of Kosala; his wife was Mantani. The fruit of their union was a son named Ahinsaka. Ahinsaka was a gentle and intelligent boy. From early childhood he showed signs of greatness; after his preliminary education at home under expert tutors he was sent to the Taxila University where he passed out brilliantly and was considered one of its alumni. On the completion of his education, his teacher, who had an adverse psychological kink in his brain, instructed Angulimala to kill a thousand men as a token of respect for knowledge. This piece of ill-advice completely deflected him from the right path and turned him into a terrible murderer.

He took his abode in one of the huge forests in the neighbourhood of Sravasti and killed everyone who passed through it. Of the fingers of all those whom he had killed he made a chain and wore it round his neck. Thus he became notorious as Angulimala. Gradually people ceased going through the forest or entering it for the purpose of gathering firewood. He entered the neighbouring villages at night, broke into their homes and killed the inmates. The villagers could no longer remain silent spectators of his bloody deeds; they came in their thousands to the City of Sravasti and reported the matter to the King. Bhargava, the King's Minister, learnt of the misdoings of his son and consulted his wife—Mantani—as what best to do in order to prevent his son perpetrating further violence. Mantani asked him to go into the forest and advise their son to come back home; but Bhargava was too shrewd to place full faith even on a son who was a murderer; he refused to comply with the request of his wife.

However wicked a son might be, a mother's love remains unchanged. The mother herself undertook to go into the forest and persuade her son to come back home forgetful, as mothers naturally are, of the son's depravity and the possibility of endangering her life at the hands of her son.

As was His wont, the Lord Buddha one early morning suffused the whole world with thoughts of loving kindness and beheld through His mind's eye that if He does not present Himself before Angulimala Mantani would be murdered thus crushing for ever the germinating force in Angulimala which would, in the passage of time, blossom forth into Arahathood. In the morning, that day, the Lord Buddha went on His begging rounds in the streets of Sravasti, and in

the afternoon He went alone towards the forest where Angulimala lived. The people who saw Him making His way towards the retreats of Angulimala tried to prevent Him, but He went His way unmoved. When He had entered the depths of the forest Angulimala saw Him. He was surprised at the audacity of a monk—he was unaware that this particular monk was the Buddha—to come alone and unguarded, for it was always in armed gangs that people dared to cross that dreadful forest. The monk's courageous attitude touched the very pride in him, for it appeared to him a challenge in the very domains where he had considered himself lord.

He firmly determined to nip this act of boldness in the bud; well-armed he followed the Buddha. Using one of the many powers of His mind, the Lord Buddha wished that Angulimala, however fast he might run, would not approach Him within a respectable distance. Angulimala speeded up with all the

By

The Rev. SHANTI BHADRA,

The Pirivena, Balangoda

force he was able to muster, but was unable to come within even an appreciable distance of the Buddha. He felt exhausted and weak; he was ashamed of his inability to overcome the monk, for he was so fleet of foot that to overtake the fastest running carriages was child's play to him. Crest fallen and thoroughly spent up, he called out "Stop monk!" The Lord, answering, said "I have stopped already. You had better stop." This reply made him pause and reflect; he questioned himself as to what the monk meant when he ordered him to stop when he was already at a standstill; he searched his brain for an answer, but no edifying solution was forthcoming.

The faith he had in his powers of mental and physical strength flagged, he was completely upset. He now sought the help of the Buddha to unravel this tangled skein. In a voice, sweet and soothing, the Lord answered: "Angulimala, I have stopped, for I live a life of harmlessness radiating thoughts of

love and kindness to all beings. But you, though in your physical posture still, yet you are going down the slopes as a result of your depraved mind and uncontrollable nature."

These words struck deep down into the heart of Angulimala. He thought that such courageous words could come forth only from the son of Queen Maha Maya. He bent low and with humble mein requested the Buddha to ordain him a monk. Angulimala, was accepted by the Blessed One and was received into the Order.

And not long had that venerable one been in the Order when, dwelling alone and apart, untiring, resolute, strenuous, he speedily knew for himself, realised and attained in this present body to that ultimate object of the Holy Life, for the sake of which noble youths withdraw from home to homelessness. Perfectly he understood; "All birth is ended, the holy life lived out, done that which was to do; no more is this world for me!" And so the venerable Angulimala also became yet another of the number of the noble ones.

This story clearly illustrates that even in the so-called scraps of humanity are embedded a germ that would blossom forth if handled with care and wisdom. It is this want of understanding and lack of tact in touching the humane chords in the wrong-doers in society that have filled the prisons, the world over, with hardened criminals and human wrecks. As bodily diseases need hospitals, medicines and gentle nursing, so it may well be granted that depressions of the mind, too, need gentle handling, congenial employment, recreations and reformatories. Imprisonment and physical chastisement alone cannot be considered remedies at all for weaknesses committed in moments of mental derangement or the heat of excitement. Those who fall into such weaknesses need to be watched long and carefully under gentle supervision in reformatories.

May independent Sri Lanka bring to bear the true spirit of Buddhism in such social problems, study to understand and forgive, and agitate for well-equipped reformatories in congenial surroundings where attempts may be made to raise the scraps of society into flowers of humanity.

May all the Gods permit us to enter the field after worshipping the Sun God. The Gods consent obtained, O goyi-lord, give us, sickles. May the clouds keep us cool, shading the sun's rays, And the Gods deliver from all evil, granting peace, these thirty payas.

