



THE BUDDHIST

“*Sīla Paññānato Jayam*”

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ANCIENT SYSTEM OF LIFE CAN SOLVE MODERN PROBLEMS

BY the time we come to the age of the Buddha, that is, about the 6th century B.C., Northern India had developed into a number of highly organized janapadas or kingdoms. According to the Pali Cannon the most famous of these states were Anga, Magadha, Kāsi, Kosala, Vajji, Malla, Cedi, Vaecha, Kuru, Panchāla, Maccha, Surasena, Assaka, Avanti, Gandhāra and Kamboja. More or less all these are included in modern Bihar, the United Provinces, the Punjab, and Kashmir.

The spiritual allusions in the Buddhist Tripitaka bear ample witness to the fact that the peasant of that age in those kingdoms was a contented and happy man who looked after his flock of sheep and herd of cattle, a man who was civilized to such an extent as to be able to cultivate his lands systematically and methodically. He also went abroad and introduced the art of agriculture along with the Village Committee System and so many other things which served the purpose of civilized life. Apart from the landed property, the flock of sheep or the herd of cattle was one of the chief sources of income and as such, a patrician of wealth was the man who could command a numerical superiority in the domesticated animals, especially cattle. The most popular saying of that age was “*Natthi go Samāntam Dhānam*”—that there is no other property greater than cattle.

In the course of time, as these peasants went on advancing in civilization, they made great progress in the direction of arts and crafts such as weaving, pottery, carpentry, leather work, and so on. Before long we begin to see signs of these trades forming themselves into organized trade unions, Campā, Rājagriha, Srāvasti, Bārānasi, Mithilā, Pāvā, Cedi, Kavsāmbi, Indraprastha, Kāmpilya, Mathurā, Taksilā and Dvāraka were the centres of such highly organized trades. Even today some of these great cities keep up to their traditions. The Buddhist Jātaka stories say that the trade and commerce of the country developed in leaps and bounds as a result of the above-mentioned industries and agricultural works. Hence the information available in the jātakas forms one of the richest sources with regard to the sociological conditions prevailing in India in ancient times. Although there are scholarly controversies over the period of jātakas, yet the evidences available

at Bhārahut and other places indicate that these stories existed even in the fourth century B.C. So the facts that we collect from these about the economic, political, social, industrial, trade, religious, and literary conditions of India at the time of the Buddha can be taken to be very reliable and authentic. In jātakas we find special reference regarding the setthhis or financial magnates and the plutocrats of the age. Sometimes they were wealthier than the actual ruler of the country. The fountain head

of the labour long before the time of the Buddha, the Brāhmins had made the people believe that it is the wish of God. This belief is embodied in the fourth discourse of Bhagavat Gitā as follows :—

“*Caturvarṇyam Mayā Srīstam Guṇa-karmavibhāgasah
Tasya Kartāramāpi Mām Vidya-kartāramavayam.*”

(The four castes were emanated by me, by the different distribution of qualities and actions; know me to be the author of them, though actionless and inexhaustible).

In accordance with this teaching the system of life known as Varnāśramadhārma began to take shape. Although there is ample evidence to believe that this might have been started in Vedic Period (2500-1500 B.C.) it appears to have matured quite after the Upanishadic Period (800-500 B.C.) which was characterised by fanatic worshippers of God. Prior to this, i.e., during the Brāhmanic Period (1500-800 B.C.) the ceremonial rites to gratify God or Gods and false asceticism to attain salvation were thriving. Animal sacrifice was greatly hailed.

It was against these practices that Jainism and Buddhism sprang up. The doctrine of Non-violence of Jainism went too far and became too extreme. Consequently even today it is not much appreciated in India. On the contrary Buddhism kept to the golden mean, drawing, its followers from all strata of society which generally prefers moderation to extremism. The doctrine of Non-violence is not a monopoly of Jainism or of any other system of thought. Buddhism too is well-reputed for Non-violence. In Buddhism it is taught through the Noble Eightfold Path. And that is as follows :—

- (1) Right understanding of the true nature of existence;
- (2) Right aspiration of self-renunciation, of goodness and of mercy;
- (3) Right speech free from falsehood, harshness, slandering and useless talk;
- (4) Right conduct of abstaining from killing, from dishonest taking and from adultery;
- (5) Right livelihood which does not bring harm and suffering to other beings;

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of such enormous wealth was trade. Many jātakas such as Samudda Vānija, Bāveru and Valāhakassa bear witness to the trade with foreign lands and the extent to which international trade was gaining ground.

The development of the rural peasantry and the industrial urban population inevitably results in the birth of demand and clamour for political and citizenship rights. Hence during the Buddha age we see advance forms of social institutions and administrative councils such as gam sabhās, nigama sabhās and nagara sabhās. The chief of a gam sabhā or a village council was titled Gāmini, that of a nigama sabhā or an urban council was called Nigama Setthi. The chief of a town or a municipal council was called Nagara Setthi. At that time the politically well-organized and fair-sized urban areas were known as Gana Rājya. The head of the traders' guild was called Sepi Mukhya, and the chief of the craftsmen was called āchāriya. All these indicate that the administration of a Gana Rājya would have been largely democratic. The janapadas or big provinces were either democratic or monarchical. In the Tripitaka we often come across such democratic states as Vajji and Pañcāla and such monarchical kingdoms as Magadha and Kosala.

Another remarkable feature that had developed by this time, i.e., the 6th century B.C., was the organized caste system of India. Although it is con-

- (6) Right endeavour to control anger and to avoid all bad actions of body, word and mind ;
- (7) Right attentiveness of mind ;
- (8) Right concentration of mind.

When one is to follow Eightfold Path there is no difficulty for one to be guided by Non-violence. In other words, the entire Eightfold Path is nothing but an outcome of Non-violence. Among Buddhists all do not practice this noble doctrine to the same degree, or with the same speed. Hence we find four major sections of them. The first and foremost of them are priests ; second section formed of priestesses ; the third is of laymen and the fourth is of lay-women.

Out of these the priests and nuns should remain unmarried. They cannot possess any private property. They live in separate huts with a daily routine of work. The main principles of their system of discipline are entirely democratic. It is only a very high type of ideal society that can have such democratic disciplines. And in the history of religion or in any other social organization the Buddhist priests were the first people to socialize their property.

In the beginning, Buddhist priests limited their activities to practising meditation and propagating the Dhamma. Later on in order to facilitate the propagation of Buddhist teachings, educational activities were included in the daily routine of the priests. As a direct result of their taking part in educational enterprises from the sixth century onward there grew up several well-known universities in India called Nālanda, Vicramasilā, Jagaddalā, Odantapuri, and so on. Thus there is no doubt about the fact that it was due to the educational efforts of the Buddhist monks that ancient Indian Society made tremendous progress.

Today there is one type of Buddhist monk in Ceylon, Siam and Burma, and another type in China, Japan and Tibet. The former belongs to the orthodox school, whereas the latter to the reformed school. These two schools are known as Hinayāna and Mahāyāna. Their conditions are now very much different from those of former times. The duly ordained nuns are not found today in most of these countries. Ceylon too lacks Buddhist nuns.

The male and female members of the laity or the upāsaka and upāsikā are expected to live a righteous and virtuous life looking after the order of the Sangha or priests and nuns. There are five precepts or rules of conduct which they have to observe daily. They are as follows :—

- (1) Abstention from doing fatal injury to any living being ;
- (2) Abstention from taking things not given ;
- (3) Abstention from adultery or lawless sexual actions ;
- (4) Abstention from false speech ;
- (5) Abstention from distilled and fermented intoxicating liquors that are causes of headlessness.

All these precepts are means of deliverance from ill.

Besides these, there are many other teachings, injunctions and customs that a Buddhist has to observe with regard to social behaviour. In various scrip-

tures at many places we see advice pertaining to matters economic being given to laymen. There is no place for exploitation of the poor or of the weak by the rich or by the strong man in Buddhism. The man who earns a livelihood is asked to do it just as the bee gathers honey from flowers without doing any harm to them. The Suttas such as Sigālovāda and Vyagghapajja are full of such advice on household affairs. Instructions on similar matters are also found in the Catukka Nipāta of Anguttara Nikāya. According to those a Buddhist is forbidden to deal in poisonous commodities, deadly weapons, meat and liquor. Nor is he allowed to make profit by selling things at fancy prices and by taking prohibitive interest on money lent. It is because the life of a Buddhist is expected to be righteous, harmless and full of virtues.

Devil dancing and such other superstitious sorcery were utterly condemned by the Buddha as highly misleading. The Buddhists are forbidden to practise ceremonial rites and obscene religious observances.

The Buddha never approved the caste system of India. Hence there are no Brāhmins, Ksatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras among the Buddhists. In this connection what the Buddha has said is very interesting. In the course of Vasala Sutta, He said :—

“*Nā jaccā vasalo hoti—na jaccā hoti brāhmano ;*
Kammanā vasalo hoti—kammanā hoti brāhmano.”

(None is a low-caste by birth and none is a Brāhmin by birth ; one becomes low-caste by action and one becomes Brāhmin by action.)

Herein it is inevitable to point out that the Buddhist justice is the same for all and all are equal in the eyes of law. There is not a single true Buddhist institution where caste system is respected. Buddhists, therefore, possess the spirit of true brotherhood that every individual should follow today.

Another thing that a Buddhist can enjoy is free-thinking. He is never asked to follow anything blindly. Following is how the Buddha advised some men in the Kālāma Sutta :—

“Put not your faith in traditions merely because they are old and have come down to us through many generations ;

“Do not believe anything upon the ground of common report or because people talk a great deal about it ;

“Believe not a thing merely because some one lays before you the written testimony of some one or other of the sages of old time ;

“Do not believe anything that you have imagined, thinking you have received the inspiration from a God ;

“Believe nothing upon the authority of your teachers or priests ;

“Whatsoever, after the personal experience and investigation is found to agree with your own reason and tends to serve your own well-being, as well as the well-being of all other living beings—that cleave to as truth and shape your life in accordance therewith.”

