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“*Sīla Paññānato Jayam*”

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“THE IDEAL PAST”

IT is a curious fact and a universal tendency that humanity always believes that the past is the best state of all, the present is bad and the future will be worse. All good and holy men regarded as saints and arahants lived in the past; contemporary men and affairs are corrupt and degenerate; after us, the future will be increasingly worse. This ideal past, which in reality never existed, drifts further and further away as one draws near it, like a mirage. If one dives deep into that “ideal past” and investigates the experiences of those who lived then, it will be found that they were equally dissatisfied with the contemporary state of affairs, and that they themselves had their eyes fixed on an ever-retreating “ideal past.”

So, we find the Pali Commentaries praising the theras who lived in the past, and indirectly remarking on the unsatisfactory nature of the contemporary society of monks, at least in the fifth century A.C.¹

For example, in the course of relating the story of Tipiṭaka Cullasumma Thera who attended a sermon of his pupil Tipiṭaka Cullanāga Thera, the commentaries say that the ancient theras were fond of listening to the dhamma, and vied with one another in assembling immediately they heard the announcement.² This may be taken as an insinuation that the monks at the time this statement was made did not care much for hearing the dhamma.

There was a difference of opinion between the same teacher and pupil with regard to a subtle doctrinal point, and ultimately the teacher is reported to have accepted openly the opinion of his

pupil. Here again the Commentaries praise Cullasumma Thera's magnanimity, saying: “And the ancient theras are not jealous; they do not go about carrying only what they prefer, like a bundle of sugar-cane. They accept only the reasonable and reject the unreasonable.”³ This suggests that generally the contemporary monks were not amenable to reason, but obstinately held fast to their own views, whether right or wrong.⁴

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Speaking about attending on the Elders, the Commentaries state: “Now, the ancient bhikkhus do not show respect looking at the face, thinking ‘this is our preceptor or this is our teacher.’ They attend on them (their guests) as they come.”⁵ When we read this passage, we get the feeling that the monks at the time this was written waited only upon their teachers and preceptors and the like, and not on other theras, unknown to them.⁶

Numerous arahants are said to have lived during the period of Duṭṭha-Gāmaṇi and his brother Saddhā-Tissa, in the first century B.C. But, strangely enough, we find Saddhā-Tissa requesting the monks to name one holy man (*ayya*) who deserved his veneration.⁷ This undoubtedly is a reflection on the Sangha of the first century B.C. Saddhā-Tissa does not seem to have been pleased with the great majority of monks of

his day, and seems to have been at a loss to find one whom he could worship with undiminished devotion.⁸

This kind of general dissatisfaction with contemporary society and admiration for the past can be traced as far back as the time of the Buddha himself.

One day Mahā-Kassapa visited the Buddha at Veluvana at Rājagaha. The great elder, who had an unequalled reputation for holiness, spent most of his time in solitude, and visited the Master only occasionally. The Buddha himself held him in high esteem, and regarded the elder equal to himself in exhorting monks. Therefore the Buddha requested Mahā-Kassapa to advise monks and give them a religious talk on this occasion.

But Mahā-Kassapa showed no eagerness to do this: “Sir,” said he, “now (*etarahi*) the monks are not compliant (*dubbacā*); they are inclined to be recalcitrant (*dovacassakaraṇehi dhammehi samannāgatā*); they are intolerant (*akkhamā*) and not keen to take advice (*appadakkhīnaggāhīno anusāsaniṃ*). Here I saw Sir, Ananda's co-resident (*saddhāvihāri*), a bhikkhu called Bhaṅga and another bhikkhu called Ābhūjika who is Anuruddha's co-resident, talking each other down on their learning (*añña-māññaṃ sutena accāvadante*) saying: ‘Come on bhikkhu, who will recite more? who will recite better? who will recite longer?’”⁹

Similarly on two other occasions at Sāvatthi, when the Buddha suggested that Mahā-Kassapa should advise the monks, the great elder was reluctant on the ground that the monks then were bad, and implied further that they were

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1. We should remember here that the statements found in the present Commentaries were translated into Pāli from the original Sinhalese Commentaries written earlier—most probably several centuries earlier. Therefore these statements refer to a society that existed even earlier than the 5th century A.C.

2. *porānakattherā kira piyadhammasavanā honti. Saddaṃ suteva ahaṃ pathamaṃ ahaṃ paṭhamanti ekappahāreva osaranti.*

Dīgha Commentary (Hewavitarana ed.) p. 535; *Majjhima Com.* (Hew. ed.) p. 187.

3. *porānakattherā hi anusuyyaka honti, na attano ucimēva ucchubhāraṃ viya*

ukkhipitvā vicaranti; kāraṇam eva ganhanti, akāraṇaṃ vissajjenti. *Dā* p. 535; *MA I*, p. 187.

4. But ancient monks were no better either: We know how the quarrelsome bhikkhus of Kosambi obstinately and unreasonably held fast to their own factious views on a minor matter in spite of the Buddha's admonition, compelling the Master to leave the monastery and retire to the forest.

5. *porānakabhikkhū kira na amhākaṃ upajjhīyo amhākaṃ ācariyoti mukhaṃ olokētā vattam karonti; sampattaparricchede va karonti.* *Dā* p. 530; *MA I*, p. 207; *Yb* p. 245.

6. Pāli Commentaries refer to monks who were too fond of their pupils, and would not allow them to attend on others—*Dīgha Commentary*, (Hewavitarana ed.) p. 575; *Majjhima Com.* (Hew. ed.) p. 241; *Vibhanga Com.* (Hew. ed.) p. 200.

7. *Bhante, maghaṃ vanditabbayutta-kam ekam ayyam ācikkhatha*—*AA I*, p. 384.

8. Was Saddhā-Tissa, perhaps, prejudiced because of the young monk of Lohapāsāda who fell in love with a lady of his court? See *Anguttara Com.* p. 13.

9. *S*, p. 275.

SOME THOUGHTS ON RIGHT THINKING (SAMMĀ SANKAPPA)

“SURELY, there is a difference between right thinking and right or conditioned thought. We may be able to produce in ourselves imitatively right thought, but such thought is not right thinking. Right or conditioned thought is uncreative. But when we know how to think for ourselves, which is to be living, dynamic, there it is possible to bring about a happier culture.”—(J. Krisnamurti, 1944, Talks Ojaill, 12-18, page 3, Talk 1.)

The distinction is drawn here between independent thinking on the part of the individual, where the thinking is a process which rises from the inward activity of the individual on the one hand, and the thoughts arising in the mind of imitative individual on the other hand, where those thoughts are after types and patterns which the individual has imitatively acquired and reproduced, may be, with a slight difference in form or shape. Obviously pattern thinkers only reproduce their prototypes and contribute nothing themselves. As a matter of fact they do no real thinking. They are therefore not engaged in grappling with any real problem. Naturally they can offer no solutions. How can they have effects on culture or happiness, when they are more or less mechanical reproducers? Not so the thinker who actually engages in the process of real thinking, instead of reproducing thoughts after the pattern of the thoughts of others. Thus, right thinking is one thing and a right or conditioned thought another. The reproducer of the right thought, is only trafficking in a conditioned thought. He has conditioned the thought by accepting it as right—without having thought it out for himself. If he did the latter he would have done the thinking—not adopted the thought. The adopted thought is to the extent of adoption conditioned. To the same extent it is not thought out by the adopter. So right thinking is not the same as a right or conditioned thought. The conditioned thought may be a right thought—but it is not right thinking in so far as the adopter has never thought it out or done the thinking himself.

Having thus far elaborated the meaning of the quotation we might examine, the attitude of the practical Buddhist of today to right thinking. The Buddhists both lay and monkish are content to traffic in conditioned thoughts. The Pitakas are quoted. The Buddha word is quoted. Buddhaghosa and the whole train of commentators are quoted—all as authority—not as an aid to investigation or an incentive to dynamic thinking and as a help to think for ourselves to grapple with the problems at first hand and make our own discoveries.