* * *

කන්දේ පායන ඉරු රැස්
දෙවියෝ මේ සමයට දැන්
සෙවන කලේ
වැඩ වෙන දැකැති සුරතට
අරගණ අම්මාගට පින්
දෙමුව අතේ
ගොඩ සිටුවාවන් ගොසී
මහකුන්හට ඇසුනොත්
මේ මට තැගි ලැබේ
සබේ සිටින ලොකු කුඩා
මහත් අය දරවර නැතිව
කවි පවසන්නේ

The god of the sun's rays shining on the hill has now shaded this our gang ; With fortune bringing sickles in right hands invoke we merits on the mother. Should the Goyi-lord on the highland hear me, I shall receive reward ; May all this company, great and low, recite songs without bickering.

වැසලා සක් දෙවි බවතින්
චිතනට පෙර තපස්සේ ඉඳ
දැන් ඉල්ලන්නේ
ව පුල චීරන් පරවන මඩ
කරලා පැසි කරලේ අග
බර වෙන්වේ
පි සලා බෝජන ජලයෙන්
ගිනිකර තෙද බලයෙන්
මයි දැන් දුන්නේ
වැදලා මේ කසි කියන්ඩ
පත්තිනි දෙවියෝ අවසර
මට දෙන්නේ

Sakdevi descending from his abode, begs alms in his ascetic garb of yore ; The corn sown on the mudded golden rocks bends down ripened ears ; With boiling water dressing food by supernatural power the alms were given; May Goddess Pattini grant me permission to compose and recite these verses.

* * *

At close of work by eventide, it is a usual feature to hear the reapers sing the following piece :—

දවස පුරා කවි කියන්ඩ
සීතාගනයි ආ වේ
ආයේ මගෙන් කවි අහන්ඩ
කවර කලද එක් නේ
අපට නැයො අද ඇත්තම්
දුකට පිහිට වෙන් නේ
එන මෙන්වේ වුදු මගුලට
අපින් සමග එක් නේ

I came intent on singing to while the livelong day Say when again, my comrades, ye'll listen to my lay If kinsfolk now stand by us, all trouble will seem light And in Maitri Buddha's feast, with one accord unite.

සද සද සොඳ සෙල්ලම්
වන්දනාවේ යන් නේ
ඉස්සර ගිය සෙනගයි ඔය
සාදුකාර දෙන් නේ

වින්බරකින් සෙනග ඇවිත්
යස කරපිය මාලිගාව
සැම රවේම තිලකයි ඔය
සඵරගමුවේ මාලිගාව
With sport and jest full varied, our pilgrim path we cheer, Hark! the band before us shouts, "Sadus" echoing clear. The palace shrine who beautify, to crowds the land gives birth Saffragam's fair temple, the frontal-mark of earth!

සබර පේලිය යනකොට —
මුදු රැලදෙන අන්ද මේ
කිලිවලාවෙන් බඳින
කොන්ඩේ —
තාරුකා පොඩු අන්ද මේ
සතර විදියේ ඇවුළු පින්දන් —
මැතික් බැම්ම බලන අන්ද මේ
ඇතා පිටිනුන් දෙවිඳු
වැඩ සිට —

මගුල පෙරහැර අන්ද මේ
As surge the waves of ocean, the thronging lines go by, Their hair knots bound in circles dark, like stars in midnight sky ; Like jewels gleam the torches, adown the four-spread lane, The patron God in howdah rides, as in a wedding train.

THRESHING THE PADDY

At this stage much importance is paid to the preparation of the threshing-floor or *kamata*. The site reserved for this purpose is covered with five, seven or nine large "magal mats." On this matted floor three concentric circles are traced with ashes (*aluhan vadanava*), and two straight lines are drawn to bisect the circles at right angles, from East to West and North to South. Within each segment of the innermost circle are drawn the representations of four agricultural implements, viz: *poruwa* or scraper, *dati-goyiya* or pitch-fork, *kulla* or winnowing basket, and a *laha* measure. The *mutta* is placed in the centre of this diagram, and it consists of a large conch stuffed with small quantities of gold, silver, copper, brass, iron, ashes, cowdung and a jak flower. This conch is covered with a smaller conch shell, that serves as a stopper. Both shells are covered over, with *tolabo* leaves, *hiresa* and three sheaves of paddy, and tied into a bundle. At a propitious moment one of the farmers considered to be most fortunate by the others, bears a sheaf of corn on his head, and walks solemnly round the *mutta* thrice, and bows towards it each time at the four corners of the mats. Next he deposits the sheaf of corn on the *mutta*, and salutes it thrice with joined palms. When this ceremony is over, the paddy is deposited on the mats, and the threshing is carried out with the assistance of about six bullocks. Immediately follows an interesting ceremony known as *Andukaranava*. The chief farmer on the *kamata* carries the *dati-goyiya* across the back of his neck with some straw hanging from its ends, and two others follow close to his heels with sticks held in similar positions. They circumambulate the heap of paddy seven times, repeating the following refrain.

දැනි දැනි කුමන දැනි
සමනලින් ගෙනා දැනි
කොස් දැනි කොසමි දැනි
කුමලිලොටිලොටිලොටි
නූලාහම් | අවනාහම් දැනි

රන් දැනි රිඳි දැනි
චීරන් දැනෙනේ චීරන් උකුලට
කොල සලාබා පුරවති
එගල මෙගල තද මෙරගල
මලරන්දෙ මලබබදෙ
පරවනදෙ මලගිය මල
දෙනගේ මල වස්සා
ආණ්ඩු, ආණ්ඩු.

When the threshing is completed, and the paddy has been heaped up, an interesting ritual known as the *Amakate* is performed. The *Amakate* consists of a whip of straw about six inches long, in which are enclosed a few seeds of paddy, some ashes, a little cowdung and similar ingredients considered to be auspicious. The chief farmer takes his position in the centre of the *kamata*, and the paddy is heaped round him knee-deep. The *amakate* is handed to him, and he shifts it from one hand to the other round his legs reaping thrice, each of the following lines.