The Buddha seems to have paid a great care for the other people's sentiments and activities. Hence He organized the Order of Fathers Sangha on

democratic lines. Almost all Buddhist assemblies and typically Buddhist activities bear witness to this. Although the Buddha had nothing to do with the outward politics of the country. He favoured democracy. In the Sattaka Nipāta of the Anguttara Nikāya in a discourse with Vassakāra, the Chief Minister of Magadha, the Buddha speaks very highly of the people's Government of the Licchavis, their system of legislation, assembly, unity, law, respect for elders, respect for women, respect for religion and the saints. He says further that such a democratic government cannot be crushed easily because it is well-favoured by the people.

Buddha held in esteem simplicity in life, economy, self-respect, monogamy, tolerance, friendliness, generosity and unity. It is because of these great ideals that the Buddhists are accustomed to simple habits. The good Buddhists never take pride in fashionable ways of living. They also are very generous in their common behaviour. And unity is their aim of life.

In order to prove the greatness of Buddhist teachings, I must take another outstanding point. So far as social life of ancient India is concerned, it stands unique. In the history of India it was the Buddha for the first time that gave the largest freedom to women. He advocated their cause and said that woman too must enjoy all rights of citizenship and freedom. Every woman must be regarded as an independent person and thus, as an act of approval of such a principle, He admitted women to His order. Henceforward they could be ordained as nuns, or, could live as lay-women with the privileges that men could enjoy without being slaves of men. To a Buddhist woman, marriage means nothing but a free partnership. She not only keeps her property separate but also retains her own ideas, habits and individuality.

In the Buddhist cannon women are classified into several categories such as mothers, daughters, wives, widows, servant maids, ordinary lay-women and nuns.

The highest honour is bestowed upon the mother and she is called sometimes “The Buddha of the Family.” Thus she is paid supreme respect in order to maintain a high standard of morals in society. There were some people in those days who lamented over the birth of a daughter. They liked only sons. When the King of Kosala begot a daughter he visited the Buddha and lamented the fact that his issue was a daughter. Thereupon the Buddha pleased him by convincing him that the daughter was as good as the son.

While emphasising the merits of a housewife, the Buddha says that the goodness of the wife depends neither on the caste nor on the social status but on good management of domestic affairs. It is the good conduct, kind behaviour, lively interest and earnest working in all household affairs that make her great. In this connection the Buddha also had laid emphasis on the importance of the mutual love, respect and concord between the husband and the wife.

Once while praising the intelligence of the woman the Buddha said :—

“*Nā so sabbesu thānesu—puriso hoti pundito*

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"KAPPITIPOLA AND THE INSURRECTION OF VELASSE"

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IN the annals of Sri Lanka the name of Kappitipola is closely associated with the Insurrection of Velasse, or the Rebellion of Uva, which occurred in 1817.

Prompted by patriotic feelings and the spirit of national independence, Kappitipola joined the insurgents of Velasse and became their acknowledged leader and champion in that last and formidable struggle for wresting the Kandyan Kingdom from the hands of the British. He was also known as Monaravila, and hailed from the flower of Kandyan aristocracy, being allied to some of the most opulent and illustrious Radala families in the Kandyan country. It is said that whenever Kappitipola came to Kandy, he took lodgings in the residence of Ehelepola, who was his mother's brother.

When the Kandyan provinces came under the suzerainty of the English in 1815, Kappitipola was made Dissave of the province of Uva. At this time Milleve, the Dissave of Velasse, was found too old and feeble to administer his district, and, therefore, Government decided to attach that office to the Dissave of Uva. Hence, Kappitipola became Dissave of both Uva and Velasse, and filled that office until he joined the insurgents in 1817. Henry Marshal, a contemporaneous English writer remarks that Kappitipola's manners were much more frank and affable, in the company of Europeans, than those of any other Kandyan chief, and that he conducted himself in company with a remarkable degree of decorum and propriety. It is reported that Kappitipola was the only chief of recognition, who submitted himself early to vaccination, and had all his children vaccinated; and thereby he revealed the great degree of confidence he had in the English. On the other hand, he is described by Mr. John Davy, as an active, enterprising, intriguing, ambitious and unprincipled man.

With the establishment of British rule in the Kandyan provinces, the Kandyan people gradually manifested their displeasure and aversion to the changes which had come over them. They began to inquire when the English intended to return to the maritime areas, thus leaving them to manage their own affairs of government. "You have now," said one, deposed the king, and nothing more is required—you may leave us." They also harboured a superstitious notion that the English could not live in the Kandyan territory, and on one occasion a subordinate chief remarked to an English Officer, that the British rule in the Kandyan provinces was as incompatible as yoking a buffalo and a cow in the same plough.

Under these unhappy circumstances, the revolt by the people of Velasse in 1817, seemed almost an inevitable event. Before the lapse of six months, the rebellion progressed and developed so rapidly that all the Kandyan country was up in arms against the English, save the lower part of Sabaragamuwa, the

Three and Four Korales, and Uduvara and Yatinuvara. Molligoda, the First Adikar, remained faithful to the English, but all the other chiefs of importance, either joined the rebel standard or were confined by the British on grounds of encouraging and favouring the insurrection.

The rebels put forward a pretender to the throne, who was said to be a distinguished kinsman of the deposed king, Sri Vikrama-Rajasinha. This strange candidate for the Sinhala crown assumed the name of Dura Samy, but when the insurrection crashed it was revealed that the pretender was an alleged illegitimate member of the royal family, a Buddhist monk by the name of Wilbawa, whom many of the chiefs were not inclined to recognise as a fitting and proper person to the throne. The rebels erected a palace at Dumbara, where the pretender held his court, and they paid him homage and treated him with royal honours.

On the instructions of Mr. Sawers and Major Macdonald, the Commandant of Badulla, Kappitipola advanced to Velasse for the purpose of restoring order in the province of Uva, and bringing the people back to their allegiance to the British Government. In this campaign he was not accompanied by a large military force. Twelve of his own followers, each equipped with a musket and a few rounds of ammunition from the Government magazine, followed him. It was reported that when Kappitipola reached the province, he fell a prisoner into the hands of the Velasse insurgents, and this information was conveyed by the return of his twelve followers with the muskets and ammunition they took with them.

A detachment of the 19th Regiment moved to Velasse from Batticaloa early in November, 1817, and with the appearance of troops a large number of the inhabitants fled into the woodlands, carrying with them their cattle, grain and other movable property. For the purpose of maintaining a line of communications from Batticaloa to Badulla and several military posts were established, the principal post being at Kattabowe, the chief Moorish village in the district.

At this juncture the Moors played a very diplomatic game betwixt the English and the Kandyans. In view of their own gain and profit, they showed signs of favouring whichever that seemed to be the winning side. Meanwhile Major Macdonald marched with a regiment to Velasse, and Colonel Kelly proceeded with his troops from Kandy to Badulla. With a view to suppressing the insurrection at any cost, Major Macdonald adopted severe measures of punishing the inhabitants. A very dark and dismal picture of Macdonald's terrific operations of inhuman devastation and destruction is given by Marshal. "The houses of the inhabitants were forthwith set on fire and burnt to the ground, and all the cattle, grain, etc., belonging to the people were either carried off by the troops or destroyed. The inhabitants

appeared to be horror-struck at the devastation thus produced; they ceased to shout at the troops, or to fire upon them; while they were seen on the neighbouring heights, and close to the skirts of the plain, gazing in silence upon the flames which consumed their habitations, and the driving away of their cattle, they having had no time to remove any part of their property."

As a result of these terrorising tactics, some of the headmen and their followers made their submission to Major Macdonald and implored forgiveness. On February 21st the whole of the Kandyan country was placed under martial law, and this action was followed by the arrest of Ehelepola, who was kept a prisoner in Colombo, being suspected of his being disaffected towards the English.

On February 28th, 1818, Major Macdonald was attacked at Paranagama by the Kandyan forces under the command of Kappitipola, accompanied by the pretender. Kappitipola's forces numbered about 6,000 to 7,000 men, and Macdonald had not more than 80 rank and file to repulse his enemy. Fighting continued for sometime, the attack being renewed at intervals, and about the 7th of March the contest relinquished and the rebels separated. About the beginning of April, 1818, Government proclaimed that a reward of 1,000 pagodas will be awarded for the apprehension of Kappitipola, and smaller sums for the other insurgent chiefs. Madugalle, a chieftain from Dumbara, joined the bands of Kappitipola about the end of August. He discovered the identity of the pretender, and was greatly perturbed in mind at the deception practised upon him and the Kandyan people. Immediately he took Kappitipola prisoner and sent him to Pitawala, with instructions to keep his feet in the stocks. Madugalle next fell upon the pretender, and imprisoned him in the palace erected for him at Dumbara; and also ordered that his feet be secured in the stocks. By now it was evident that the insurrection was crashing. Some of the chiefs who joined the insurgents were captured during the months of July and August, and several of them were tried by Courts-Marshal. Ellepola Maha Nilame, a chief of distinction was found guilty of high treason, and sentenced to death.

Kappitipola was arrested in the neighbourhood of Anuradhapura in the company of another chieftain named Pilima Talavva, son of that famous Pilima Talavva, beheaded in 1812. Madugalle who had become reconciled to Kappitipola, and was acting in concert with him was also taken prisoner, and thus the insurrection ended most disastrously to the rebels. Kappitipola and Madugalle were both tried before a Court-Martial, and sentence of death was passed on them. Their execution took place on 25th November, 1818. Pilima Talavva, referred to above, suffered the same fate, and Ehelepola the alleged friend of the British Government, who was kept a prisoner in Colombo, being

suspected of favouring the insurrection was banished to the Island of Mauritius.

Mr. Henry Marshal paid several visits to Kappitipola when he was a prisoner in gaol. Although he was aware that he was a convict sentenced to death, Kappitipola conducted himself with great self-possession and tranquillity of deportment. It is reported that on one occasion, he spread out the cloth which covered his loins, and which looked very much soiled and dirty, and in a smiling attitude he remarked to Mr. Marshal, "You know this is not the way I used to dress." When discussing the subject of the insurrection, he admitted that on two counts he was culpable; firstly, in accepting the office of first adikar from the pretender, and secondly, for not submitting himself to Government when a general indeminty was granted to the insurgents who should deliver up their arms before 20th September, 1818. Kappitipola is reported to have remarked that although life was full of trouble, existence was still desirable and therefore earnestly solicited that the sentence of death may be commuted to banishment. He also firmly believed that the misfortune that came upon him was the result of delinquencies committed in a previous birth.