Thus stagnation and sterility take the place of creative thinking, self-discovery and progress on the path.

When and how will the Buddhists set about or even consider the task of using the Pitakas and commentators as aids to investigation and set foot on the arduous path of the actual process of right thinking? When and how will they give up the useless wanderings in

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the deserts of imitative thought vainly hoping some day to arrive at an oasis? We the Buddhists of Ceylon are dreaming of leading a war-torn world into the paths of peace. Conditioned or pattern thought, however right, is an enclosure. It excludes, it resists. It creates conflict thereby. Is conflict to be avoided by entrenching ourselves in conditioned thought? Is this not rather a fresh way of engendering new conflicts?

Is it not the obvious task to give up conditioned thought and instead start doing the thinking ourselves, by delving into ourselves, our natures, our activities, our hopes fears and desires to discover the process at work and thus make self-discovery thereby bringing about right thinking? Is this not the only way in which the first step of the noble eightfold Path may be traversed?

The question may be asked in what way, the acceptance of authority leads to conflict. Have not the acceptance of the authority of religious teachers led to holy wars of offence as well as defence? Zealots have carried out holy wars to convert peoples to their faith. Blood has been shed to defend religion—national religion. Even these defensive wars have known all the horrors of other wars. Death destruction and human misery have been the price paid for these wars of defence too. This is the price which a teacher like the Buddha would never have paid or agreed as a justifiable price to be paid even for the defence of His teaching. Yet misguided followers of teachers of universal love have in a frenzy of loyalty, let loose the worst passions of human nature on their fellowmen in defence of and in the name of the Lords of Love and compassion. All this violation of the feelings of compassion in the name of the doctrine of compassion itself! Such is the result of sentiments of loyalty to a cause, resistance to that which is seen to be opposed to that cause. The self-enclosing nature of loyalty to a right or conditioned thought, engenders opposition and all the evil elements that emanate from greed, possessiveness and every species of selfishness. Setting up of authority even of the Buddha, building round his teaching sentiments of loyalty and feelings of protectiveness towards his order—the Sangha, developing feelings of attachment to temples, images, symbols, places of worship, rituals and ceremonies in turn make for anger, passion, hatred, ill will of all sorts, the war of the creeds, the din of conflicting ideologies, the intoxication which is religious frenzy, the loss of reason in man, thoughtlessness to the extent of negation in conduct and feeling of the very foundations of what one professes to defend and propagate and making a pretty little hell on earth. These are the unavoidable evils that attend the

setting up of authority. The authority is set up to cure mankind of these very tendencies. Do we need more to demonstrate the evil of setting up authority; a conditioned or pattern thought, though it may be right? Is more needed to show that what is wanted of the true practical Buddhist is the process of right thinking, the business of grappling with problems first hand and making investigations for one's own self to make the discoveries so essential to become aware as to how one is to act in relation to one's peculiar and individual environment? No two persons being alike, and no two environments being the same, the discoveries of two different persons in the process of right thinking must necessarily be different and the resultant right understanding of one's own self and of one's environment alone, can give one a true basis for action for establishing correct relationship with others. Who can be authority for another? Who can take another along the path? Can our learned monks do so? Can the sacred books do so? Here comes the true significance of “Attāhi Attano nātho.” In the light of this pronouncement all authority crumbles down, Buddha's included. Buddha has nowhere claimed exceptional treatment for himself or his utterances. In the Kāḷāma Sūtra—he said “Mā Samano no garuṭi, Mā pitaka sampādanena.” *i.e.*, Don't accept out of respect for a monk (himself a monk) or because it is set out in the Pitakas. This is why the Buddha speaks of Buddhism as “Atakkawāda” a doctrine not to be proved or disproved by logic—is a limited weapon—with great capacity for misleading. It is only personal experiment by each individual that can satisfy and convince. And personal experiment to be worthwhile, must commence with dynamic and right thinking which never could or should be imitative thinking in terms of a teacher or an authority. That is why Buddhism is described by the Buddha as something to be experienced understood by each individual for himself—bit by bit by first hand experiment.

I have done so much quotation from the Buddha—not to suggest acceptance of what is said here by quoting the authority of the Buddha in support. It is only as helping to see the experience of Buddha in relation to a matter of experience of each one of us as individuals. Community of experience is helpful to see if the experience is true at least for the time being till the dawn of full understanding. To test other experience in light of one's own experience is a normal and natural process and is in no way comparable to the acceptance of the experience of others as valid in total disregard of the fact of no experience of oneself or one's experience being contrary to that of the authority. *The sincere seeker will reject the experience of others even though it be Buddha's when it is in conflict with his own. For that way alone lies progress on the path. In so walking the path we may return to that which we have once rejected or reject what we have*

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WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE METHODS ADOPTED FOR WORLD IMPROVEMENT

"The system on which all the nations of the world are acting is founded in gross deception, in the deepest ignorance, or a mixture of both; so that under no possible modification of the principles on which it is based can it ever produce good to man; on the contrary, its practical results must ever be to produce evil continually."—
Robert Owen.

MEN may be beaten, chained, tormented, yoked like cattle, slaughtered like summer flies, and yet remain in one sense, and that the best sense, free. But to smother their souls within them, to blight and hew into rotting pollards the suckling branches of their human intelligence, to make the flesh and the skin . . . into leathern thongs to yoke machinery with—this is to be slave-masters indeed. . . It is verily this degradation of the operative into a machine which is leading the mass of the nations into vain, incoherent, destructive struggling for a freedom of which they cannot explain the nature to themselves. Their universal outcry against wealth and against nobility is not forced from them either by the pressure of famine or the sting of mortified pride. These do much and have done much in all ages; but the foundations of society were never yet shaken as they are at this day.

"It is not that men are ill-fed, but that they have no pleasure in the work by which they make their bread, and, therefore, look to wealth as the only means of pleasure.

"It is not that men are pained by the scorn of the upper classes, but they cannot endure their own; for they feel that the kind of labour to which they are condemned is verily a degrading one, and make them less than men. Never had the upper classes so much sympathy with the lower, or charity for them, as they have at this day, and yet never were they so much hated by them."—From "The Stones of Venice," by John Ruskin, Vol. II., Chap. VI.

It is not by scattered acts of individual heroism that the greatest and most important changes in the life of humanity are achieved; it is not by invincible strength in arms and military might, nor by the development of new and improved methods of communication or wonderful machinery, nor by means of vast exhibitions, nor through the organization of labour unions, nor revolutions, nor strikes, nor international sanctions, nor serial navigation, nor atomic weapons, nor assemblies of united nations; but by a change of public opinion.

And to bring about this change in public opinion no extraordinary exertions of the mind are needed, nor endurance of great physical pain, nor the refutation of anything in existence, nor the invention of anything hitherto unknown; it is only needful that we should not blindly subscribe to the erroneous, obsolete, public opinion of the past, which governments have established by artificial means; it is only needful that each individual should say what he really feels or thinks, or at least that he should not say what he does not really think.

And if only a small body of people were to do so at once, of their own

accord, outworn public opinion would fall off of itself, and a new, living, real opinion would assert itself. For, public opinion in this respect, is like a pitcher which is taken to the water—it at first must be pressed down to make the water enter it, but when it is a little full it gets filled by its own weight without any pressure. And when public opinion should thus have changed without the slightest effort, the internal condition of men's lives which so torments them would change likewise of its own accord.

One is ashamed to say how little is needed for all men to be delivered from these calamities which now oppress them; it is only needful not to lie.

Let people only desist from the falsehood which is instilled into them, let them but rise superior to the lying propaganda of state and sect; in short, let them decline to say what they neither feel nor think, and at once such a revolution of all the organizations of our life will take place as could not be attained by all the efforts of revolutionists during centuries, even were complete power within their hands.

By

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If people would only believe that strength is not in force but in truth, would only not shrink from it either in word or deed however great the temptation, not say what they do not think however lonely they may become by doing so, and not do what they really regard as wrong and contrary to the dictates of their conscience!