අමාකටද ගොන්නැඹිලි
තබා මුදුන නහරවැලේ
මක්කම සිරි පාද උසට
සමනල සිරිපාද උසට
ඉහල වෙලේ තිබෙන බැතන්
පහල වෙලේ තිබෙන බැතන්
අටු කොටුවල තිබෙන බැතන්
ඇද පුරවන් මේ කමතට

"O sweet grain-cock! O tembili-hued oxen!

Place creeper (yokes) on (their) heads, May the paddy in the upper fields, The paddy in the lower fields, The paddy in lofts and barns, Be drawn to fill this *kamata*, As high as Mecca's sacred foot, As high as Samanala's sacred foot."

At the conclusion of the "Amakate Ceremony," the paddy is collected into bags. Both measuring and storing the paddy are important items, and are executed in ceremonious manner.

"HARVEST HOME"

With a portion of the new rice thus collected, the farmers in the first instance, perform the pious act of *Sangika-dana* or alms-giving to the Sangha. The *Sangika-dana* is a religious ceremony of importance in every Buddhist home. It is an occasion when the departed lives of the household as well as dead relatives and kinsmen are remembered, and merits offered for their well-being in the next. The *Deviyannedanaya* or offering of the first fruits of the harvest to the gods is a popular feast. On this solemn occasion a Kapurala or Pattinihami is invited to officiate and perform the elaborate ritual and ceremonies connected with the event. The last of the harvest ceremonies is called the *Alutbat Mangallaya* or "new rice festival," a kind of "harvest home." It is a festive occasion for rejoicing, and friends and relations are invited to participate in the great feast of "eating the new rice." The rice that is cooked for the occasion, as well as the vegetables and fish should not be tasted during the process of preparation. The auspicious time for commencing to eat is indicated by the head of the household tasting the food. All the guests assembled are served with rice and tasty curries upon plantain leaves. Food, cakes, sweets and fruits are lavishly provided, and everyone enjoys a sumptuous meal.

BRIDE OF THE BUDDHA

A MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE OF CEYLON

FROM MR. J. F. McKECHNIE,

formerly Bhikkhu Silacara

IT is with much gratitude that I am feeling the kindness recently extended to me by the Buddhists of Ceylon, and by others also, in the strange vicissitudes of my life which I have lately had to encounter.

Part of my trials was due to myself, and part was occasioned by others, but now all has been made good by the free-will offerings of my many Buddhist friends in the generous manner characteristic of all true Buddhists. By the conduct of these towards me, I am well assured that I am not forgotten, that I have friends who have not forgotten me, and have shown that this is so in the one best way that this can be shown—by their actions. To mention the individual names of a few, I would name the Rev. Thera, Narada of Bambalapitiya, Daya Hewavitarne of Colombo, Mrs. Rant of the London Buddhist Vihara Society, Mr. Fran Allen of the same Society, and others associated with them in those activities of theirs which are directed towards founding upon English soil a sure, firm footing for the Theravada Buddhism of the Buddha and of his immediate followers, the Theras of old.

Now that Lanka, the old original home of Theravada Buddhism, has won itself a place among the free nations of the world, it would be good indeed, were it to bear this in mind, and when the opportunity offered, gave some substantial support, in token of its new political status, to yet another portion of the globe, in helping the establishment in the British Isles of the old religion of Lanka, great, pure, and free from all the accretions the years have brought, and even still threaten to bring to it.

Jaya ti Lankaya! And to Lanka's unadulterated religion.

Mr. Daya Hawavitarne, presently in England on a holiday, who obtained this message for *The Buddhist*, writes:

Until the war broke out in 1939, he was working at the British Branch of the Maha Bodhi Society in London. During the war years he was staying in Sussex but a couple of years ago, something had gone wrong and suddenly he found himself without a roof over his head. He is now staying at the 'Old Parson's Home,' at Bury, about 60 miles out of London. It is a nice place with lovely surroundings and he told me that he was very comfortable. He gets an old age pension of 26/- a week which he surrenders to the Home, but they give him 5/- back for pocket money. He said: "of course, I have to provide myself with clothing and footwear, but I can do that with money provided me in the past by kind Ceylon friends."

BUDDHISTS in London have lodged a protest against the exhibition of a Film, *The Bride of the Buddha*, on the grounds that the story is a distortion fact and an insult to religion. Ceylon's High Commissioner in London has intervened in the matter. The result of the protest is eagerly awaited.

Mr. Daya Hewavitarne, is leading the protest on behalf of Ceylon Buddhists.

The following letters have passed between him and the High Commissioner for Ceylon in London:—
Sir,

I have the honour to bring to your notice the fact that a film entitled "Bride of Buddha" is about to be released by Eros Films, Ltd., Wardour Street, London, W.1.

As a representative of the Maha Bodhi Society and the All-Ceylon Buddhist Congress I submit that this film will hurt the susceptibilities of all Buddhists, do great harm to the Religion and spread erroneous ideas as to the Religion of Buddhism.

I venture to say that the film may also create ill-feeling between Britain and Ceylon.

I would also remind you that previous films bearing any reference or title to Buddha or Buddhism have been banned, and I earnestly urge that you be pleased to take immediate action to prevent the release of this film and the use of this title assigned to it.

Yours faithfully,

DAYA HEWAVITARNE.

Office of the
High Commissioner
for Ceylon,
25, Grosvenor Squ.,
London, W.1.,
18th May, 1949.

Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter of the 12th May, 1949, regarding the release of the film entitled "Bride of Buddha," I am directed by the High Commissioner to inform you that an urgent telegram has been sent to Ceylon in connection with this matter. A further reply will be sent to you as soon as possible.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) P. R. DE SILVA,
for Secretary to the High
Commissioner for Ceylon.