In compliance with their request, both Kappitipola and Madugalle were taken on the morning of the day of their execution to the Dalada-Maligava. Permission was granted by His Excellency Sir Robert Brownrigg to Mr. Sawers to meet Kappitipola at the temple. It was a most touching and pathetic scene when Kappitipola knelt before a monk on the threshold of the sanctuary, and detailed the principal meritorious actions of his life, such as the benefits he had conferred on the Sangha, and the gifts he had given to temples and similar acts of piety. When he came to make his "*parathanava*" or last wish, Kappitipola desired that in his next birth, he be born in the Himalayas, and finally enter the state of Nirvanic bliss. The monk then addressed him and pronounced the following benediction: "As sure as a stone thrown up into the air returns to the earth, so certain will you, in consideration of your religious merits, be present at the next incarnation of the Buddha, and receive your reward." The chief next rose and said to Mr. Sawers "I give you a share of the merit of my last offering," and so saying he took the upper cloth of his dress, and offered it to the temple, remarking that although it was foul and ragged "the merit of the offering would not on those accounts be diminished, it being all that he had to give." He invited Mr. Sawers

to accompany him to the place of execution, which was respectfully declined. Kappitipola shook hands with Mr. Sawers and bade him farewell. He was then led to the place of execution near the Bogambara Lake, and there requested that some water be given him to wash his face and hands. After the ablutions, he tied up his hair in a knot on the top of his head, and sat on the ground. From the folds of the cloth which girded his loins, he took a small book, and recited some "gathas." Giving the book to an officer standing nearby, he requested that it be delivered to Mr. Sawers, as a token of the gratitude he had for his friendship and kindness, while they were officially connected at Badulla. While Kappitipola uttered the word "Araham" the executioner struck him on the back of his neck with a sharp sword, and second stroke deprived him of this mortal existence. It was indeed a sad and bitter ending to the unfortunate and ill-fated life of a noble chieftain who cherished the best of hopes for the future of his country. May it be, that Kappitipola died the champion of a last cause unhonoured and unsung, yet it may be well said, that his name will be writ large in the annals of this Island's history, as an ardent and sincere patriot who sacrificed his life for the national independence of Mother Lanka.

BUDDHISM IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

By The Ven. Bhikkhu C. NYANASATTA

BEING a continental nation in the heart of Europe, the Czechoslovaks could not have been among the first pioneers to unearth the Buddhist manuscripts in Ceylon, Burma, Nepal and other countries. That enviable task fell to the British Colonial Civil Servants and Army Officers.

But once the wave of discovery, transcription and edition of the first Pāli and Sanskrit Texts by English, French, Danish and other scholars had established a new branch of study, viz., the Pāli Theravāda Buddhism, next to Germany, Czechoslovakia was among the first European countries where the study of Pāli and Pāli Buddhism struck root.

The Czechoslovaks inhabiting the historic countries Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia and Slovakia (Upper Hungary up to 1918) are an old race of the Indo-European Ariyan family of races and languages. Their oldest chronicles in Latin and Czech languages record the tradition that their ancestor called Czech brought his race of the Czechs to their present home from the East, after having crossed three big rivers. His brother Lech, another chief, led the Poles; and the Yugoslavians and the Russians were probably led by chiefs related to the founder of the Czech race. From where the migration of the Czechs and other Slavic races originated is not exactly known yet; if one of the big rivers crossed on their way was the Volga, they might have come from the

vast plains east of that river, under the growing pressure of Mongolian invaders from Asia. This fact would account for a trace of Mongolian features among some inhabitants of East Moravia, Slovakia and Poland, unless these Mongoloid elements are the remnants of the original Huns, Hungarians, Tartars of Jenghis Khan's army, or the Turks.

No sooner had the Czechoslovaks settled in their new homes in Central Europe and become consolidated as one race under their own princes than the Christian missionaries sent by German or Frank kings began to endanger their political independence. Then a Czech prince, who saw that all the Slavic races in the West were gradually absorbed in the Empire by reason of forced conversion and conquest of their countries, and being anxious to avert the same calamity, he sent envoys to the Emperor of Constantinople, asking for preachers of Christianity who could speak a tongue intelligible to the Czechs and the Slovaks. The Czech ruler knew well that if he and his people embraced the new faith without being compelled to it by their German neighbours, the new imperialists would have no pretext for conquest, and thus the Czechs could preserve not only their political independence, but also their race and language; otherwise a strong conqueror never or only very seldom learns the tongue of a subjected race, but converts and teaches them in the invader's own language.

The Czech envoys brought home with them two brothers, apostles of Salonica, who were able to preach the new gospel

in a tongue understood by the Czechs. Unlike today, at that time, eleven hundred years ago, the Slavonic races of Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia must have had almost the same language. Previous to going to teach the Czechoslovakians, the two brothers, Apostles Cyril and Methodus, adapted the Greek alphabet to the phonetics of the Slavic peoples, and then translated portions of the New Testament into their new literary idiom. Their script and the tongue employed for writing at that time, the Cyrillic, has ever remained the liturgical language of the Orthodox Slavic Christians, and the present Russian, Bulgarian and Servian alphabet is a modification of the Cyrillic Script.

As this Cyrillic script and the modern Russian characters, though adapted from the Greek alphabet, differ rather much from Greek, and contain many new symbols unknown to the Greeks and the Romans, it would be an interesting research subject for an ambitious Sanskrit scholar familiar with Pāli and all the variations of Asoka's script as found in Toquarian and other extinct dialects of ancient Buddhist Turkistan, and countries to the north and west of India to see if the modifications of, and additions to, the Greek letters of the Cyrillic script bear resemblance to some form of Asoka's script rather than the Hebrew, Persian and other characters. If a knowledge of Asoka's script among the Eastern Slavs of 7th-9th centuries could be taken for granted, then it could be established that they also had some knowledge of Buddhism and perhaps even Pāli or some other Prakrit.

It is rather strange that the Czech apostles from the shores of the Mediterranean Sea should have chosen 'bog,' 'boga,' 'bogova' as equivalents for 'god,' 'gods,' 'of god.' The modern Czech word for god is 'bůh,' acc. case 'boha,' possessive 'bohova.' In Slovakian god=bôh. The word next in importance and frequency in Christian religion, viz., 'heaven' is called in Czechoslovakia 'nebe,' 'nebem,' 'nebo,' 'neba,' 'neбом.' When I hear my Burmese pupils pronounce nibbāna as 'neban,' it sounds almost like the Czech word 'nebem,' instr. case of 'nebe.' In Slavic languages 'o' sounds almost like the Pāli 'a,' hence 'boga,' 'bogova,' etc., sound almost like 'Bhagavā' in Pāli as spoken outside Ceylon.

To make the new gospel acceptable to the Czechs, the apostles certainly used terms dear to their flock, just as the Christian missionaries in Ceylon adopt Pāli technical, terms in their liturgy and vocabulary. And hence, if the 'heathen' Slavs had any faint reminiscence of Buddh', Buddha, Bhagavā, Bodhi, Nibbāna, etc., then bůh (buddh') bôh (bodhi), boga, bogova, nebo, nebe, neba, nebem, nebom, etc., must have endeared the new gospel and the preachers thereof, and thus made them readily embrace the new faith. The new converts and their two preachers and teachers did not use Latin at all, but only their common tongue for their liturgy. The neighbouring German missionaries, apparently jealous of the successful work of the Greek teachers, Cyril and Method, accused the two brothers of heresy, and they had to go to Rome to clear themselves of the charge. This alleged heresy might have been some underground Buddhist currents of thought or some ceremonies going along with their new faith, that has ever remained but skin deep, for all heresies and reforms found a fertile soil among the Czechs.

When John Wycliffe expounded his theses for the reform of the Church in England at the close of the 14th century, the Lollards, his followers, became a movement only much later; while in Bohemia these theses provoked a strong popular movement that resulted in the public burning alive for heresy of Johannes Huss of Bohemia at the Council of Constance in 1415, and this gave a signal to a revolution in Bohemia that necessitated crusades to suppress the Hussites, the Bohemian followers of Wycliffe.

This quick cultural exchange between the English and the Czech savants was then due to the fact that King Richard II (1367-1400), in whose reign the Lollards arose, had for queen a Czech princess, the daughter of King Karl IV, the famous Czech king and Roman Emperor (Charles of the Holy Roman Empire, coronated in Rome, 5. iv. 1355). Prince Charles was being educated in Paris when, on the death of his father, he was suddenly called to occupy the throne of Prague. Like many a present political leader in Ceylon, this Prince had to re-learn his mother tongue on his journey home, and he was so ashamed of the neglect of his own mother tongue that, when he was once established at Prague as King of Bohemia, and, later as Emperor, he determined to make the Czechs as advanced as the French of Paris. He founded the famous Czech University of Prague, the first in the Holy Roman

Empire, in 1348, after the model of the Paris University. To encourage higher studies among the Czechs, the King invited scholars, both professors and students, from the West to settle in Prague. There was a constant flow and exchange of scholars, between Paris, Oxford and Prague. When King Charles' daughter had married King Richard II of England, as the daughter of a scholar Emperor, she was surrounded by Czech learned men even when in England. The English historians say that this Good Queen Ann (in Bohemia she was called Barbara) favoured John Wycliffe and his reform movement of the Lollards. The famous English Reformer was stimulated to translating the Bible into English just by this queen; for when he saw that their Czech queen possessed a Czech translation of the book to read the Bible in Czech, while in England, John Wycliffe undertook his own translation. It was the Czech nobles who accompanied their Princess, and the Czech scholars from Bohemia that came to Oxford, and the Oxford professors that came to teach at Prague, who brought all new thoughts fresh from the West to Prague.

It is, therefore, no wonder that the first University in the Empire, viz., Karl IV University of Prague, should have had able Pāli scholars in the very first years of Pāli research. Prof. Z. Winternitz is a well-known early authority on the History of Indian Literature and Pāli Literature for he is often quoted both in English and German Literature on Pāli and Buddhism. His contributions to various scientific magazines dealing with India and early Buddhism are so numerous that every student of Pāli finds Prof. Z. Winternitz's name referred to, and his work quoted by special scholars in Pāli and Theravāda Buddhism. Prof. Winternitz was at one time on the staff of Tagore's Shantiniketan University.