But what is there so gravely deplorable in shouting, 'Ceylon for the Sinhalese!' or, in cheering some prince, or the leader of some faction; in putting on a uniform or some kind of court-dress and waiting on, and bowing to, and calling men and women like ourselves by strange titles, and then giving the young and simple-minded to understand that all this sort of thing is praiseworthy and proper? Or, why is the writing of an article in defence of an Asiatic group federation, or on the maintenance of racial purity, or in condemnation of Englishmen, or Tamils, or Indians, of such consequence? Or, what harm is there in attending at some patriotic festivity, or in drinking to, and speaking in favour of people or persons or policies or ideologies of whom and of which we really do not approve? Or, what is there seriously wrong in keeping silent when one's own nation is praised and other nations abused in one's hearing; or when Christianity is criticized and Buddhism is lauded; or when some hero of war as Dhutugemunu or Ravana is admired, and some apostle of peace such as Tolstoi or Gandhī is derided?

All these things seem so trivial and of no consequence. Yet in these and similar ways which seem so unimportant, in refraining from them, in proving as far as we can their unreasonableness, lies the only possible force which constitutes good genuine public opinion

that opinion which, while itself advancing, moves all humanity.

Governments know this, and tremble before this force, and strive in every way to counteract or swamp it.

Governments know that strength is not in force, but in thought and the clear expression of it, and, therefore, they are more afraid of the expression of independent thought than of armies; hence they institute censorship, practise bribery of the press, and monopolize the control of religion and of schools. But the spiritual force which moves the world eludes them; for it is neither in books, nor in papers, nor in institutions; it cannot be trapped by the most powerful of governments, and is always free; it is in the depths of the consciousness of mankind. "The most powerful and untrammelled force of freedom is that which asserts itself in the soul of man when he is alone, and in the sole presence of himself reflects on the facts of the universe, and then naturally communicates his thoughts to wife, brother, friend, and to all those with whom he comes in contact, and from whom he would regard it as sinful to conceal the truth." (Tolstoi).

No billions of pounds, no millions of troops, no organizations, no wars or revolutions will produce what the simple expression of a free man may—this simple declaration of his, on what he regards as just, independently of what exists or was instilled into him, is more powerful than all these.

A free man will say with truth what he thinks and feels amongst thousands of men who by their acts and words attest exactly the opposite. It would seem that he who sincerely expressed his thought must remain alone, whereas it generally happens that every one else, or the majority at least, have been thinking and feeling the same things but without expressing them. And that which was on one day the novel opinion of one man will on the next day become the general opinion of the majority. And as soon as this opinion is established, immediately by imperceptible degrees, but beyond power of frustration, the conduct of mankind begins to alter.

"Where there is a tacit convention that principles are not to be disputed; where the discussion of the greatest questions which can occupy humanity is considered to be closed, we cannot hope to find that generally high scale of mental activity which has made some periods of history so remarkable. Never when controversy avoided the subjects which are large and important enough to kindle enthusiasm was the mind of a people stirred up from its foundations and the impulse given which raised even persons of the most ordinary intellect to something of the dignity of thinking beings."—J. S. Mill.

Dispite this, at present, every man, even if free, asks himself, "what can I do alone against all this ocean of evil and deceit which overwhelms us? Why should I express my opinion? Why indeed form one which contradicts those existing? It is better not to reflect on these speculative and involved questions. Perhaps these contradictions are an inevitable condition of our existence. And why should I struggle alone with

all the evil in the world? What hope is there of success? Is it not better to swim with the current of the stream in which I float? If anything is to be done, it can only be done, not alone but in company with others?"

And we neglect this most powerful of weapons—the expression of our thoughts, truthfully and without fear—which moves the world, and resort to the employment of the much less effective weapon of social activity. And we do so "when society is itself the tyrant—society, collectively, over the separate individuals who compose it—its means of tyrannizing are not restricted to the acts which it may do by the hands of its political functionaries. Society can and does execute its own mandates; and if it issues wrong mandates instead of right, or any mandates at all in things with which it ought not to meddle, it practises a social tyranny more formidable than many kinds of political oppression, since, though not usually upheld by such extreme penalties, it leaves fewer means of escape, penetrating much more deeply into the details of life, and enslaving the soul itself. Protection, therefore, against the tyranny of the magistrate is not enough; there needs protection also against the tyranny of the prevailing opinion and feeling; against the tendency of society to impose, by other means than civil penalties, its own ideas and practices as rules of conduct on those who dissent from them." (Mill). And so in participating in the social activity as it exists in our world every one of us is obliged, if only in part, to deviate from the truth and to make concessions which destroy the force of the powerful weapon which should assist us in the struggle.

We all complain of the senseless order of life, which is at variance with our being, and yet we refuse to use that unique and irresistible weapon within our hands—the consciousness of truth and its expression; and on the contrary, under the pretext of struggling with evil, we destroy or blunt the weapon, and sacrifice it on the altar of expediency or compromise.

One man does not assert the truth he knows, because he feels himself bound to his fellow-workers; another, because the truth might deprive him of the profitable position by which he maintains his family; a third, because he desires to attain reputation and authority, and then use them in the service of mankind; a fourth, because, he does not wish to destroy old sacred traditions; a fifth, because he has no desire to offend people; a sixth, because the expression of truth would arouse persecution, and disturb the excellent social activity to which he has devoted himself; a seventh, through sheer love of ease, and that it is best to leave the world to itself. In short, fear, greed, selfishness, intolerance, and indifference hamper men in one way or another in the assertion of the truth they know.

One serves as minister, government official, or soldier and convinces himself and others that the deviation from truth indispensable to his condition is redeemed by the good he does. Another who is a spiritual teacher, does not in the depths of his heart believe all he teaches, but permits the deviation from truth in view of the good he does. A third, who instructs men by means of literature, notwithstanding the silence he must observe with regard to the whole truth

in order to remain on the good side of the government and society so as to sell his books, has no doubt as to the good he does. A fourth, who struggles resolutely with the existing order as a revolutionary, is quite assured that the aims he pursues are so beneficial that the neglect of truth, the use of equivocation, or even of the untruth may be resorted to for the success of his activity, without at the same time destroying the utility of his work thereby.

In order that the conditions of a life contrary to the consciousness of humanity should change and be replaced by one which is in accord with it, the outworn accommodating public opinion must be superseded by a new and living one truthful in all aspects. And so that the old outworn opinion may yield its place to the new living one, all who are conscious of these new requirements of existence should express them openly and without distortion. And yet all those who are conscious of these new requirements, one in the name of one thing, and one in the name of another, pass them over in silence, make excuses for themselves, or even by word and deed help to maintain their exact opposites.

Although much that has been herein stated merits further elucidation, for one thing, limitations of space preclude so doing, and for another as such elucidation would involve an exploration of fields too full of controversial matter to be conveniently dealt with here, no such elucidation is attempted. A few quotations, however, from authorities deeply versed, in the subject are appended for the sake of the light they throw thereon.

"None of us can rightly disclaim responsibility for the evils that beset us; it is as a community that we have failed, but the character of a community depends on the characters of the men and women who compose it. There are many causes that could correctly be cited to account for this profound failure." One among these causes is "our unwillingness to make definite to ourselves what it is we believe to be worth the seeking. The world today is in discordance with our desires. What is it that we desire, . . . what do we believe to be the ends for which it is worth while to live? . . . In my opinion our most urgent need today is to know clearly what are the things that belong to our happiness. . . . This joy is the mark of love—of love of persons, of art, of any good thing; it is known to the poet and artist, to the mystic and the scholar, and to the lover; it is withheld from the tyrant and the man whose heart is wholly set on making money and yet more money. . . . Our duty, as I see it, is to find out what we hold to be worth seeking at all costs to know clearly what it is we are in fact seeking, and to discover whether there be any way of remoulding this sorry scheme of things so that it be nearer to our heart's desire. This is a task that has constantly to be undertaken afresh. I believe that we shall fail in this task unless we are willing to think steadily (and truthfully); we shall also fail if we wholly lack any tenderness towards the traditions of our past—the wisdom handed down to us by men who were ignorant of the marvels of science, but not of the delight of loving and being loved." Susan Stebbing in *Ideals and Illusions*.