Daya Hewavitarne, Esq.,
109, Canfield Gardens,
London N.W., 6.

23-6-49.

The High Commissioner for
Ceylon in London.

Sir,

I thank you for giving me and fellow-Buddhists of Ceylon and England the opportunity to see the preview of the

film "Bride of Buddha." The unanimous decision of those present was that the film be banned totally, for we felt that if this film was released for general exhibition, it would not only hurt the susceptibilities of the Buddhists, but also spread erroneous ideas as to the religion of Buddhism.

I shall, therefore, on behalf of the Maha Bodhi Society and the Buddhist world in general urge you to be pleased to take immediate steps to prevent the release of this film in this country.

I have brought this fact to the notice of the High Commissioner for India in London too and I am sure he will join us in taking necessary action to prevent the release of this film.

Yours faithfully,

DAYA HEWAVITARNE.



Mr. Daya Hewavitarne

Office of the
High Commissioner
for Ceylon,
25, Grosvenor Square
London, W.1.,
27th May, 1949.

Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter of the 25th May, 1949, regarding the film "Bride of Buddha," the High Commissioner has, on advice of the Ceylon Government, asked the producers for a preview of the film by him and a few leading Ceylon Buddhists now in London. I shall be glad if you will be present at such a preview and also suggest the names of any prominent Ceylon Buddhists now in London who should be invited for the preview.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,
(Sgd.) P. R. DE SILVA,
for Secretary to the
High Commissioner
for Ceylon.

Daya Hewavitarne, Esq.,
109, Canfield Gardens,
London N.W.6.

THIS book is an account of a forty-five weeks tour round the world. It is a very readable book. Mr. Humphreys is never dull. Neither is

he profound. His style is always chatty, racy, interesting; and almost always superficial. He is interested and observant but never strikes the reader as being anything more than a dilettante. His book differs from the average tourist's journal in that he has a somewhat more extensive knowledge of the countries he visited and thus a greater sympathy with their peoples.

There are three different accounts in this book. They are—the account of Japan where the author spent about six months; the account of the chief Buddhist countries of the East where he spent shorter periods; and the fleeting impressions of the other countries through which he travelled.

Mr. Humphreys on Japan is faintly suggestive of Lafcadio Hearn. He is most painstaking in his attempts to understand and appreciate the art, the culture and the philosophy of Japan. He writes understandingly of the unique and intricate tea ceremony, the stylised traditional plays and the classical dancing of the Japanese. He admires their fine calligraphy, their refined and graceful architecture, the studied simplicity of their landscape-gardening and their dainty clothes. He is in raptures over the exquisite beauty of the Japanese countryside and the perfect delicacy of Japanese homes. He is awed by the philosophy of Zen and the profundity of its exponents. Nowhere does he achieve the poetic lucidity of Hearn, but, like Hearn, he too is very much in love with Japan and all things Japanese.

Mr. Humphreys went to Tokyo as one of the prosecuting counsel in the International War Trial. His descriptions of Japan and the Japanese are mixed with chatty sidelights on the international lawyers in Tokyo. Mr. Humphreys in Japan seems to have moved serenely in two very different worlds. On the one hand he is the friend and admirer of the Japanese people. On the other, he is the friend and colleague of the prosecuting lawyers in the International War Trial. This Mr. Humphreys is very different from the other. He writes chattily of the activities and recreations of his colleagues. He takes a patriotic pride in the Empire Day celebrations. He makes suggestions for improving barrack life. He makes

A TRAVELLER SPEAKS

Via Tokyo by CHRISTMAS HUMPHREYS—

Hutchinson & Co., Ltd., 21s.

the now-so-fashionable gibe at the Russian delegation. He collects evidence of Japanese war-crimes. He writes of the conduct of the trial. And, most surprisingly, he holds the naive belief that the Japanese attitude to the invading forces was that they delivered the Japanese from "the thralldom of a military clique who had kept them in subjection for the last ten years!" Mr. Humphreys in Japan was obviously an acute case of schizophrenia!

China suffers by immediately following Japan on the writer's itinerary. After being schooled into the delicacy, refinement and taste of Japan, China strikes him as being rather large, vulgar and confused. The author is sufficiently self-analytical to realise that his experience in Japan has not quite fitted him to appreciate China, and he does his best to do so in spite of it. But he hardly even succeeds. There is a distinct difference in the writer's approach to China from his approach to Japan. It is more that of a tourist,—trying to know the country through guides and resident Europeans.

After China the writer visited Siam, Burma, India and Ceylon. His accounts of these countries are interesting and as informative as he can make them. Apart from his Buddhistic learnings, and therefore his greater interest in these countries, his descriptions of them are hardly anything more than the usual tourist's impressions. In addition Mr. Humphreys has been fortunate in being shown these countries by intelligent and educated natives who have, of course, done their best to give him a correct perspective of their homelands. In spite of this, the author has not quite been able to divorce himself from journalistic newsiness and the perennial fascination that anything novel holds for the tourist—witness his undue stress on the urinal stones of old Anuradhapura. One cannot rely on the accuracy of the information the writer conveys about these countries. In speaking of Ceylon he has made some delightful blunders. Below the Northern Terrace at Sigiriya is a boulder supported on short stone struts but Mr. Humphreys tells us that it is upheld by wooden piles so that a fire lit underneath it would have sent it crashing down to close the sole entrance to the fort! I am not competent to speak of the mistakes he may have

made in speaking of Siam, Burma and India. Mr. Humphreys' account of these countries thus does not seem to have very much of the saving grace of

accuracy to redeem it from being the usual travelogue of the round-the-world tripper.