Concurrently with the academic Buddhism, viz., the study of Pāli and including Buddhism in the comparative study of Religions, in the second half of the 19th century, there arose already at the end of the 19th century a literary Buddhist movement, and the Theosophical version of Buddhism; and even in Czechoslovakia (Bohemia and Moravia of that time) Buddhism was discussed by Czech scholars, and Buddhist motifs were elaborated by philosophers, poets, writers and artists. But it was only at the beginning of the present century that Buddhism, especially the Theravāda, began to penetrate to the broad masses of the educated reading public. The final annexation of Upper Burma had brought to light the living religion of the Burmese; and this time eloquent writers, not mere linguistic research students and scholars, began to write favourably on the religion of the Burmese. The soil for the growth of Buddhism in the West had been prepared by Pāli scholars, travellers and reports from other Buddhist countries and India, therefore the seed of the Dhamma sprouted and began to grow even among the less sophisticated masses of readers.

The reports from Burma fired the imagination of part of English population, and it began to dawn upon them that the 'Light of Asia' might enlighten the West too. As a result of this wave of Buddhist propaganda by the English and German writers and speakers, a few English and German Bhikkhus appeared

in the orange colour robes, and their writings, and speeches on their voyages to the West stimulated many to enthusiastic study of Buddhism; and several English and German Buddhist Magazines, and Buddhist missions gave impetus to the study of Theravāda Buddhism in Pāli, and to translating the texts into English, German, Italian and other languages.

With the exception of the few English bhikkhus and their patrons and collaborators, most of the early English writers on Buddhism, and even great Pāli scholars like Prof. Rhys W. Davids, though admiring the Dhamma, still had not the courage to call the Buddha and the Dhamma more than the "Light of Asia." But the Germans and the Austrians—and Czechoslovakia being then part of the Austrian Empire, the Czechoslovaks at that time formed a cultural unit with all German-speaking peoples—these enthusiastic students of Buddhism in Middle Europe cut across such hesitating timidity among the Buddhist scholars in the West; they boldly declared that, far from being a faint Light of Asia, the Buddha-Dhamma is of universal application, with ever-valid message of deliverance to the West also, that is to say, the Buddha-Dhamma is the Light of the World. The first Austrian translator of almost the greatest part of the Suttapitaka, an ardent admirer of Buddhism, who came to the East to see living Buddhism with his own eyes, Dr. E. Neumann, quotes with approval a saying of his friend and collaborator, the Italian Pāli scholar, Robert L. Orange: 'Na hi kanci sotabbam manāmi annatra Tathāgatenā' = 'None but the Perfect One do I deem worth listening to.'

Perhaps the most determined Defender and Propagator of the Buddha-Dhamma in Germany and the whole West was Dr. Paul Dahlke, who had spent the best half of his life in the Buddhist Orient, and then for 15 years was the Apostle of Buddhism in the West. Dr. Paul Dahlke had a great admirer and emulator in Czechoslovakia too. It was Dr. Ing. Leopold Prochazka (=Walker), an intellectual of exceptional capacity, a wealthy gentleman and brilliant writer. Belonging to the pre-war generation, when the word and the political entity of 'Czechoslovakia' was yet unknown, and hence the Czechs of Bohemia and Moravia were equally at home both in Vienna and Berlin, this Czech scholar accumulated a splendid library—all available books on Buddhism in German, English, French and other languages were at his disposal.

The result of his 30 years of extensive learning and many years of intensive study, test and application of Buddhism in practice crystallised in his effective Czech exposition of the Dhamma. Dr. L. Prochazka was personally known not only to Dr. P. Dahlke, but also to several German Bhikkhus of the Island Hermitage at Dodanduwa, who met him when he represented Czechoslovakia as the Czech Delegate to a Buddhist Congress in Germany. He was the Czechoslovak Consul of an International Council of Buddhism and International Buddhist Union sponsored by the Island Hermitage Colony of European Bhikkhus at Dodanduwa, Ceylon. He had envelopes and official note paper with this designation both in Czech and English,

for he highly valued the recognition and the honour conferred on him by Ceylon Theras.

Being hindered by family ties from becoming a Bhikkhu in Ceylon, this Czech Apostle of Buddhism, Dr. L. Prochazka, in imitation of his intimate friend in Berlin-Frohnan, Dr. P. Dahlke, sacrificed the best half of his life to the teaching of the Dhamma through writing. He wrote some seven very voluminous books on Pāli Theravāda Buddhism, 'Buddhist Meditation,' 'The Buddha and His Teaching,' 'Buddha and Christ,' 'Gossiping with God,' 'The Teaching of Actuality in the Doctrine of Enlightenment,' 'The Teaching of the Path to Deliverance in Original Buddhism,' 'Dynamic Nature of Personality and Consciousness,' and other Papers on Buddhism. Most of these books are very voluminous (250-300 pages) of Folio format, with covers adorned with original artistic wood cuts; all are beautifully printed on the best paper, with scarlet initial letters, all written edited and published by the author himself.

This modern Czech Propagator of the Dhamma became successful by his acute power of reasoning which he had acquired in his training as graduate Engineer; and this reasoning with mathematical precision led him to several discoveries and inventions in science and engineering, enabled him to venture with extraordinary success in business on great scale and thus brought him riches, prosperity and great reputation. Therefore when this wonderful genius turned all his energy to teaching the Dhamma with the force of a prophet, he fascinated and held spell-bound all his readers. This Teacher of the Dhamma in Bohemia spent his earnings—hundreds of thousands crowns—for his own publications. Thousands of copies he donated to all public libraries and to scholars who were likely to profit by reading such books.

Writer remembers how he received a very heavy bundle of these books free, on mere enquiry where copies could be bought. It namely happened that Dr. Paul Dahlke, in reviewing new Buddhist books in his magazine, mentioned that he had received a new book from a Czech author. Said the good Doctor: "though I cannot read Czech yet I warmly recommend the book, for I personally know the author as true Buddhist..." Now the review mentioned only the title, 'The Buddha and His Teaching,' name of author and address as 'Pilsen.' Booksellers could not find the publisher without knowing the year of registration, etc., so a letter to the Esperanto Delegate of Pilsen resulted in searching for Dr. L. Prochazka, finding his address and handing over the letter to the author. As a reply there came a big parcel containing all his publications, with a friendly letter informing that it was a present from 'one who is delighted when his books are read'; and he offered to send any other books from his library, for he liked the books being read, and not lying idle in the shelves of libraries.

In the course of writer's regular correspondence with the learned author, Dr. L. Prochazka consented to collaborate in founding a Czechoslovakian Buddhist House, in imitation of Dahlke's Buddhist House in Berlin, and even to finance it when necessary; but the famous author modestly insisted on not

being mentioned for this as Patron or President! Dr. L. Prochazka alone did not seriously dissuade prospective candidates of Czechoslovakia from becoming Monks in Ceylon; and not only books, advice, encouragement, introduction and recommendation to the Theras in Ceylon (Island Hermitage) were offered and given freely, but also financial help and collaboration to promote the cause of Buddhism was always offered even when not asked for. Had Dr. L. Prochazka not perished during the Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia, today Czechoslovakia would be a leading western country with strong Buddhist movement and sound organization of missions from Ceylon, and a Buddhist Vihāra and Buddhist House in Czechoslovakia, all financed by him alone.

Unfortunately this pioneer died in the last years of war as a victim of mistaken zeal of the Nazis. With other Czech gentlemen sitting at a broadcast of English news from London, Dr. L. Prochazka was arrested and tried for high treason; and while others denied any knowledge of English or of having been aware of radio news from England, the true Buddhist admitted both, though he then must have been more engaged in Buddhist meditation than listening to radio news. He was condemned as traitor, his property confiscated, and he was sentenced to five years of heavy labour in a House of Correction, a horror Camp in Germany, where no relatives or friends were allowed to see him. There he got cancer, and only when his case was past cure and he reduced to skeleton, he was permitted to be taken on parole on payment of a huge sum as security. It was too late: the Czech Buddhist scholar and worker died soon after an operation in Prague.

When hostilities in Europe had ceased and postal connection with Czechoslovakia was once more established, writer having remembered that the last letter of Dr. L. Prochazka had remained unanswered due to war breaking out in 1939, he hastened to assure the Czech Doctor that European Bhikkhus easily acclimatize themselves in Ceylon and have not to suffer any grave disorders in the Tropics. But this time it was his daughter, Dr. B. Svobodova—Prochazka who answered for her father. Thus the Czech Buddhist movement is bereft of an able leader, and no new leader having yet appeared, the orphaned Buddhists in Czechoslovakia have not yet fully consolidated their ranks. If Mrs. Dr. Bozena Svobodova-Prochazkova could continue her father's work, like in many other respects, Czechoslovakia could be, if not the leading, at least one among the leading countries in the West with well co-ordinated and flourishing Buddhist movement. The soil has been prepared, the seed has been sown, the corn grows, the harvest is near, but there are no hands to gather in the harvest of the Dhamma cultivation in Czechoslovakia! Or are the Czechoslovak Buddhists afraid that the communist government in Prague would victimize them as the Nazis did, or nationalise even this harvest, just as they nationalise the industries, the banks and the Christian churches?

Beside the learned expositions of the Dhamma by Dr. L. Prochazka, the Czechs have their own translations of all popular books on Buddhism; as, Sir Edwin Arnold's 'Light of Asia,'

Nyānatiloka's Word of the Buddha, Col. H. S. Olcott's Buddhist Catechism, and many other translations from English and other languages.

But to render justice to present Czechoslovakia, we must admit that, though poor in Pāli translations and well-organised Buddhist Societies of the pure Theravāda Buddhism—there are many well-functioning semi-Buddhistic Theosophical Societies almost in every town in Czechoslovakia—Pāli Buddhism has a stalwart exponent and Defender in the Czech Orientalist and Indologist, the Pāli Professor Dr. Vincent Lesny, Dean of the famous Prague University of King Karl IV. An Oxford scholar, expounder of Pāli for the last 30 years, the 67 years old Czech Professor is one of the very few remaining members of a generation of Pāli research scholars and teachers like Prof. Rhys W. Davids, Prof. William Geiger, the Mahā Thera Nyānatiloka, Prof. Sczerbaeky and other well-known pioneers in the field of Buddhism. Besides being Professor and writer on Buddhism, Dr. V. Lesny is the chief Czech translator of Rabindranath Tagore's Bengalee poems.