This is what Santayana has to say of nationality: "Nationality offers another occasion for strange moral confusion. It had seemed that an age that was levelling and connecting all nations, an age whose real achievements were of international application, was destined to establish the solidarity of mankind as a sort of axiom. But even here black men and yellow men (and also brown men) are generally excluded; and in higher circles, where history, literature, and political ambition dominate men's minds, nationalism has become of late an omnivorous all-permeating passion." We are but too familiar with the disastrous consequences of a rampant nationalism combined with the pursuit of autarky (or national self-sufficiency in economic matters), adopted primarily for the sake of being prepared for war. Much of our present-day hardship resulting in the increased cost of essential commodities such as food can be attributed to this.

There are many who object to idealism on the ground that it flies in the face of reality and is thus mere impracticable utopianism. Nevertheless it must be admitted that all thinking beings have ideals, for, to say that I have an ideal, means that I conceive or have an idea of a state of affairs which I judge to be good,—worthy of attainment. This leaves open the question whether the ideal is realizable, and also whether it is good or evil; but an ideal every one of us must have who wishes to make anything of the human life they have been endowed with. The important thing is to see that the ideal is good and not evil, and none of us can rightly do this if we do not adhere to truth in all respects. The vast majority of us are content to shuffle along this mortal coil with ideals based on half-truths, or distorted truths, or truths which they vitiate by yielding to convenience and accommodation, and they have themselves to blame for their lives lacking in that complete happiness which is the grandest gift life has to offer to humanity.

Happiness, however, is not an end to pursue; it is something experienced in the pursuit of an ideal which is good and worthy of pursuing; it is a characteristic of a state in which a human being's capacities are being fulfilled. There are some who suppose that happiness is an end sought after by the weak, but this is a result of treating truth, beauty, and goodness as three ends or one great end. Happiness is not an end to be chosen instead of truth, beauty, and goodness; it is a character of experiences of knowing something to be true, contemplating something beautiful, and fulfilling one's duty.

One of our greatest difficulties in choosing a worthy ideal arises from the fact that most of us do not comprehend that which is good. Here we must be guided by the philosophers and sages, and the Buddha it must be acknowledged is the best for he has been accepted as a guide by a greater number of people through a longer period than any of the others. There are, however, certain positive evils such as the following: Anything that hinders or makes impossible a right relationship between people; hatred of anyone; delight in the suffering of anyone, including deliberate cruelty; obtaining power over anyone and exercising it for his hurt; unkindness in all its various forms, including insensitive-

ness to other people's needs; using people exclusively for one's own aims, as though they were things and thus without regard to their being also persons: indifference to truth; lack of self-control; and fear. These are indubitably positive spiritual evils, and if we keep them in mind we shall not find it so difficult to know that which is good.

The weakening of the power of judgment which is a consequence of the modern way of life is a serious factor to be taken into account when inquiring into the evils of our time. Instead of judging for ourselves, we habituate ourselves from the time we are able to read to depend on the thinking of journalists, politicians, film-makers, and a variety of purveyors of propaganda too numerous to mention. As Schopenhauer states, reading has become for most of us a mere thinking with other people's brains. The evil of swallowing mass-opinions is not that they are shared by other people but that they can hardly be said to be our own at all. With such weakness of judgment goes a lack of critical spirit, and thus insensitiveness to the claims of truth. The end is the denial of reason.

We cannot separate material from spiritual conditions. Essential improvements in material conditions must be achieved with sacrifices—sacrifices not only of single individuals, or only of things cherished but are without value, but also of things it would be good to have were our world different from what in fact it is. These sacrifices will not voluntarily be made unless we have faith that they will help to achieve an ideal worth realizing. Nevertheless, important though the material conditions are, they are not worth the having if they are obtained only by the suppression of freedom and the denial of truth.

Truth and conscience are pivotal words in this thesis, and it seems more prudent to leave the reader to interpret them for himself. These words of L. T. Hobhouse may, however, be helpful: "A man's conscience may be a poor thing but it is his own; and . . . though there may be many errors incident to the principle that men should do ultimately what is right in their own eyes, yet, if they do anything else than what is right in their own eyes, there is no moral law at all." In feeling morally obliged to act in such and such a definite way we are aware of the authority of conscience. Conscience has authority; and as Butler has pointed out, authority and superintendency belong to conscience by its very nature. Our conscience is the final judge which tells us truly what we ought to do; but the claim to truth is not a guarantee of truth: conscience, no less than intellect, may err. But there is no greater authority vouchsafed to human beings than their conscience, and so, if we act in violation of our conscience, that we do so is evil; and if we act in accordance with our conscience, that we do so act is good. To go further is inconceivable. "Truth furthers things; error does not unravel, it only entangles," says Goethe; and, "It makes all the difference in the world whether we put Truth in the first place or in the second place, says Whately.

Only the truth, and nothing but the truth and its expression can establish that new public opinion which will reform the ancient, obsolete, and pernicious order of life; and yet we not only

do not express the truth we know, but often even distinctly give expression to what we ourselves regard as false. If only free men would not rely on that which has no power, and is always fettered—external aids; but would trust in that which is always powerful and free—truth and its expression!

If only men were fearlessly and clearly to express the truth already manifested to them of the brotherhood of all nations, and the crime of exclusive devotion to one's own people,* that exploded false public opinion would fall off of itself like a dried skin—a skin upon which depends the power of governments, and all the evil produced by them; and the new public opinion once free of that hinderance, would stand forth manifestly and powerfully and make its demand for the establishment of new forms of existence in conformity with the consciousness of mankind.

In the light of these things, a man should surely dare to live his briefspan of life with little heed of the common speech upon him or his life, only caring that his days may be full of reality, and his conversation of truth-speaking and wholeness.

The path ahead of humanity is an arduous and toilsome one, but if each one of us will strive conscientiously, we can yet make of this world a fit abode, for free and happy men; and the only thing that we must do is not to be afraid of truth, however galling, and rely on that love which casts out fear and brings peace.

* *Note.*—In this confusion and chaos in which civilized nations are struggling with utter hopelessness, we are bound to arrive at the inevitable conclusion that the cause of this hopelessness and helplessness lies not in the outer world but in ourselves. Not in the problems we have to solve but in the hypothesis with which we approach their solutions,

Our political and social conceptions are Ptolemaic.

The world in which we live is Copernican.

Our Ptolemaic political conceptions in a Copernican industrial world are bankrupt. Latest observations on ever-changing conditions have made our Ptolemaic approach utterly ridiculous and out-of-date. We still believe, in each one of the 70 or 80 sovereign states, that our 'nation' is the immovable centre around which the whole world revolves.—Emery Reves in 'The Anatomy of Peace.'

"THE IDEAL PAST"

(Continued from page 99)

devoid of qualities necessary for the higher life.¹⁰

"It is so Kassapa," (*tathā hi pana Kassapa*) agreed the Buddha, and explained the existing situation: Formerly (*pubbe*) the monks dwelt in forests, lived on alms-begging, used rag-ropes had only three robes, desired nothing, were contented, lived in solitude without social contact, were given to endeavour, and they also praised the value of these virtues. Those who had these good qualities were popular and respected in those days. That was an encouragement for younger bhikkhus to follow these good virtues.

But now (*etarahi*) the monks do not practise these virtues. Now if a bhikkhu is famous and renowned, if he receives the four requisites abundantly, then the

elders would receive him and respect him. The younger monk, also followed their example. One could safely say the celibates were overpowered (*upadutā*) by dangers to the spiritual life (*brahmācārupaddaveṇa*).¹¹

On another occasion Mahā-Kassapa asked the Buddha why formerly there were less precepts and more arahants, and why now there were more precepts and less arahants?