The writer has also included a short survey of Buddhism in Siam. This contains a certain amount of facts, and a large amount of the author's opinions. His observations are amateurish and rash. He says that "If all the teaching in the Pali Canon were reduced from 1,000 volumes to 10, and the remainder burnt, the Buddhism of the Southern School would be a greater force in the life of Siam, Burma and Ceylon. But though thousands support me in this belief, none would act on it!" His cock-sureness is most amazing! He also makes references to Buddhism in Burma and Ceylon which are characterised by the same superficiality.

Mr. Humphreys frankly does not attempt to speak authoritatively of the other places he passes through. His descriptions of them are quite straightforwardly, fleeting impressions. But even he has been unable to resist making a summing up of the Yankee character on the basis of about a fortnight's stay in the States!

It is quite obvious from early in the book that the author is very sure of himself and his abilities. On the second page he gives us a list of his accomplishments and interests. He visits every country with an "I know all about you" attitude. This is rather exasperating when it sometimes becomes apparent that he does not know all about it. He quite smugly tells us of his varied accomplishments—he knows quite a lot of Japanese and Chinese fine arts; he is a connoisseur of Japanese wine; he is more than a little familiar with Indian philosophy; he has a knowledge of archaeology and architecture which enables him to appraise all the temples he sees from Tokyo to Colombo; he has his particular swimming technique to counter tropical currents; and to cap it all he modestly informs us that "Japanese Buddhism has been *refounded*" on the Twelve Points of Buddhism—of which he is the formulator and propagandist. To a lay mind it does seem rather absurd that the author—who does not appear to have a particularly deep knowledge of the Dhamma—should take upon himself the task of "reuniting" the Northern and Southern Schools of Buddhism on a platform he has built

(Continued on page 38)

THE VENERABLE NARADA THERA IN ENGLAND

AN APPRECIATION FROM GEOFFREY L. RUDD,

Editor, "The Vegetarian"

THE visit of the Venerable Narada Thera, of Colombo, to England has been appreciated by both Buddhists and those seeking in other ways to re-establish a better way of life in Europe.

On June 13th the Bhikkhu addressed the Bournemouth Vegetarian Society on *The Life Of Compassion* and was able to give a comprehensive idea of *Ahimsa* in relation to everyday life to a large and keenly interested audience. He afterwards expressed the view that this audience of laymen was one of the most responsive to which he had lectured and, although speaking in a Christian Church Hall, was able to present the Buddhist disbelief in a God-Creator and to contrast many traditional Western beliefs with the enlightened teaching of the Buddha Gotama.

Vegetarian Societies are very strong in England—there are nearly 40 active groups with thousands of members who also support a growing number of associations formed to fight vivisection, vaccination, cruelty to animals and blood sports, misuse of the soil through chemical fertilisers, and all forms of commercial materialism. Buddhism, if it can be presented in a way acceptable to Western thought, that is without the use of strange Eastern terms, should therefore find a sympathetic hearing. Indeed, many thinkers are already turning to other religions and philosophies, for they are coming to realize that orthodox Christianity, with its mass of meaningless dogma and ritual, can offer no spiritual food and bears little or no relation to the essentially compassionate and humanitarian teaching of the Master Jesus.

It is clear that Peace and Brotherhood will not be established until the humanitarian and compassionate ones in all nations are united in their way of life and gather strength through active fellowship. The Bhikkhu has seen that Europeans are willing and even anxious to listen to his views—are Buddhists willing to listen to the good in Western civilisation, or they fixed in their views in a changing world?

Before any real co-operation can take place, it is also clear that the East and West must put their own houses in order, for few will deny that time has not been kind to the teaching of either Jesus or Gotama—both ways of life have been

misrepresented, misinterpreted and even betrayed, and many differing groups have appeared, each claiming to have the true and enlightened vision.

Many of us think that men like the Bhikkhu are pioneering this great and much-needed work, but that far more interchange of visitors to our respective countries should take place, so that we can see what each has to offer in spiritual values.

Your people may find much of our life difficult to understand, for the history of the West has been stained with bloodshed, oppression and crude commercialism, and it is among these inimical conditions we have to work. But we on our part find it difficult to accept the apparent laxity among Buddhists who, while professing to follow the Buddha Gotama, eat meat, smoke tobacco, and generally behave like men of the world.....no one with high principles, we feel, would embrace a way of life which is so riddled with loopholes for the weak and immoral—any more than the true Buddhist would worship a man-created God in some hypothetical heaven.

Let us be frank with one another..... there is only a handful of men and women practising Buddhism to-day. There is only a handful of men and women living Christianity—these facts which must be faced. How, then, can and will the beauty and purity of the Great Ones' Teachings be restored? Only by one way. By each taking up life sacrificially and by living the Life.

And herein lies the joy in greeting the Venerable Narada, for we feel that here is one who is showing the Good Way by personal example and by service to his fellowmen.

FILM SHOW

SATURDAY, JULY 16th, 1949,

at 6-30 p.m.

MEMBERS AND THEIR
FAMILIES

ARE CORDIALLY INVITED

V. S. NANAYAKKARA,

Hony. General Secretary.

Digitized by Noolaham Foundation.
noolaham.org | www.noolaham.org

WORLD'S A STAGE

DEAD and gone! These tragical words relate to the "exit" of every actor in the drama known to us as life. In the case of one who has extinguished all craving, the word 'gone' could only mean disappeared from view. Leaving such an individual—in short an *Arahat*—to his or her bliss, let us notice the case of one who has 'gone' only to fill new roles in some other unknown, spheres. Gone! we know not where, and gone after having acted a variety of parts, good, bad, and indifferent, and done a lot of nonsensical and some sensible things during the brief space allotted to that "actor!"

"All the world's a stage, and all men and women merely players," says Shakespeare. How philosophical is the student of human nature!