When Rabindranath Tagore toured over Europe after receiving his Nobel Prize, he visited Prague too, and was the guest of the University and of Prof. V. Lesny. Prof. Dr. V. Lesny twice visited Ceylon and India. While in Ceylon, the Czech Professor visited many monasteries, combing them in vain for some rare unedited Pāli manuscripts on ola leaves; and on his visit to the Island Hermitage, Dodanduwe, he bitterly complained to Ven. Nyānatiloka Mahāthera against native bhikkhus for refusing to lend their ola leaves for inspection, transcription or taking to museums in Prague. The good Czech Pāli scholar apparently forgot that monks are not owners, but only trustees of their libraries and custodians of monasteries, and as such may not allow their books to be taken out of the shelves and sent straight-away to Praha!

When in India, Prof. V. Lesny visited even Mohenjo-Daro excavation sites, and being refused anything from the collection of finds from pre-Ariyan culture, he searched with his own hands in the heaps of earth for some relics of ancient times that escaped the attention of the Commissioner of Excavations and his labourers. And strange, there he was more successful than with monks in Ceylon, for in his *Novy Orient IV—8/9*, p. 175 he exhibits one of his acquisitions.

The field of research work of Prof. V. Lesny is not confined to Sanskrit, Pāli, and Theravāda Buddhism alone. Besides translating from Old Bengalee and modern Bengalee of Tagore, Sarojini Naidu and other modern and classical poets of India, he is an authority on many other Indian languages; and curious to note, that beside his especial research work on the Syntax of Pāli and Mahrati languages, he has made a study even of the language of European Gypsies, proving their Indo-Ariyan origin as against their own tradition that they are descendants of the Old Egyptians.

His rich treasure of knowledge, information and relics from Buddhist Ceylon, India and other Asiatic countries, Prof. V. Lesny has utilized in founding and ably conducting the Oriental Institute of Prague. The monthly organ of the

Institute, Novy Orient (New Orient) has a special section on India and Buddhism, and Prof. V. Lesny, the Chief Editor, is in charge of the Buddhist and the Indian sections.

The Czech 'New Orient' is an elegant monthly review, ably edited, richly illustrated and quite up-to-date. In the January, 1949 Number (IV—4-5, pp. 85/89, Prof. O. Pertold has a long article on 'Devil Dancing in Ceylon.' This scholar and diplomat, who has made a special study of Demonology visited Ceylon several times, witnessed bāli ceremonies and made a thorough study and lively description of the ceremony. Beside his study on Devil Dancing, Prof. O. Pertold has published a work on the Pirit ceremonies and on social structure of Ceylon. Apart from his knowledge of the caste system in Ceylon, Prof. O. Pertold must be well-versed in both modern and classic Sinhalese; for he says in his article that he understood the bāli chanting even better than his Sinhala companions did, for they knew modern Sinhala alone, while he is well-versed in Elu, the language of the ceremonials and rituals. His article is illustrated, beside other pictures, by two masks, viz., Nāga Kanya' and two Garā yakās.' On the whole, for their New Orient the Czechs must be rightly envied even by the English and the Americans, probably due to the untiring devotion of Prof. V. Lesny, the Chief Editor, and his band of able Orientalists.

Prof. V. Lesny, the undisputed Czech authority in matters of Buddhism published several studies on Buddhism, containing whole chapters of original translations from Pāli, which appeared long before the war. It appears that while British, American, German and Soviet bombers droned over Czechoslovakia and bombs devastated his country, Prof. V. Lesny spent his time in the quiet city of Olomouc in Moravia, engaged in rendering the beautiful Pāli gāthās of Dhammapada into Czech verse. His complete verse translation of the Dhammapada appeared in 1946 (Praha, Samec). When the book reached writer in 1948 for recension and review, at first sight the lines of the Yamaka Vagga, Book I of Dhammapada, when translated into Czech language and put into acatalectic dactylic hexameter, without rhyme, alliteration and asonance, appeared unsuitable garb for the Word of the Buddha. But, when once got used to reading Czech poetry again after 15 years' pause, it was a real pleasure to read the whole Dhammapada in Czech.

Although some very severe criticism of the unusual metre, and of a few passages of the Dhammapada was contained in writer's review of the book, Prof. V. Lesny published it all verbatim in his New Orient IV—No. 8-9, May, 1949, pp. 202-204, even a humorous remark, viz., 'if the author was afraid to offend the Christians or has accepted a bribe for dissuading the Czechs from becoming monks?' He namely has translated verse 304, Book XXI thus: (in free rendering)

"Painful is the life of a monk, and hard to enjoy,
Full of hardships is life in a house that is full of sorrow,
Painful is the life with monks; a pilgrim wanders in pain,
Therefore don't become a pilgrim, and you will have no suffering."

The verse ought to be just the other way:—

"Hard's to attain the life of a monk,
and hard to rejoice therein,
Full of hardships is life in a house that is full of sorrow,
Painful is to live with unequals, suffering follows the pilgrim in rebirths.
Therefore be free from rebirth, and no sorrow will follow thee."

In the same review the translator is blamed for using biblical terms, where words not so much used in the Bible or prayers of the Christians would be more acceptable to many Czechs, whose 30 years old slogan has ever been:—"Away from Rome"—The Church conspired with the Habsburg dynasty to hold us for 300 years un-free: now we have got rid of the Habsburg Emperors, there yet remains to free ourselves of the Church of Rome." The translation of verse 354, Vagga XXIV:—

'Who knows the meaning of the Holy Script, the New and the Old Testament... while a much more successful rendering would have been:—

"Who is versed in the Word of the Buddha, and in exposition of its meaning."

All technical terms of the Christian religion sound awkward when used by the Buddhists. Here in Ceylon we have long become accustomed to words like Blessed, Holy, Saint, Sacred, Disciple, Reverend, Venerable, Temple, prayers and other words taken over from the Christians and thrust upon us by the first translators, but in Czechoslovakia they would prefer using terms without a connotation reminding them of the Bible, which after all, are archaic words, and hence modern neutral terms are preferable to these relics of the past.

New Orient IV—No. 6, March, 1949, has a two-page article of the writer with his photo as monk:—"New Trends of Buddhism in Ceylon." Here the writer deals with the three main tendencies of Buddhism in Ceylon, viz., the rationalistic, introduced by Western students of the Dhamma, the comparative or academic trend, and the latest tendency to socialism and radical communism among the new generation of the wearers of the orange coloured robe, which is becoming more of a red hue while studying English at the University and colleges the rationalistic and the comparative methods as approach to the understanding of what is beyond mere logic and cannot be realized by a syllogism of the dialectical method, but ought to be attained by mental culture, viz., concentration and insight practised away from the haunts of men, in forest hermitages. But this latest modern trend is on the waning since the Ceylon Government now provides ample free modern education at the traditional monastery seminaries where monks retain their jack-dye-orange hue without turning red.

Much space of Novy Orient is occupied by translations from all Oriental languages, especially Chinese, Japanese, and the extinct tongues of Turkistan. Even translations from the latest discovered manuscripts on beach bark of Toquara or Tokhara, unearthed during the expeditions of Sven Hedin find space in this Czech Oriental Review.

In another place writer has translated some of these remnants found in a hollow Buddha statue and images of the Buddha from a cave temple in Turkistan, after 1200 years rest under the ground in blocked caves.

In 1948, Prof. Dr. V. Lesny published a voluminous book 'Buddhism,' Praha, Samec, 448 pp., illustrated and up-to-date. He takes a broad view of Buddhism, assuming that Asoka's Buddhism may be a truer interpretation or version of the genuine words of the Enlightened One than the Pāli Tipitaka. Though Prof. V. Lesny shrinks from going as far as late Mrs. C. Rhys Davids in her last words, he says that 'beside the monastic bias of renunciation, the original Word of the Buddha contained a strong trace of laic element that grew up in Asoka's time, and which was then purposively suppressed in favour of the anchorite ideal of the Pāli Tipitaka, only to blossom forth in the Mahāyāna.'

The good Professor forgets that Asoka, himself but a layman, in writing his edicts and rock inscriptions, almost exclusively for the guidance of the laymen, does not mention anattā, nibbāna, arahā and other terms, not because they did not exist then, but because he knew himself to be but in the nursery class of Buddhism, while such strong fare as anattā, nibbāna, arahā, lokuttara magga and phala, paramattha dhammā, etc., is food for none but an advanced student and monk yogi.

The book under review contains a special chapter on Buddhism in Ceylon, and each Buddhist country has a chapter devoted to Buddhism therein, even Java, Turkistan and other countries where once the Dhamma flourished are represented. Then the book describes and discusses all aspects of the Mahāyāna, and closes with a chapter on Modern Buddhism, especially the Neo-Buddhism of Paul Dahlke's School. A picture of Dahlke's Buddhist House in Berlin—Frohnau makes us regret that the Czech erudite author must have had no, or not enough information about modern Buddhist movement in England, France, Switzerland, Germany, Finland and elsewhere.

He also apparently did not remember the Island Hermitage at Dodanduwa, Ceylon; or when he visited it more than 20 years ago it must have looked unlikely to grow into a strong centre of the study, practice and propagation of Buddhism, not inferior in importance to Dahlke's House in Berlin. Had the author had enough material, he would certainly not have omitted a special paragraph on the Nestor of this Brotherhood of European and Oriental Bhikkhus, viz., the Venerable Mahathera Nyānatiloka, whom he knows personally. Recent correspondence with Oriental Institute of Prague, and writer's series of Czech articles in Novy Orient on 'Eleven Years as Bhikkhu in Ceylon' will correct this deficiency, and in a new publication of Prof. V. Lesny we are sure to see illustrations from Island Hermitage, and even a note that, beside other Western Bhikkhus there has lived in Ceylon these 11½ years a Czechoslovak Thero who dares to criticise Czech Professors' publications in Prague, and who has achieved the strange feat of becoming a popular teacher and preacher of the Dhamma in the Sinhala language.