"It is so Fassapa," said the Buddha, "when people become degenerate and the good teaching disappears, there are more precepts and less bhikkhus attain arahantship."¹²

After the Buddha's death on one occasion Mahā-Kassapa reprimanded Ānanda for moving about with young monks who were "loose and not self-restrained." Mahā-Kassapa called Ānanda a youngster (*kumāraka*) who did not know his position (*matam*).

Ānanda remonstrated that he should be called a "youngster" by the Venerable Mahā-Kassapa when he had grey hairs on his head. The great elder rejoined that it was because of his association with "unrestricted and irresponsible youngsters."¹³

A therā named Pārāpariya, some time after the Buddha's death, broods at length over the degeneration and deterioration of monks. He says that when the Master was living they led noble lives, but now their life was lamentably degenerate and overpowered with evil. "Those great and noble arahants are now dead and gone. Such men are now rare" he laments.¹⁴

Another therā, named Phussa, makes a long prediction indicating that bhikkhus in future will be hopelessly corrupt and depraved, and will be guilty of the practices prohibited by the Master and lead ordinary worldly lives.¹⁵

These illustrations clearly prove that even at the time of the Buddha, and also immediately after his death, there was a strong body of opinion that good men belonged to the past, contemporaries were unsatisfactory, and future generations would be corrupt beyond hope. The Buddha himself is said to have contributed to this opinion, which has persisted down to the present day.

10. *ibid.* pp. 276-278. We can appreciate Mahā-Kassapa's disappointment better if we remember that once one of his own pupils had burnt down the therā's hut near Rājagaha. At that time Mahā-Kassapa had two pupils with him—one was good-natured and the other ill-behaved. On several occasions Mahā-Kassapa advised the ill-behaved pupil to mend his ways, and on account of this the young monk harboured a grudge against the elder. One day, when the elder was out, the wicked fellow destroyed the utensils and set fire to the elder's hut and ran away. No wonder Mahā-Kassapa was not willing to advise monks! See Dhpa p. 223 f. Also Jātaka No. 321, Kuṭṭipusaka Jātaka.

11. S pp. 278-279.

12. *ibid.* p. 287. The same question was put to the Buddha by Bhaddāli and the same answer was given. There the Buddha explains that he did not lay down rules until occasions presented themselves. M II, p. 87.

13. S p. 284.

14. *Theragāthā*, pp. 302 ff. Pārāpariyatthera-gāthā.

15. *ibid.* pp. 305 ff.

ALL-CEYLON BUDDHIST CONGRESS

THIRTY-FIRST SESSIONS

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

The following is an English summary of Dr. Malalasekera's presidential address delivered in Sinhalese:—

ANURADHAPURA was the cradle of Buddhism in Lanka. It was here that the Arahata Mahinda, son of the great Buddhist Emperor Asoka, converted King Devanampiyatissa and his subjects to the religion of the Sakyamuni. It was here that the Tripitaka took final shape. In the Ganthakara Piri-vena, near the Sri Maha Bodhiya, not far from this spot, the Venerable Buddhaghosa wrote his commentaries which established securely for ever the fundamental teachings of Theravada Buddhism. The Maha Vihara at Anuradha-

Chief among them is Mr. D. C. R. Gunawardena, Chairman of the Reception Committee who, besides his well-known reputation as one of the most efficient members of our Public Service, is also a scholar well-versed in the Dhamma and, what is far more important, a very devout Buddhist.

WORLD FELLOWSHIP OF BUDDHISTS

Since we last met at Badulla, at what was a most memorable session, I have had the good fortune of being able to travel in many lands, and of acquainting myself with Buddhist activities in several countries both of the East and the West. Wherever I went I saw unmistakable signs of a great awakening among the Buddhists and a determination to play their part in shaping the new world that the conclusion of the last devastating war has made necessary. The time is fully ripe for bringing about a greater unity and solidarity among the Buddhists of the world. As you know, in May, 1950, an International Conference will be held in Lanka to inaugurate a World Fellowship of Buddhists. The response this proposal has already evoked in all quarters is most encouraging and there is every reason to hope that the Conference will be a truly representative gathering, such as never before been held in this country. We must see to it that the fullest use is made of the unique opportunity thus afforded, for a great step forward in the promotion of the Buddha-Sasana. The world today, more than ever before, needs the healing balm of the Dhamma, the consolation and the confidence which it alone can give, and the assurance that the future of humanity lies upon humanity itself. Men and women eagerly await a revival of Buddhist missionary activities, which will carry the message of the Tathagata from Ocean to Ocean, regardless of barriers of nation or race, caste or colour.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY

In this noble enterprise we, the Buddhists of Lanka, have a responsibility greater than that of any other Buddhist community. For, the Buddhist world rightly looks to us for leadership in such a venture, because that has been the role which has been ours in the past. Can we say that we are in a fit condition to assume such leadership? As individuals, can we truly say that we are doing our best to lead Buddhist lives, to observe the precepts laid down for our guidance and voluntarily taken by us upon ourselves? It is not easy to lead completely blameless lives, but how many of us even try to do our best? Are we not often hypocritical in our actions, trying to find excuses for our various failings, paying but lip-service to the religion that is ours? How many of us, even those who occupy high posts in Buddhist organisations, use religion as a cloak to hide our misdeeds and as a convenient means to advance our own selfish ambitions? Otherwise, how is it possible that we should violate even the elementary precepts of our religion, in the most glaring manner, and on the flimsiest of pretexts?

FOR the second time the All-Ceylon Buddhist Congress held its annual gathering at Anuradhapura, when Dr. G. P. Malalasekera, presided over the 31st annual sessions.

On the first occasion when the ninth annual sessions were held at Anuradhapura in 1927, Sir Francis Molamure was president, and Dr. Malalasekera and Mr. D. N. W. de Silva were the Hony. Secretaries. At that time it was—as it was originally intended and inaugurated—a Congress of Y.M.B.A.'s when delegates from associations from all parts of the Island met in happy reunion, spiritually and socially.

With the march of years the Congress assumed a new complexion.

On December 25, 26 and 27 nearly 300 delegates from various Buddhist Societies in the Island met at Anuradhapura. They were the guests of a Reception Committee headed by Mr. D. C. R. Gunawardena, Government Agent, N.C.P. Accommodation for the delegates had been made at the Dutugemunu Hall and at several private residences in the town.

The session started with a special ceremony at the Ruwanvelisaya. There was a Buddha Puja and in addition a number of bhikkhus chanted Pirit. The delegates went in procession to the Town Hall, where the Chairman of the Reception Committee, Mr. D. C. R. Gunawardena, welcomed the delegates, after which the President of the Congress, Dr. G. P. Malalasekera, delivered his presidential address.

The delegates also took part in an alms-giving at the Sri Maha Bodhiya specially arranged by the Reception Committee.

The afternoon session of the first day was devoted to resolutions. In the evening there was a Pahan Pinkama at the Sri Maha Bodhiya and Bana preaching by Pitakotte Somananda Thera.

The morning session of the second day was devoted to a number of discussions on subjects such as temperance, the rearing of animals and fish for food and racing, and the Buddhist attitude to the economic problems of Ceylon.

After this discussion, the delegates viewed an exhibition of recent finds specially arranged by the Archaeological Commissioner at the Anuradhapura Museum. The evening session of the second day was devoted to the annual general meeting of the Congress and a tour of inspection of the recent excavations at Lowa Maha Paya, Dakkhina Vehera and other places. In the night Mr. D. T. Devendra gave an illustrated lecture at the Esplanade on "Some Buddhist Antiquities."

On the third day the delegates went on pilgrimage to Mihintale and Polonnaruwa in a fleet of buses. Mr. Devendra acted as the Guide Lecturer on this tour. In the night there was a film show at the Esplanade.

The session concluded with a variety of entertainment, including folk songs and a Poets' Corner.