This is what happens. An 'individual' is brought into existence as a vehicle for the manifestation of a transmigrated *karmic* force. This manifestation is endowed with certain characteristics, good or bad, produced by the good or bad *karma* (action) which gave birth to the vehicle. The cardinal inherent traits are the instinct of self-preservation and the instinct of craving, or lust. The degree of the latter trait depended on what the causation was like. If the causation was lust-laden the effect (manifestation) was also lust-laden. If the lust or craving was extinguished in any manifestation (life), then there will be nothing to transmigrate. This nothingness is the *Nirvana* that Buddhist doctrine is concerned with.

How very simple it sounds! But the process of extinguishment of craving is not so simple or easy. Why? Because it is an inscrutable cosmic law that Evil is a diehard. The Buddha cannot fight against natural, or cosmic, laws. He must take the world as he finds it. A doctor cannot inject immunity from disease into anybody. When the body is afflicted he can treat it and cure it by the application of his knowledge. This is what the Buddha—the Enlightened Sage does. He explains the affliction and prescribes the remedy—rather a bitter one to some people! It is for the "patient" to pay heed to the doctor's advice and instructions, and take the prescribed medicine—'sweet' though it may not be—and get himself cured—or, unheeding of the physician, "go to hell"!

Oh! the tragedy of it all!

E. T. G.

A TRAVELLER SPEAKS

(Continued from page 36)

à la Col. Clcott. For two thousand years the essentials of Buddhism have been accepted as common to apparently contending Buddhist sects, which have no startling differences. For a Westerner with the memories of *auto-da-fes*, such a doctrinal attitude is perhaps unintelligible. This author of a new "Thus Have I Heard," however, cannot be forgiven his lapse. I am prepared to understand his Occidental bustle about his much-flaunted Twelve Points, but not his preamble to the twelfth where he avers that Buddhism does not deny God or soul. Theravada Lanka, I have heard saw the shipwreck of his Twelve Points. They first floundered in Japan, when the "We agree" of the foregathered ecclesiasts at the Nichi-Hongwanji Temple was very probably—"the slavish approval by beaten people of a suggestion put forward on behalf of the conquerors."

The author's conclusions are rather disappointing. He begins with a flippant account of how London looks to the returned traveller, and then he wanders off into musing rather unoriginally and platitudinously on the lot of mankind.

The writer has a number of poems of no particular merit scattered throughout the narrative. Some few of them are interesting but these are not the more serious ones. They merely illustrate another phase of Mr. Humphreys the dilettante.

Numerous photographs taken by the author illustrate his text. Most of them are quite good but they suffer from being invariably placed some distance from the incidents described and sometimes from inaccurate captions.

The overall pattern of the dust cover drawn by the author's wife is colourful and attractive.

TISSA DEVENDRA.

PANDIT PANNANANDA THERO

Parawahera Pannananda Thero, representative of the Maha Bodhi Society, Gaya, is expected in Ceylon early this month. He is an energetic young Buddhist Missionary and is connected almost with every cultural institution in Bihar.

He is a professor of the Gaya College where he has been teaching Pali since 1945. He is also a member of the Board of Studies of the Patna University.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE BUDDHA IMAGE

Sir,

Readers of *The Buddhist* should be very grateful to the Rev. W. Rahula for giving to them in the June issue the results of research in one branch of his study in the shape of a scholarly article on the above subject. It is of interest not only to the average reader but also to other students. On a previous occasion he contributed to the University Journal an equally interesting article on the Ariyavamsa Sutta. We hope that more of such contributions will follow.

In regard to the celebrated sedentary statue of the Buddha at Anuradhapura, I have a recollection of having read in Parker's "Ancient Ceylon" that this statue was brought there *via* Mantota (from India?). Will one of your readers please give reference to the page which the Index does not help me to get at. It will be of some interest to know on what evidence Parker came to his conclusion.

Sāgala Valavva,
Chapel Lane,
Wellawatta,

June 17, 1949.

P. D. R.

POLITICS AND CRIME

Sir,

Hardly a day passes without a few murders being committed in this country, and they are all not of the type that was common in the past, that is, killing on sudden provocation. Homicide is now being practised as a fine art, well-calculated, premeditated deeds, either for material gain or for revenge. What shocks one most is that those who are accused of these atrocities are not confined to one sex or to any particular class or age. Men and women, teen-agers and non-gangsters, laymen and priests all form this blood-thirsty crowd.

It is useless blaming the cinema for all these crimes. It has been found that some of our men are such adepts that they can give valuable hints to Chicago gangsters. It is ludicrous to blame Western influence for it, as seems to be the fashion among some of us. It is fantastic for foreigners to make capital of these crimes for propaganda against Buddhism.

What then is the cause for this alarming increase in grave crimes in this Buddhist country? Is it not paradoxical

that our people are also deeply religious? These very criminals, at another time and place, will be in the front rank of the devoted and the pious. Is their piety then a pose?

It is time that the leaders of the country, let alone the leaders of the different religions, devoted some time to probe into the matter in their own interest even if they are not prepared to take a more disinterested view. From all that appears, it is not far wrong to presume that the country suffers from a severe dearth of religious leaders, both among the laity and the priesthood, not only among Buddhists but also among other religionists. Bhikkhus, who, in the past, were looked upon as spiritual gurus by Buddhists are so few and far between, that many Buddhists have come to look upon the general brotherhood with suspicion, more or less. There are indeed so few among the vast number of Bhikkhus who can be regarded as genuine members of the Sangha, who can lead the laity—who can earn their respect and affection.