To show how well-informed about current Buddhist affairs Prof. V. Lesny is, we may add that in one of his recent numbers of *New Orient* he writes on the Sanchi relics, their pilgrimage in Ceylon to enable the vast crowds to worship them at Kandy, their way to Burma, return to India, where Pandit J. Nehru received them in procession. In the next number we are sure to read about Ven. Nārada Thera's mission to the West, a proposed Vihāra, in London, Restoration of Mahiyangana Cetiya, New Governor-General's pro-Sinhalese and pro-Buddhist propensity, his Excellency's mastery of the Sinhala language and other actual pieces of news. We wish long life to the Czech Professor, and when he next visits Ceylon he should

not be refused any rare books or manuscripts so long as there are spare copies left in Lankā.

To conclude this article on Buddhism in Czechoslovakia writer draws attention to the recent visit to Ceylon of a Czech Representative, who visited many Vihāras in and near Colombo, came to Vajirā-rāmaya, where Ven. Nārada Thero, just back from England, where several Czech Buddhist ladies asked for specific instruction in meditation, offered to get down a big Pāli book on ola leaves from Udukkava for the new Czech student of Buddhism; and there being no time, Venerable Piyadassi Thero straightaway combed the whole library, till he found two loose leaves as present to

Prof. V. Lesny and other Buddhists at Prague. Mr. V. H'ala, the Representative, also carried with him to Prague a volume of Ven. Nyānatiloka's cyclo-styled copy of *Visuddhi Magga* for Prof. Lesny, a Buddha statue for another Prague devotee, much printed Word of the Dhamma, a score of "The Buddhist" (Colombo) Bosat, and happy memories of Buddhist, Colombo. He was still commissioned to bring some sandalwood scent sticks (*handunkuru*) and a fresh coconut from Ceylon to Prague. Let us hope he has obtained both and returned safe to Prague, where he will report to Prof. V. Lesny of us and thus cement the bond between the Buddhists of Ceylon and those of Prague and other cities in Czechoslovakia.

SOCIETY AND THE INDIVIDUAL

By

A. MIVANAPALANA

THE Individual and Society. All of us have been interested in this subject in some form or shape during most of our conscious, and may be, even in our unconscious life. For, is not the life of every one of us a strategy, an adjustment to an ever-changing environment, particularly to that part of our environment which we term society?

Is not every moment of our life a crisis, a conflict, a tug-of-war, even during moments of so-called contentment and bliss? In contentment and bliss man struggles or wishes to maintain and continue that state. This struggle or wish is strategy and conflict. In it, is incipient disharmony, and definite potentiality of disillusion. The history of every individual, is the history of this struggle. It is the history of the problem suggested by the title of this talk.

Man has been defined as a social animal. "That man is an animal is admitted—but that he is social is open to serious doubt," so runs the facetious witticism. Behind this witticism lies a fund of truth. It poses the problem implied in the subject of my talk far more forcibly and even more revealingly, than its title.

Man is an animal. Undoubtedly. Not only biologically. We live in times which exemplify this fact at every turn, practically in every country in the world. Almost every evidence that he is an

animal, also discloses that he is not social. Thus is revealed the problem in its grimmest form. We live in times when science and civilisation so-called, have reached their highest pinnacle. Yet total wars, war crimes, further crimes to punish war crimes, Gandhi, Bernadotte, Tin Tut, class struggles, economic warfare, militant nationalism, religious fanaticism, civil wars, crimes within the same state, families divided—all furnish proof that man is not only animal, but is unsocial.

This age-old problem, old as man himself, since the day he took the step towards evolving into a social being, has engaged his attention. Why? only because of his acute consciousness of the absence of the social instinct in other men. His attention to the problem, was a reaction—not an action pure and simple unmotivated by self-interest. It was to protect himself from the unpleasantness resulting from unsocial behaviour of others. Every such reaction was a resistance, a strategy, an opposing force to meet the force of the unsocial individual. Thus has grown a vast maze of opposing forces, tug-of-wars intensifying the problem of individual as individual and spreading its incidence over an incredibly large area and making the solution or rather the dissolution of the problem increasingly intricate and difficult. Add to this struggle of opposing forces the accidental interplay and by-play between individuals in society, developing unanticipated and incalculable problems, bringing, on the whole of

mankind, what appears an inextricable stranglehold.

Wells finds that man has come to the end of this tether—that *Homo sapiens*—is irrevocably doomed unless he learns to grow social. And how is he to do this? Wells has no formula, except an attempt or restatement of the idealisms of man which have so far failed and betrayed him most miserably. He will have a rearrangement of the social tug-of-war inspired by a change of heart, a re-orientation of values, and Superman will emerge, (I suppose) if this recipe is worked out—of which he has very real and dismal doubt. The doubt is more than justified when one sees that in the restatement and reorientation of idealisms, the opposition of individual to society is retained at the base, and there is only a change of formula as to the reconstruction of the superstructure. He attempts to come out of the maze and in the effort—re-enters it through another door more secretive and more concealed because of its new facade.

Olaf Stapledon in a very sincere and lengthy search looks "Beyond the 'isms' and reaches a formula in substance not different to that of Wells. Scores of writers in the West have awakened to the disillusionment of religions, ethics, morality, philosophical systems with the acute pains induced by total war, brought to the door and the life of every individual, as nothing in the past has been able to do. They are all furiously thinking. With great earn-

estness and sincerity they address themselves to the task. By long winded and labyrinthine paths after traversing most interesting viewpoints, making discoveries, evolving fresh generalisations and rationalisations, all arrive more or less where Wells arrived, namely at a change of heart and values, a reorientation of everything to suit the change. None of them escape the banality of wanting to erect the new structure on the old foundation. As a matter of fact every one of them believes that the change of heart and restatement of values and the set-up of fresh idealisms in place of the fallen idealism, is a new foundation. None of them see that the new structure is to be built, as the old edifice was, on the interplay of opposing forces between individual and individual on the one side and individual and society on the other. They believe that in the method and manner of reinstatement of values and idealisms there is power to make of man something less of an animal than old ideals and religions were able to make of him. The disguise of the vestments of the social animal will be incapable of making him more social or less animal.

It may be thought that the change of heart they propose is a change of the individual to accord with the change of values and idealism. What does this change of heart mean or what can it mean? Nothing more than that fresh idealism will take the place of old idealisms, while the individual, continues to regard himself, as a separate entity undergoing the process of re-orientation in relation to the new objectives or idealisms. The concept of separateness of the entity of the individual, introduces at the very source of the new inspiration, the requisite element for the disintegration of the entire structure meant to be raised. The very concept of separateness of the entity is antithesis. Antithesis is conflict—conflict of each separate entity with other similar separate entities and with the entire group of other separate entities. This is reset under disguise within the full gamut of the old conflicts and their interminable coil of entanglements.

How have the 'isms' of old dealt with this problem? Primitive man with his animism invested natural elements and objects with malefic and benefic attributes and found in them supernatural forces interfering with man. He sought to resolve his conflicts and solve his problems by appeal to the spirits of nature. The dawn of intelligence and elementary understanding of the processes of nature soon laid the spirits of nature to rest. The efficacious solutions of problems by this method gradually went out of vogue.

Polytheisms with gods and goddesses prone to polygamy, polyandry, illicit loves, jealousies, rivalries and hates came to inhabit the mountains and skies and took a hand in the affairs of men, meting out punishment to the wicked rewarding the just and good at all times showing a weakness to follow the example of those who created these shining ones and yet preferred to believe that they were the creatures and the sport of the gods.

The chaos that arose in the moral concepts of man under the sway of polytheism was retrieved by a grand rationalisation of the heavenly disorder by enthroning one god and dethroning the rest with their engaging wives and their amatory adventures.

Monotheism had the capacity to evolve a consistent code of moral commandments to suit the shape of the moral development of man at the time of its emergence. With the development of man's intellectual and moral concepts, anthropomorphic god, who though august and solitary in the heavens continuing to possess some inherited weaknesses of the motley crowd of his ancestors, began to shed his terrific aspect as seen in the Old Testament, and fast evolved into an ethereal non-personal benign god-head with a refined morality to the extent of the refinement of man's moral ideas. So man continues to create his god and clothe him with ever-fresh attributes.

In the process of creation setting up and evolving of his gods from animistic beginnings we have seen man's gods in Greece, Rome, Babylon, Egypt, India. We have also seen the rituals, prayers, ceremonies, incantations, priestly meditations, offerings, oblations, sacrifices, self-mortifications and penances. Alongside these we have witnessed as part and parcel of religion a medley of moralities and sometimes immoralities showing the changing conscience of man.

Through this long history of variegated pattern has run the problem we are considering, of individual and society. All through these efforts at god-making, ritual creating and morality devising, the fevered anxiety of man to solve this problem, to escape its pains, is clearly evident.

But centuries he has spent, with each new effort, weaving into the fabric of his new solution the whole of the old problem, deluding himself into the belief that the new appearance had successfully shed the old weakness. Every time, he removed what appeared to him as the vitiating factor, throughout continuing to retain the ancient delusion of a separate individuality in the individual, thus setting

up, implicit in the new invention, the weakness of the old one that was being discarded. Every new effort was thus foredoomed to failure as was eventually evident each time, when a fresh revision or version became necessary. Wells and the rest in the West are continuing in the coil of the vicious circle as did the creators of gods and morality of old.

The failure of 'isms' and moralities is the failure to understand the problem of the individual. The individual when understood as a separate entity has naturally to set itself up in isolation in relation to the rest—that is, in relation to society. If the individual is not so understood as an entity the antithesis between the individual and the rest falls away. The individual becomes incapable of considering himself as in opposite relation to any one in any matter. Thus the conflict dissolves at its source or rather does not arise at all. This absence of conflict gives rise to a state of affairs in which conflicts in reaction cannot arise. This begins a cessation, an absence of conflict with individuals as they realise the absence of a separate entity in their individualities. This realisation when fully and completely established brings about a state of love in place of the state of conflict. The relation of one individual to another and the rest of individuals becomes love unqualified—not fleshly love, a sentimental love, an erotic love, but a love of a universal kind, an impossibility of conceiving of any conflict or opposition—a love which is not a strategy or an adjustment but a love pure, simple unalloyed unadulterated by any ulterior motive—not even by an idealism. The moment the problem of the individual is solved by the individual he ceases to have any problem in relation to another or in relation to society. Thus the individual problem is the problem of society. Society consists of individuals. Problem individuals constitute a problem society. Where individuals are problem free society has no problems. Moralities, 'isms,' theologies, supernaturalisms are of no avail. Only understanding avails.