Dr. G. P. Malalasekera

pura was for many centuries the chief centre of Buddhist learning in Asia. From it radiated the Dhamma into many lands, beyond the seas, as far as China and Japan, and developed in them cultural and religious activities which shaped the destinies and the character of the dwellers of those lands. In these streets once walked Ambassadors from Alexandria and Rome, Egypt and the Celestial Empire. When Anuradhapura fell, the glory of the Sinhala Race, too, dwindled, and passed into obscurity. It is significant that whenever our monarchs, in later dark days, succeeded in uniting the country and establishing peace and prosperity in the land for a brief moment, Anuradhapura's light shone again. To us, therefore, gathered together from all parts of the Island it is a source of inspiration and courage to meet on this sacred soil. Phoenix-like, Anuradhapura is rising again from its ashes, harbinger of the new era of greatness that has just dawned before us.

possible we render our heartfelt thanks,

THE DRINK PROBLEM

Time was when this Island-home of ours was rightly famed as the "Dhammadvīpa." Today we have earned notoriety as a land of thugs and racketeers, gamblers and black-marketeers, seething with corruption. Our moral standards have sunk so low, that we seem to have lost all sense of shame. Instead of trying to rescue ourselves from the morass into which we have fallen, it would appear as though we are deliberately sinking deeper into the mire. Among our traditional virtues, we laid great stress on sobriety. Drink was regarded as an unmitigated evil; the drunkard ranked equally low with the outcast. Not even in the darkest days of our history did our rulers demean themselves by association with traffic in drink, though human nature was the same then as now and there were many who had a craving for liquor. Today, we see the sad spectacle of the State setting itself up to be the manufacturer and purveyor of drink. It is true that the traffic in drink brings in many millions of rupees to our national exchequer, but we are told that Government is not influenced by considerations of revenue. Frankly, I cannot bring myself to believe it, I do not know how many of you will accept that assurance either. In any case, the position is not one that we can regard with complacency. In ancient times, the ruler was the head of the State and he did more or less what he liked, though, of course, with due regard to public opinion. But today, the Government is our own; it is we who elect our rulers and any actions they do are done in our name. It then comes to this, that you and I and every Buddhist in the land becomes, by this action on the part of Government participants in the nefarious trade of the manufacture and sale of liquor. I ask you, are we going to tolerate that? Are we going to acquiesce in and ourselves become participants of a course of action which will increase poverty and crime in the country and bring misery into the homes of hundreds and thousands of our fellow-beings? The answer is, obviously, no. What, then, shall we do about it? The least we can do is to raise our voices in loud protest. From one corner of the land to the other. Buddhists, as individuals and through their organisations, must demand that they shall not be made party to this evil which is in direct violation of the tenets of their Faith. Let it not be said that we did not make our attitude known to those that are responsible. If they pay no heed, the remedy is in our hands.

Government has no mandate from the people to engage in the manufacture of liquor, establish distilleries or make use of co-operative Societies to push forward sales of arrack. It has no right, therefore, to do any of these things without giving the country opportunity to express its views by means of a plebiscite or in some other suitable way. We cannot and must not allow Government to engage itself, in our name, in activities which are derogatory to our national dignity, entirely repugnant to and in flagrant violation of our age-long traditions and most cherished ideals.

Meanwhile let us exercise the right we already have of closing taverns by Local Option. We have been told that if we do not like taverns to blot this

fair land, it is for us to remove them by Local Option. Let us take Government at their word and do that. We have already reduced the number of taverns from two thousand to three hundred. Let us, in the coming year, do everything in our power to bring that number to zero. And then at least, let us hope, there will be Total Prohibition enforced by legislation and no more glib-talk about the impossibility of making people virtuous by passing laws. We do not need any one to tell us that, but we have a right to ask that temptation shall not be brought to our very doors. It is being repeated *ad nauseam* that Prohibition failed in the United States. But, let us remind these Jeremiahs that Ceylon is not the United States, that our traditions and our ways of life are as far apart as the poles.

GOVERNMENT SERVANTS AND TEMPERANCE ACTIVITIES

While on the subject, I should be failing in my duty if I did not refer to the steps that have been taken to prevent Government servants from taking an active part in temperance activities. In May, 1913, when the Government then in power attempted a similar restriction there was vigorous public protest. At a public meeting, held at Ananda College on May 4th, 1913, Mr. D. S. Senanayake, who seconded a resolution of protest, said that he never for a moment thought that the Ceylon Government would ever issue a circular that would prevent Buddhists from being its servants. "As we are all aware," he said, "Buddhists are all members of a total abstinence society that had been started 2,400 year ago by the Buddha himself. . . ."

"If this circular is to be in force Government servants must give up Buddhism and must get permission to become Buddhists. Perhaps you might say that such is not the intention of Government but that is what it means. Are we going to let it stand? Government has declared that its policy is to prevent illicit sale of liquor and to reduce its consumption. After this assurance could we have expected Government to issue a circular preventing Government servants joining societies whose object is the same as theirs? Did we ever think that Government would want to crush its most faithful friends, the temperance societies, which are trying to do what Government itself hopes to do? . . . Government has declared that its Excise policy is in the interest of temperance and national well-being . . . but the present Government forgets all that; the interests of temperance and national well-being are all forgotten and it thinks only of arrack and toddy renters. They must flourish. Government will not tolerate its servants joining or inducing other people to join temperance Societies."

Representations were made to Downing Street; questions were asked in Parliament and the offending circular was withdrawn. On July 26th, 1913, at a temperance convention held at Ananda College, a resolution was moved by Mr. Senanayake expressing thanks to all those who "successfully opposed the order issued by the local Government prohibiting Government servants taking part in the work of temperance societies." The Ceylonese of July 27th, 1913, reported that Mr. Senanayake's strenuous voice was heard in every part of the

large hall. He spoke of gratitude as a virtue, inborn in the Sinhalese. . . . There is no need for comment. Mr. Senanayake knew then what the right thing to do was and did it; we can depend on our Prime Minister to do the right thing again and earn our lasting gratitude.

THE EDUCATION MUDDLE

Ever since the occupation of this country by European powers, deliberate attempts were made by the agents of their Churches to proselytise the Buddhists. Our ancient system of education, which centred round our temples and which, therefore, formed the bulwark of our culture, was undermined by them and, with the help of official patronage, all but completely destroyed. There was a time, not very long ago, when the Buddhists did not have a single school of their own because they were not allowed to have any. Even after the ban was lifted, the Buddhists were so severely handicapped that the provision of Buddhist Schools proved to be a most difficult task. They had no material resources and no patronage while the missionary schools had all the advantages on their side. It was an unequal struggle with the odds heavily weighed against us. The Buddhists were quite unable to educate their children in their own schools, and in the case especially of secondary education, a very large proportion of Buddhist children got it only in missionary institutions. I know there are those who say that this did not affect them adversely as far as their religion was concerned. But that is merely begging the question. Who knows how much better Buddhists they might have been if they had gone to Buddhist schools? In any case, the crux of the matter is this: the only reason for the existence of denominational schools is that religion should form a basic part of education. Whose religion? The religion of the child, of course, and if that provision is not secured the sole *raison d'être* of denominational education is vitiated. There is no need to go into unpleasant details but we can see for ourselves, without microscopic inquiry, the results of Buddhists, especially members of leading Buddhist families, being educated in missionary schools. We do not want to have the situation perpetuated and that was why the Buddhists with one accord supported the Free Education Scheme which placed upon Government the responsibility of providing schools where schools are needed, and laid down the principle that religious education should form an integral part of the training given in the schools.