A reform of the Sangha was not impossible until a few years ago, but the unfortunate fact is there was political intervention even in a spiritual matter such as this. The division among Bhikkhus over this question was widened by partisan politicians who found it advantageous to them to let the present chaos continue. This then is the root cause of all evil—politics with all its attendant evils and devoid of many of its virtues. Politics, doled out to the masses, in indigestible tablets, has weaned them away from Right Thinking; and politicians who preach virtue and practise vice have been a criminally bad example to the rest. In the name of religion politicians and their henchmen, violate all religious tenets. At election time alleged leaders of religion summon the aid of liquor to gather votes for them.

Even banquets arranged by some Buddhist organisations are not free from liquor now. This is the latest achievement of some of the sycophants who exploit the name of religion to nestle in the bosom of political leaders.

Is it a wonder then that Ceylon is No. 3 among criminal countries of the world?

Yours, &c.,

C. H.

Wakwelle,
Galle.

COLOMBO Y. M. B. A. NEWS

KING'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS

Two of the three Knighthoods for Ceylon on King's Birthday were for our members—Sir Arthur Wijeyewardene and Sir Francis Molamure.

Other recipients of honours included Dr. G. P. Malalasekera, O.B.E., and N. Porolis Fernando, J.P.

Our congratulations to all of them.

NEW MEMBERS:—

24.5.49: A. W. Fernando, Wawulugala Distillery, Maggona; S. M. Senanayake, 1043, 3rd Division, Maradana; W. M. A. Wickremasuriya, Post Office, China Bay; M. G. S. Ranasinghe, 240, Nawala Road, Nugegoda; S. De S. Jayaratne, Post Office, Balapitiya; M. A. M. Perera, Kalapugama Govt. Mixed School, Kalutara.

31.5.49: L. P. Abeysinghe, 4, Pethiyagoda, Kelaniya; W. A. P. Wijesena,



Sir Francis Molamure

"Erlsmere," Auburnside, Dehiwela; R. L. A. N. Rajakaruna, Pattalagedera, Veyangoda; Don Godwin Jayanetti, "Jayanikethan," Wadduwa; M. Henry Peiris, "Nimalka," Gangodawila, Nugegoda.

7.6.49: M. C. H. De Silva, 32, Parakrama Avenue, Nugegoda; S. Ganegoda, 151/4, Cotta Road, Borella; K. H. B. De Silva, 1213, Peliyagoda Pattiya, Kelaniya; S. A. Peiris, 51, Tannery Path, Bambalapitiya; R. A. P. G. Perera, 28/10, Hunupitiya Road, Colombo 2; K. M. P.



ACTING GOVERNOR-GENERAL

We take justifiable pride in the fact that Sir Arthur Wijeyewardene (Mr. E. A. L. Wijeyewardene, who was knighted on King's Birthday) who assumed duties as Officer Administering the Government upon the departure from the Island, on retirement of His Excellency the Governor-General, Sir Henry Monck-Mason Moore, on June 29th, is one of our valued members to whom we owe much. At different periods he served us as a Vice-President. Once he was our General Secretary. He will relinquish his high temporary office on the arrival of the new Governor-General, Lord Soulbury, early in July.

Y.M.B.A. DHAMMA EXAMINATIONS

(English)

November 6th, 1949

Preliminary, Junior, Senior and Teachers' applications close on September 15th, 1949.

For Regulations and Syllabuses apply to:

The Hony. Secretary,
Religious Examination,
Y.M.B.A.,
Colombo.

N.B.—School showing best results will be awarded "Sadhwardane Challenge Shield."

Cash prizes amounting to Rs. 400/- will be awarded to underage candidates securing the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places in

Perera, Temple Road, 2nd Division, Maradana; Shamdas Mangharam, 20, 17th Lane, Colpetty; V. Veluppillai, Kaluviah Gardens, Station Road, Kelaniya; T. D. Samson De Silva, 1038, Maradana Road, Borella; D. D. W. Goonewardene, "Gunasiri," Mahara, Kadawata.

14.6.49: V. Veerasundaram, No. 10, Blake Road, Borella; S. Yoganathan, 24/8, Gothami Road, Borella; A. P. Wickramasinghe, Gurulabedda School, Latpandura; K. Sudhakaran, 151/1, Cotta Road.

PERSONAL

Mr. Sampat Sri Nandalochana has entered the Police Training School, Katukurunda, for training as a Sub-Inspector.

WEDDINGS

Our congratulations to Mr. H. C. A. Senaratne on his marriage. His bride



Mr. N. Porolis Fernando

was Miss Chinta Anawaratne, daughter of Mr. M. A. W. Anawaratne.

Mr. A. T. E. de Alwis (of the General Manager's Office, C.G.R., Colombo) was married to Miss Pearlyn Beatrice Fernando, of Liyanagemulla, Seeduwa, on June 1st, 1949.

SABBE SANKHARA ANICCA

Mr. D. S. Fonseka died suddenly early in June. Our sympathy to his relatives.

We also offer our sympathy to Mr. C. Lawrie de Zoysa on the death of his mother.

NEWS AND NOTES

DR. MALALASEKERA

Dr. G. P. Malalasekera left for Hawaii on June 8 to represent Ceylon at the East-West Philosophers' Conference. A large gathering was present at the Ratmalana Air Port to wish him *Au revoir*.

A few days previous to his departure, at a largely attended public meeting, held at the Colombo Y.M.B.A. Hall, leading monks and laymen offered their blessings to Dr. Malalasekera.

The Ven. Baddegama Piyaratana Nayaka Thera, Principal of the Vidya-daya Pirivena, presided. The speakers were the Ven. Rasanakaveve Dharmavansa Thera, the Ven. Heenatiyana Dhammaloka Thera, the Ven. Dr. Paravahera Vajiranana, Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya, Dr. C. W. W. Kannangara, Mr. Rajah Hewavitarne, Dr. W. E. A. Fonseka, Mudaliyar P. D. Ratnatunga, Mr. H. L. Caldera and the Chairman.