The intellectual appreciation of this position at some level or other may not be very difficult. But full realisation with its compelling effect which makes us incapable of thinking, saying or doing anything without a full implementation of that realisation, is the problem of each one of us till a full awakening into that realisation.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"CHRISTIAN WAY OF DOING"

Sir,

Madam Chiang is the daughter of a well-known clergyman (Rev. Soong) who made the Buddhist General Chiang to be a Christian at the age of 40 years before their marriage. Both have been almost forcing all Government officials to be Christians, with the hope of Christianizing the whole of China. The wrath of Gods has fallen on them today.

Yours, etc.,

D.W.S.K.

Hong Kong,
29-10-49.

BUDDHIST VIHARA SOCIETY IN ENGLAND

I shall be grateful if you will kindly publish in your valuable journal the following extracts from a letter received by me from Mrs. A. Rant, Hon. Secretary of the Buddhist Vihara Society in England :—

"... Since the first Annual General Report which was issued at the end of last year, we have made great progress, due chiefly to the visit to this country of our revered President, Ven'ble Narada Maha Thera. To many of us it was a wonderful experience to hear Ven'ble Narada preach Dhamma, and he has made an indelible impression. We are fervently hoping he will be able to visit us again next year and once more help us turn the Wheel of Dhamma.

It is indeed a matter of urgent necessity for Buddhists in England to have a Centre where they can foregather and hear the Dhamma from learned, well-instructed Bhikkhus. For this it is essential that we should have a Vihara where Bhikkhus can live as far as possible in accordance with the Vinaya rules. Although through the foresight and generosity of some well-to-do Burmese Buddhists a temporary Vihara has now been established, the accommodation provided is far from ideal, and we need a centre that is worthy of the name of the Blessed One. We are, therefore, doing our utmost

to collect the necessary funds, and although in this predominantly Christian country ours is naturally a slow and uphill task, we have every hope of success, especially with the co-operation of the many Ceylonese and Burmese Buddhists in London. A special "Vihara Fund Committee," comprising nationals of Sri Lanka, Burma and other Buddhist countries as well as British Buddhists, has been formed to deal exclusively with the fulfilment of our primary object, the establishment of a Vihara. An appeal to H.M. Government has elicited a reply indicating entire sympathy with our project on the part of our rulers and stating that consideration will be given to our Society's appeal. A further request has now been sent to H.M. Government, asking for specific facilities.

If you wish to help us further in our efforts to spread the Dhamma in the West, might I suggest that you try and interest your friends in our objects? Enclosed with the Report mentioned earlier in this letter, I am sending you some Membership Application Forms. These forms, upon completion by newly enrolled members, should be returned to me, though their subscriptions may be sent to the Hon. Jayewardene, clearly marked "Buddhist Vihara Society in England." You would be doing a great service to the cause of Buddhism in England and the West generally by interesting as many people as possible in our work and thus obtaining for us material support as well as moral support.

"... Nothing gives us greater happiness than to find we have the active support and co-operation of our fellow-Buddhists in Sri Lanka where the Teaching has been preserved in its pristine purity through the centuries." May I, therefore, be permitted to appeal to the members of the Y.M.B.A. and other well-wishers to give their active support to the above Society and help fulfil its noble objects. I shall be glad to supply membership application forms.

As already known, the objects of the Society are :—

- (1) To establish and maintain a Buddhist Shrine, to be open to the

public for the purpose of meditation; and a Vihara where Bhikkhus can live in accordance with their monastic discipline.

- (2) To spread the Doctrine of Theravada.
- (3) To hold regular Buddhist Services, comprising the taking of Ti Sarana, of Pancha Sila, and exposition of the Doctrine.
- (4) To compile a reference Library of Buddhist works and to establish a reading room.

Subscription rates : Rs. 7/- per year ;
Rs. 75/- for life.

Yours, &c.,

R. GUNAWARDENA.

Rubber Research Scheme.
Agalawatta.
21.11.49.

ANCIENT SYSTEM OF LIFE CAN SOLVE MODERN PROBLEMS

(Continued from page 88)

Ittihipi pandita hoti—tatha tatha vicakkana

(Man is not learned everywhere, on various occasions woman too becomes learned and clever.)

Every now and then the Buddha protested against the ill-treatment of women and consequently women were treated well. They were released from their age-long bondage. We see that innocent and unfortunate widows were allowed to marry during the time of the Buddha. According to certain teachings of the Buddha, the superstitious belief, that their subjection to suffering was due to past Karma or action, was exploded.

When we consider over the foregoing facts we can come to the conclusion that there is an ancient system of life that can solve the innumerable problems and difficulties of modern life. There are very many lessons which we should learn from this system. Today the world is in a great delusion. It has lost its way. It does not know whither it goes. It knows no path to follow. This world which is now suffering and groaning can only be set aright by setting aright the foundations of a systematic life.

COLOMBO Y. M. B. A. NEWS

THE RETURN OF THE RED DRAGON

Colombo Y.M.B.A. Players were Great

IT is such a long, long time since we had appeared on the stage that one is apt to think that we made our debut with Dick Dias' "Return of the Red Dragon" last month. Any way, the smashing success our fellows achieved—all but two were new-comers to the stage—may even justify a black-out of memory if it will only spur us to more sustained effort in the future. And there should be no cause for despair if

the Dick Dias-Nanayakkara "Bracket" continues. Now Nanayakkara is neither a producer nor an actor. He is our General Secretary, and without his dynamic energy and ever-readiness to sacrifice his leisure and sleep, to the point of domestic upheaval, it would have discouraged even such a stout heart as Dick Dias.

Gosh! What a worker this Dick Dias is—author-producer-actor. Is that all? He is stage-hand, time-keeper, mechanic and everything else, all rolled into one. That is the secret of his success and that is how, by example, he holds his

cast together. Yes, I say it, because I saw him through the Y.M.B.A. rehearsals and I have seen him elsewhere. We cannot be too appreciative of or too grateful for his services. Yes, join me, please—three hearty cheers for Dick!

And now to return to "The Red Dragon," or, rather to come to "The Return of the Red Dragon."

Sinhalese Drama isn't, despite headshakings, quite dead. This is what many of those who saw the recent performance of the play "The Return of the Red Dragon" felt. It was good entertainment.

Future historians, no doubt, will remark on our pre-occupation with violence: not content with a series of world wars, mounting in geometrical progression, we look for amusement in gangsterism, murder and mystery. However, it is a weakness of the age. "The Return of the Red Dragon" is not very different, but is produced with respect for dignity and decorum, free from camouflaged vulgarity often sought after with an eye to the box office. The theme is Chinese, as the name suggests, but the scene of action is in Ceylon. This is a thriller that depends not only on our wondering what will come next, but also on the suspense of the situation growing larger and larger till, like a child's balloon, it goes pop. Save the opening scene, which is rather slow, the others which are electric and pregnant with mystery and action, hold the audience in suspense, while the amusing situations provide welcome relief from the dramatic tension. Two small points. The gradual lighting of the bench on which Winsford sits in the first scene would be far more effective than a sudden illumination. No. 2. And where did that cobra go in the last scene?

I don't like to present any bouquets to individual members of the cast, but I cannot help it. I must refer again to Dick Dias who brought experience, talent and ability to bear upon his role as Dr. Chang Fu. Everywhere he picks out the pattern of mystery and danger.

One of the headaches of the General Secretary at the initial stages was to find a young woman for the solitary role. The search ended with Jessica Wickramasingha, who, as Ho Fang (wasn't he good?) would say—as he alone could say—"was damn nice." Welaratne's radiating personality, Rupasena's natural speech and action, Hector's experience, Tilakasiri's superb characterisation, Abraham's "eccentricity"—in fact the uniformly good acting of the small cast, together with the decor and make-up by Mr. I. D. A. Weerawardene, the lighting and the various mechanical contraptions, all will remain long in our memory.

YEW KAN DU

The Players

Raman	..	Hector W. De Silva
Dr. Chang Fu	..	Dick Dias
Mangala	..	Jessica Wickramasingha
Winsford Silva	..	D. E. Welaratne
Buddy	..	M. A. Rupasena
Wang Loo	..	Lionel De Silva
Ho Fang	..	Benny M. Perera
Proctor	..	B. Don Abraham
Chinese Pedlar	}	Tilakasiri Fernando
Chinese Servant		

STUDENTS' SINHALESE ELOCUTION

Results of Preliminaries and Semi-Finals

The preliminaries and semi-finals of the Annual Students' Sinhalese Elocution Contest, conducted by the Colombo Y.M.B.A., held on Saturday resulted as follows:—

Junior Boys: H. D. Carthelis, Sumanaramaya, Mt. Lavinia; W. D. Dharmasena, Sumanaramaya, Mt. Lavinia; A. Newton de Alwis, Vajiraramaya, Bambalapitiya; W. A. Ariyadasa, English School, Udugampola; Basil Wilfred Nonis, St. Sebastian College, Moratuwa; Sherard de Almeda, St. Sebastian College, Moratuwa; N. Lincoln Bastian, Welikadamulla, Wattala; D. Dharmaransi, Gunananda Vidyalaya, Colombo; G. A. Dharmapala, Gunananda Vidyalaya, Colombo; Dayanatha Amarasingha, St. Sebastian College, Moratuwa; W. D. Dissanayake, Vajiraramaya, Bambalapitiya.

Senior Boys: Peter Mendis, St. Sebastian College, Moratuwa; M. L. Leslie Karunadasa, Bodhiraja School, Moratuwa; Marsian Leslie Wickramasingha, Pamankada; P. V. Nandasiri, Wellampitiya; D. V. Piyasena, Ratnapura; K. A. S. Kalyanaratne, Wesley College; A. B. Perera, Piliandela Central School.