We are completely in the dark as to what is now contemplated in Government's educational policy but it is quite clear that fundamental changes are going to be made. It is true that the Free Scheme has defects but it has to be equally strongly emphasised that it was never given a chance. It was passed in the face of the strongest possible opposition from very influential quarters who had vowed to kill it, if not at its very birth, in its infancy. It would appear as though they are about to succeed. It is significant that, while in the formulation of amended schemes the counsel of heads of missionary institutions has been made use of, not a single Buddhist organisation engaged in education has consulted,

There has been much to do made by opponents of the scheme on the high cost in which it would involve Government. We are told that already one-fifth of our total revenue is being spent on education and much more will be needed if the scheme is to be implemented. I would humbly submit that these statistics prove nothing. Those who are aware of what is happening in different parts of the country cannot help feeling that a large part of the colossal expenditure incurred on education is being spent in grandiose schemes of building, equipment and provision of personnel in schools, completely regardless of our vital needs and the modest means available to us. Palatial buildings have been put up in remote country areas; one does not know to whose vanity they pander. There are signs of squandermania everywhere, a feature which, unfortunately, does not seem to be confined to the Ministry of Education or its appurtenances. In the flush of our pride in having won Independence it would appear that we desire to impress the world of our importance by the extravagance of the trappings associated with our new status. One cannot help contrasting what is happening here with what obtains in the neighbouring sub-continent where it is sought to achieve dignity through modesty and actual accomplishment rather than through external show.

Whatever the reasons may be, it is evident that we can no longer depend on Government to give us schools for our children to be educated in the way we desire. The Prime Minister has recently openly declared that he would like to see many more denominational schools. He has qualified it by saying that this is his personal view and is not to be taken as a pronouncement of Government policy. But one cannot forget that the Prime Minister is the supreme head of our Government and that his wishes will not be ignored. Which means that we shall soon be back where we were before the inauguration of the Free Scheme. We shall be beggars in our own land, depending on the charity of others. Government will no longer regard the education of our children as its responsibility. It will be stated that there will be equality of opportunity for all denominations, but in reality what does it mean? Buddhist educational organisations are run by nationals of this country who have yet to go a long way in learning the business and have yet to become capable in many ways. Their resources are extremely limited. On the other hand, missionary institutions are conducted by organised missions with experienced heads who have years of tradition behind them. They have large funds at their disposal. They have the added advantage that they enjoy the loyalty and the patronage of their own products which they have consolidated during the past 200 years. Whilst the Buddhists have to fight against hard odds for their survival, the foreign missions that were brought for the set purpose of proselytisation have had all the encouragement and patronage of the foreign rule which has only now come to an end. They have not been slow to make the best possible use of these advantages and to establish themselves in almost unassailable positions of influence and power. What equality, then, is there for Buddhists if the denominational system is allowed free play?

It is not a matter that can be left to the good sense of Ministers or officials. I would suggest, therefore, that the Buddhists should demand of Government that if the denominational system is to be allowed to continue, it should be only under the following conditions:—

- (a) Denominational schools, wherever established, shall be confined to children of like denominations.
- (b) Government shall refuse permission to any denomination to establish schools in areas where the percentage of school-going children of that denomination is below a stipulated minimum.
- (c) Government shall not shirk its responsibility and duty to the people of providing them with schools which will enable their children to receive their education without being exposed to proselytising influences or conditions that will undermine their faith in their own religion.

THE RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF DEMOCRACY

I want to say most emphatically that these criticisms are not made in order to embarrass Government or to provide ammunition for their opponents. We quite realise the immensity of the problems which face our Ministers and are mindful that everything cannot be done at once and that it is not possible to satisfy everybody alike. But the duty of the people under a democracy is quite clear. They cannot and must not rest content with returning to power a particular set of persons once in four or five years and allowing them to do just what they like during that period. It is our business to remind our rulers of what we think should or should not be done for us or in our name and to see that our demands are duly heard in the right quarter. It is no secret that the burden of the Prime Minister, especially in an infant Dominion, is an almost intolerable one and I should like here to pay personal tribute to our Prime Minister for the magnificent way he has succeeded in winning the goodwill of all classes of people and welding together many conflicting forces. On him, more than on any other single person, lies our own future and it is because he commands our esteem and affection that we feel we have a right to approach him to obtain redress for whatever grievances we may feel we have. To him as "Father of the Nation" we go as his children, sure of his understanding and his sympathy.

ABOUT OURSELVES

So far we have been talking mainly of what we expect from Government. What, now, of our own duties and responsibilities? We must see to it that we do set our own house in order. Reference has been made time and again to the sorry mess into which our Temporalities have fallen. There is a crying need for reform and we must do something at once. It shall be the first duty of our next year's committee to take up this question and also to work for the establishment of ecclesiastical tribunals about which some preliminary preparation has already been made. We must also see to it that questions of jurisdiction shall not be found as a stumbling block to any section of our Sangha. We appeal to the Heads

of the Nikayas concerned to take a realistic view of things and to do away with un-Buddhist practices which arose as accidents in certain circumstances. Some at least, of these practices have now become complete anachronisms and their continuance cannot any longer be justified. It would, we submit, be a great gesture on the part of the Venerable Mahanayakas to make a declaration of a new policy which they propose to follow in the future.

These are all difficult matters which require to be handled with great tact and care but let us remember the words of the Master චයසමඵලම පුරිසො භ භික්ඛිසො ජනමිතො (the courageous man keeps on striving and is never discouraged by failure).

There are also duties which we owe to the community as a whole. Government is engaged in numerous enterprises calculated to promote national well-being and it has a right to expect our whole-hearted co-operation where such co-operation does not clash with the principles of our religion. Amongst the foremost of these schemes is that for the attainment of self-sufficiency in the matter of food. Food is a primary need for everyone. Our good friend, Mr. Arthur V. Dias, who at the moment is ill in bed and whose speedy recovery we most devoutly wish, has now for many years shown us how we can make of the food-production campaign an act of religion, a matter of loving service to our fellowmen. Let us emulate his example. I should also like to suggest that we might very well go back to the practice of our forefathers of missing a meal once a week. That is one of the essential features of the observance of *Ata-Sil* and if the practice can be revived it will not only result in our physical health and spiritual progress but will also help in some measure to relieve the scarcity of food.

I would also urge on members of Buddhist associations all over the Island to take active part in the movement for adult education and the building up of genuine community welfare centres. Among other matters I should like to place before you for consideration are:

- (a) the inauguration of holiday-courses for teachers in the Buddha-Dhamma, both in English and Sinhala. (These teachers will then be available for service in any school, Government or Assisted);
- (b) the centralisation of the publication of Buddhist tracts and pamphlets in order to make them more effective and useful; and
- (c) the fulfilment of a long-cherished ambition for the establishment of a Bhikkhu Vidyalaya to train suitable persons for ordination.

WANTED—YOUNG LEADERS

There is urgent need for young men and women of education and true piety to qualify themselves as leaders in the promotion of the Sasana. Politics have become so engrossing a feature in our lives that most of those capable of becoming leaders have been fascinated by the lure of politics. Once they become politicians they find it difficult to function as religious leaders as well, because politicians seem to suffer from the delusion that they must be all things to all men

and must say and do nothing which may savour of partisanship. Leadership has to be won by long and selfless service. The past generation of our Buddhist leader has been called to other spheres of activity and their departure has created gaps that must be filled without delay.

But more important than all this, is the need for each one of us to practise religion. The Dhamma is a way of life, meant to be followed every day, to influence every activity of ours. It is not a matter for Poya-days only or for special occasions. Viewed thus, Buddhism in Lanka is not in a happy position. We seem to have forgotten our sense of values; we have come to regard large-scale processions, pilgrimages and pahanpinkamas as the main expressions of our devotion and piety. These things are good in their own way and have their own place in the scheme of salvation but even if we thereby manage to deceive others, let us not deceive ourselves. The truth of the Dhamma is a matter of individual realisation (පමිමත්තං විදි-නංඛෙමි). Let us therefore, be mindful and self-possessed (සතො ච සම්පජ්ජංඝො). It is not what others do or do not do but what we ourselves do or refrain from doing that will lead us to the ultimate deliverance of Nibbana.

න පිරෙසිං විලොමාති
න පිරෙසිං කතාකතං
අත්තීනොච අවෙකෙඨය්
කතාති අකතාති ච

Let us Unite. There are many problems facing us, which demand careful planning and whole-hearted co-operation on the part of all of us if they are to be successfully solved. The need of the hour is unity. The Buddhists must have some organisation which can speak in their name in matters of public importance or public policy. I would respectfully suggest to all concerned, that in this Congress they can have such a body. I would, therefore, ask that in the first instance all Buddhist associations in the Island should, in their hundreds, join this Congress and give it power and strength.