They spoke in praise of Dr. Malalasekera's numerous services in the cause of religion and culture in Ceylon and of his acknowledged scholarship. The Chairman congratulated the organisers of the East-West Philosophers' Conference on their selection of Dr. Malalasekera to interpret Theravada Buddhism.

"If a census were taken," he said, "of the scholars of Buddhist countries of South-Eastern Asia as to whom they would appoint as their delegate to a World Conference of this nature there will be no doubt that the choice will fall on Dr. Malalasekera."

Several speakers referred to an earlier visit, of the Anagarika Dharmapala to America to the Parliament of Religions in Chicago and to the results of that visit.

Dr. Malalasekera, in acknowledging his deep gratitude to the speakers and those assembled, said that Buddhism possessed many unique doctrines in which it found itself in complete disagreement with other religions. At the Conference he would find himself pitted against men of very high intellectual calibre but he would do his best to give a faithful interpretation of the Buddha Dhamma as known in Ceylon and India.

He said that one purpose of his visit was to establish contact with various Buddhist groups of the West. "Although great advances have been made in material knowledge, mankind is greatly ignorant of the fundamental truths about life and happiness. The Buddha Dhamma contains these truths and it is the duty of the people of Ceylon to make them known throughout the world for the good of humanity," he declared.

Dr. Malalasekera disclosed that a Conference was being summoned in Ceylon in 1950 to which delegates from various Buddhist centres were being invited.

Dr. Malalasekera leaves by air tomorrow morning. He will stop at Madras Calcutta where he will address

meetings of the Maha Bodhi Society. He will stay for a week in Bangkok where he has been invited by the Buddhadasana Samagana.

While in Bangkok he hopes to visit Angkor Vat in Indo-China where he will be the guest of the French School of the Far East of which he is a Member of Honour.

BURMESE FESTIVAL IN NEW DELHI

June 11

"This day is a very well marked for Lord Buddha's preaching for peace. Today again we are reminded of reviving our Blessed Lord's teaching. You all feel that this world is full of darkness and ignorance and there is none who knows to cure the ills of existence. But there is a way out to attain happiness—happiness that bestows peace. The renunciation of selfishness gives birth to the sense of true freedom. From freedom is born joy, from joy is satisfaction, from satisfaction the sense of calmness and happiness," said Pandit Hammalawa Saddhatissa Thero (Ceylon) at a public meeting at the residence of Burmese Ambassador, New Delhi, yesterday evening. The Burmese Ambassador Sir Maung Gyee, presided.

Buddhist monks chanted verses from Buddhist scriptures to mark the Full Moon day of Nayon, the day which is celebrated very magnificently all over Burma to visualise the Great Sermon known as the Mahasamaya Sutta.

"Buddha on this day preached the world for peace. The Sinhalese Buddhists take this day an important sacred day, as on this day the Dhamma of Sakyamuni Buddha which was sent to Ceylon by the Great Emperor Asoka in the third century B.C. through his son Arahata, Mahinda." Saddhatissa Thero said.

"Let me assure you," Saddhatissa Thero said: "my Buddhist brethren of Burma, that we shall introduce the significance of the Mahasamaya Sutta in our Island in addition to our significance of this day. No doubt all the Buddhist countries of the world are celebrating this Full Moon day in one form or the other, but let me invite their attention to signify the Mahasamaya as Burma does."—*Cor.*

METTA

THE scent of jasmines fills the air,
Those lovely flowers so sweet and fair;

A carpet soft and white is spread
Beneath the jasmine's lovely bed.

Armed with those pure white flowers so gay

I to the Temple make my way,
And dreaming of Nirvana sweet
I lay them at my Master's feet.

Within that blessed sacred shrine
'Midst fragrant flowers and odours fine,
Free from a world of greed and odour
May radiant love within me grow!

The love that seeks no selfish gain,
That blesses life and soothes pain;
That feeds a poor and starving soul,
And saves a wretch from downward fall.

The love that feels for other's woe
Be he a stranger, friend or foe;
That envies not another's gain,
But shares alike both joy and pain.

The love that freely pardons wrong,
That meekly bears, and suffers long
That leads us safe all anguish past
Unto that Blessed Peace at last.

HENRIETTA B. GUNETILLEKE.

THE MAJJHIMA PATIPADA— THE MIDDLE WAY

(Continued from page 30)

of the balance, suspended on the pivot 'now' in the process of becoming, are each respectively immeasurably longer and finer.

If one devotes to it that deep thought which all genuine seekers after truth should rightfully concentrate upon this aspect of the Middle Path, it becomes apparent that this balance, this perfect poise, this harmonious equilibrium can only be achieved by living in the very 'now,' in the momentous moment of the present, which is the only reality. This 'now' is like the meeting point of the fine pivot of the balance and the angle in the groove of the beam. And even as in the balance it is only conceivable that a state of equilibrium is reached and maintained only for a moment of time, likewise man can keep to the middle path by right behaviour (according to the eight-fold path) only in the 'now,' and maintain that line of behaviour every succeeding moment, always bearing in mind that the right behaviour in respect of two moments of time-space cannot possibly be identical.

It is this non-identity of the right mode of behaviour in respect of two instances which makes the task of the way-farer on the Middle Path so difficult. Because Being is one with the process of Becoming and always accompanied by the characteristic of Change, the precedents of the past do not answer present problems, nor the plans formulated in the present exactly fit future contingencies. Life must definitely be lived on the sharp point of the present and the sharper and finer is a man's understanding of the 'NOW' and the closer he adjusts his mode of life to that brief moment the better equipped is he to be a traveller in the Noble Way of the Buddha.

Sabbhe satta sukhi hontu!