Junior Girls: K. D. Indra Padmini, Jetavanaramaya, Colombo; June Alagaratne, Presbyterian Girls' School, Dehiwala; Indranie Wickramasekera, Presbyterian Girls' School, Dehiwala; Chitra D. Samarasingha, Norris Avenue, Col-

ombo; Monica Letitia Munasingha, Mahinda School, Dematagoda; N. Wasantha Pinto Senanayake, Kalavritigodella School, Sirima Weerasingha, Kolonnawa; S. W. Siriwardena, Sri Sumangala Vidyalaya, Weligama.

Senior Girls: J. Evelyn Fernando, Museaus Practising School, Colombo; B. Emalyn Gunaratne, Museaus Practising School, Colombo; Kusuma Ratnayake, Museaus Practising School, Colombo; W. Premawathy Dissanayake, Vajiraramaya, Bambalapitiya; Karunawathy Kuruvitaaratchi, Government Girls' School, Ambatelle, Angoda; Karunawathy Rajanetti, Welikadamulla, Wattala; Swinitha Nanayakkara, Ketawalamulla Road, Colombo; Soma Kalpage, Mahinda School, Dematagoda.

The finals and the prize-giving will be held on Saturday, December 3.

The judges at the preliminaries and the semi-finals were:—

Miss Dilsiri Lamabadusuriya, Miss Sujata de Silva, Miss Bladra Goonetilaka, Miss Daisy Karawita, Miss Chandrani Katukodiarachchi, Mrs. M. de Z. Gunawardene, Mrs. A. M. R. Dassanayake, Messrs. W. Wimalachandra, D. S. Abeyasinghe, Deegoda Piyadasa, Sirisena Maitiye, D. N. W. de Silva and A. E. M. Abeyesekere.

NEW MEMBERS:—

1.11.49: T. B. Tennakoon (Inspector of Co-operative Societies), Barigama, Werellagama; I. F. Samarantunge, "Wijitha," Dematagoda Place, Colombo.

8.11.49: H. P. De Silva, 952, Third Division, Maradana; Chandrasiri Tilaka Perera, Kalapaluwawa, Rajagiriya; Vimala Chandra Perera, Kalapaluwawa, Rajagiriya.

15.11.49: T. M. Burah, 807, Station Road, Hunupitiya; M. C. Wannachy, Clerk, C.G.R., "Kusinara," Paiyagala North; B. H. Jumas, 124, Averiwatta Road, Wattala; E. M. C. Amunugama, Teacher, Zahira College, 103, Greenlands Road, Havelock Town.

RESIGNATIONS:—

S. Mahesan and S. Nadarajah, No. 126, High Level Road, Nugegoda.

NEWS AND NOTES

OPENING OF ABHIDHAMMA VIDYALAYA

Under the auspices of the Buddhist Philosophical Society, the Abhidhamma 'Vidyalyaya' was declared open recently at No. 231, Dematagoda, by the Ven. Rerukane Chandawimala Maha Thero.

Dr. W. E. A. Fonseka said that to understand the Buddhist Doctrine well, a knowledge of Abhidhamma was essential.

It enabled one to see things as they truly were. In the Abhidhamma, the Buddha had anticipated the findings of many a philosopher and scientist, particularly, with regard to the Doctrine of 'Anicca,' (Transience), 'Dukka,' (Sorrow), and 'Anatta,' (Soulessness). Abhidhamma was meant not merely for study, but for deep contemplation, so that one might realise one's ultimate goal.

In this philosophy, the Buddha had microscopically analysed, 'Mind' (Nāma), and 'Matter,' (Rupa), and had set a unique path to get rid of the ills of life.

Mr. B. R. Dias, Manager of the Vidyalyaya, offered betel and invited the Ven. Rerukane Chandawimala Maha Thero, to declare open the Abhidhamma Vidyalyaya by lighting a brass oil lamp.

The Ven. Rerukane Chandawimala Maha Thero after lighting the oil lamp, said: "The Buddha's teaching is profound. It can be clearly grasped only by those who possess a knowledge of the Abhidhamma. Although some say, that a knowledge of the Abhidhamma is not necessary, to understand the Buddha's teaching, it must be emphasised that it is essential for a clear understanding.

It is my wish that this Institution should be established with a devotion, <http://www.dhammadownload.com>

SANGHI RELICS IN BANARAS

The Holy Relics of Arahants Sri Sari-putta and Maha Moggallana, the two chief disciples of Lord Buddha were taken to Sarnath, Banaras, for exposition where the U.P. Government accorded a state reception. The delegation that accompanied the Holy Relics was an international one, representing all the Buddhist countries of the world. The delegation headed by the Maharaj Kumar of Sikkim and Ven. N. Jinaratana Thera, Secretary of the Maha Bodhi Society, consisted of Ven. H. Dhammananda, of the Maha Bodhi Society, the Maharaj Kumar of Sikkim, Secretary to H.H. Maharaja of Sikkim, the Rev. Lama G. C. L. Sangpo (Mongolia), U San Htoon U (Burma) Sri Sahu Mani Harsa Jyoti (Nepal), Mr. J. W. Swale Ryan (Europe), Dr. S. P. Chatterjee (Bengal), Pt. Jayadratha Choudhury (Chittagong), Sri P. L. Tamang and the representatives of Tibet, Bhutan and Siam. The Relics which

were taken in the Punjab Mail under Police escort in a special tourist car, offered by the Government of India were received by H.E. the Governor of U.P. at the Banaras Cant. Station.

These led the worship of the Sacred Relics from November 5th to 13th:—

H.E. Sir Homi Modi, Governor of the United Provinces; H.H. Kashiraj, Maharaja of Banaras; The Hon'ble Shri A. G. Kher, Minister of Local Self-Government, U.P., Lucknow; His Holiness Jeltan Bakula, the Head Lama of Ladakh (Kashmir); Shri P. K. Kaul, Judge, Allahabad High Court; Shri Kamalapati Tripathi, M.L.A., Banaras; Shri Raghunath Singh, Vice-President, City Congress Committee, Banaras; The Hon'ble Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, Minister of Police, U.P., Lucknow; Shri Jagat Narayan Dube, President, District Board, Banaras.

—Cor.

WHAT MME. CHIANG WOULD HAVE DONE WITH JOHN L. LEWIS

New York.

Madame Chiang Kai-shek has been described as making a throat-slitting motion at one time when asked what she would do in China with a labour leader like John L. Lewis.

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt outlines the incident in the current instalment of her wartime memoirs in "McCall's Magazine."

Madame Chiang, on her first wartime trip to the U.S., impressed Mrs. Roosevelt as a "sweet, gentle, rather pathetic figure."

Later, Mrs. Roosevelt wrote, she was surprised at "the casual acceptance of certain cruelty" by the then first lady of China.

"I remember an incident at a dinner party..." the widow of President Roosevelt said. "John L. Lewis was acting up at the time, and Franklin turned to Madame Chiang and asked: 'What would you do in China and with a labour leader like John L. Lewis?'"

"She never said a word, but beautiful, small hand came up very quietly and slid across her throat—a most expressive gesture."

Lewis is President of the United Mine Workers.—*China Mail*.

MR. RAMAGE

A London Correspondent writes:—

With the news that Brah. E. Ramage (known in Ceylon as Rev. Upāli) has been accepted as a working member of the Buddhist Vihara Society of England of which the Ven. Nārada Mahā Thera is President, it is also reported that he has been chosen to take over the Unitarian Churches of Maidstone and Chatham in England of which, for many years, the Rev. Will Hayes was Minister. Many in Ceylon will remember Mr. Hayes as a frequent speaker at the Maha Bodhi Society in London and the author of the book "My Buddha" and other works.

Far from leaving Buddhism and becoming a Christian, Mr. Ramage has been chosen *because* of his period in the Ceylon Buddhist Sangha, and in this Free 'Christian' Church, Christian only in the sense that they still do not yet officially accept the idea of Karma and Rebirth in which many are interested and also of course that they accept Jesus as their main leader. But they *do not* accept Jesus either as Christ or as an 'unique being from Heaven and Son of God,' but as one of many world Teachers together with The Buddha, Lao, Tze, Sri Krishna and others, and as a modern spokesman, the late Walt Whitman of America.

On Sundays there are addresses instead of sermons. The following is a report of one as sent to the local papers for publication under "Church News."

"Life in a Sinhalese Buddhist Monastery" was the subject of an address given on November 13th at the Chatham Unitarian Church and to be repeated at Maidstone on the 20th.

Brah. (Rev.) E. Ramage was well-qualified to give this talk as he has been

an ordained Buddhist Monk of "Deacon" status, Sāmanero, and lived in Buddhist Monasteries for 14 years as well as visiting Hindu and Christian Ashrams.

He spoke of the cheerfulness, cleanliness and sparkling, invigorating yet calm serene atmosphere which all Buddhist Monasteries and Temples possess.

Then he spoke of the monks' costume, their daily round of duties and how they are forbidden by their Rules to eat anything between the noon of one day and sunrise of the next. He mentioned how at one time, before alien missionary and government influences came to power, how the monks were the chief school teachers of the people and how well they performed their task—a task they may once more, with their country's Independence, be able to take up and continue.

Also he spoke of how not only women, but men, children and even youths, flock to the Temples on Full and New Moon Festival (Poya) days. A thing rare to see in England. He also mentioned how so many Europeans have become Buddhist monks from time to time, but most eventually leaving the Robes disappointed, for to join the Sangha means not to run away from life to a life of ease but to having to face oneself if the real value of a Bhikkhu life is to be achieved. The Abhidhamma being far in advance than even the high stage in the West that psychology has reached under Freud, Jung and others. He related also how he himself *did not* 'disrobe,' but by advice had *put aside* (temporarily) his Robe for health reasons, and not then, until he had achieved within the Sangha (Buddhist Monkhood) the gain of the greatest prize which he believes life can contain—Also he spoke of the honour in which Sangha and laity alike in Ceylon and India still hold him.

It was an interesting talk, too short on a very large subject. Mr. Ramage, however, will be speaking again on this subject and welcomes written questions which he would endeavour to answer publicly in due course."

COLOMBO Y. M. B. A. HALL

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