Let us sink petty personal differences and unite in the common cause of the Sasana. No Mara or Deva will then be able to stop our advance. In the past the Buddha Sasana brought us honour and glory and it will undoubtedly bring us peace and happiness in the future. The Golden Age of the Dhamma is yet

to be අප්පමාදෙසා සම්මාදෙඵ. Let us earnestly prepare ourselves for its arrival. May all beings be happy: සම්මේ සත්තා සමිත්තු සුඛිතභත්තා.

SOME THOUGHTS ON RIGHT THINKING (SAMMA SANKAPPA)

(Continued from page 100)

once accepted. Only through utter sincerity and honesty can we arrive at the truth—not by imitation or blind acceptance. If Buddhism is anything, it is not blind acceptance.

Why have I quoted Krishnamurti? Is he to be accepted as authority? Far from it. I have quoted him only because there is in his statement that which agrees with my own humble experience. It has been true for me as much as what I have quoted of the Buddha word has been true for me. Some among my readers may find the quotation true in their process of thought and experience. In such a case, my discussion of the quotation may help in even so slight a manner to help go forward in the process of right thinking and true experience.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE RETURN OF THE RED DRAGON

(This letter was received by the Hony. General Secretary of the Association the day following the premiere of our Sinhalese play.

Sir,
I am one of those who witnessed the Sinhalese Play "The Return of the Red Dragon" last Friday evening. While thanking its author Mr. Dick Dias for his magnificent production I feel myself proud of the leading Buddhist Institution's talented excellent cast. Jessica Wickremasinghe in the courageous and interested role of Mangala, I am sure added colour and brought distinction to the marvellous thriller.

In appreciation I am sending through you a gift to Jessica Wickremasinghe. Would you kindly present to her for which I shall be thankful to you.

Yours faithfully,
D. S. RANATUNGE.

No. 28, Station Road,
Mount Lavinia,
November 27, 1949.

Note by Editor.—We add our congratulations again to Dick and Jessica. The Hony. General Secretary made the presentation when the play was repeated on November 28.

OUR LAST CARNIVAL

Sir,
I shall be glad if you will give publicity to the following correction in the Carnival accounts published in the October issue:—The item "Games of Skill"—Rs. 6,581.72 should be split up into three items as under:—

Games of Skill	
(T. B. Dissanayake)	6,283.47
Lucky Dip	
(Mrs. Lala Abeysekera)	273.15
Ladies' Derby	
(L. Wijemanne)	25.00
	<hr/>
	6,581.62

I regret the error.
Yours, etc.,
L. PIYASENA,
Hony. Treasurer.

ECHO ON "CHRISTIAN WAY OF DOING"

Sir,
The letter under the caption, "Christian Way of Doing," which appeared in your journal of December, 1949, contains the opinion of D. W. S. K., of Hong-kong, on the Nationalists' defeat in China.

What I gather from his letter is that the Nationalists are being routed because Chiang Kai Shek and Madame Chiang are 'guilty' of trying to convert China into a Christian country.

The Nationalists are being licked not because Chiang Kai Shek attempted to convert China into Christianity, but because the Communists possess better equipped, better disciplined and better led troops.

If China was really converted into a Christian country there would not have been this unnecessary bloodshed. England, U.S.A., and the Commonwealth (the countries in the latter Union are practically all Christian) are countries where peace and democracy prevails. In contrast, look at China, Burma, and Indo-China. The inhabitants of those countries have turned murderers and plunderers. And mind you, they are supposed to be Buddhists.

I think D. W. S. K., should, in future, be careful about his opinions.

Yours, etc.,
CHRISTOPHER SAMARAVEERA.

No. 871, 2nd Division Maradana,
Colombo, 17th December, 1949.

COLOMBO Y. M. B. A. NEWS

MULKIRIGALA, VAVURUKANNALA, VERAHNA AND DEUNDARA

SADHU! Sadhu!! Sadhu!!! and a luxury bus left the Y.M.B.A. gates. The party had not gone very far when it was realised that a very im-

portant member had been left behind. The bus was promptly stopped and the member, who had been engaged in some other work of the Y.M.B.A. was fetched. Opinions differed as to how the member would react to his being left behind,

but we who knew him, could expect nothing but smiles.

With this mild flutter we sailed along and reached the bus-stand near the Wellawatta vegetable market—No, we were not to buy vegetables—where we

picked up two others and we continued our journey. At Panadure the violinist of the party and his father joined us.

Our party was complete. Throats were cleared, the violin tuned and the singing began. The variety entertainment continued as long as the bus was on the move and we are ever grateful to them for making the otherwise tiresome journey so pleasant.

We reached Rahula Vidyalaya, Matara, a little after dark and were received by Mr. C. A. Ariyatilake and some of his friends. Their warm reception and generous hospitality have left in us a deep sense of gratitude for all that they did for our comfort.

After a night's restful sleep—but for all the disturbance that a centipede could create—we rose rather too early and left at seven o'clock on our pilgrimage. We went direct to Mulkirigala where we spent over an hour in religious observances. It is a pity that some visitors stoop to mutilating the sacred precincts by carving their names on the rocks.

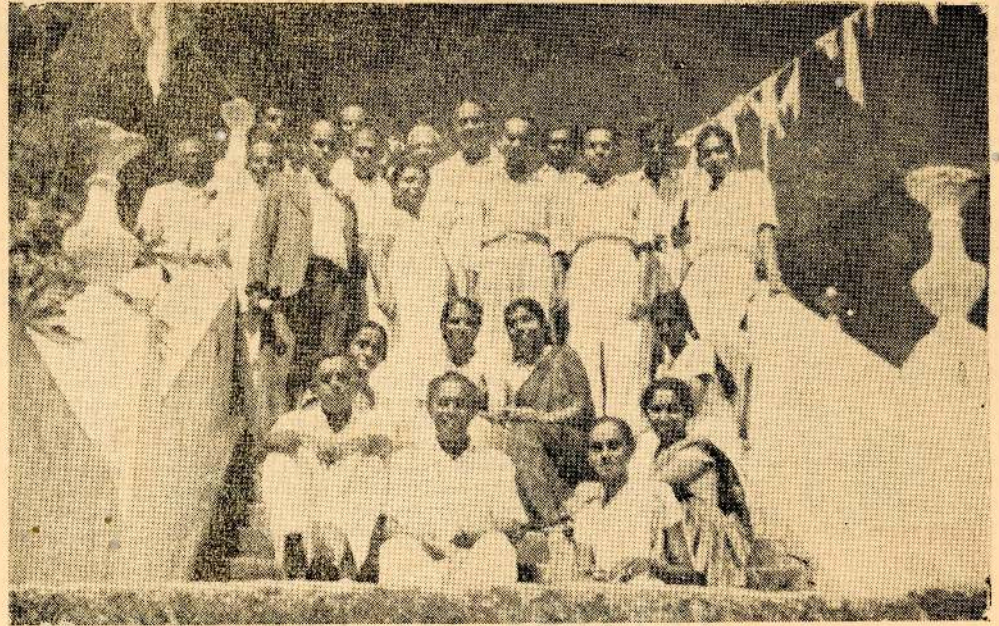
From Mulkirigala we came to Vavurukammala and from there to Verahena Temple. It was a revelation to most of us. As we entered the temple we saw a colossal sedant Buddha-image in the making. The upper part of the huge image has yet to be built. We were told that from knee to knee the image measured 44 cubits and that when the image was completed its height would be 44 cubits. Beneath the image and underground, vaults have been built

according to the descriptions given in the books of the treasure vaults of the Ruvanveliseya.

From Verahena we came to Deundara where we spent nearly an hour at the temple and the Devale.

nothing to be desired, may I take this opportunity of appealing to members to join in these tours in larger numbers and come to know one another better, which will be all for the good of the Association.

DRANBER.



This is the party that went on a Pilgrimage-Picnic to the South last month. In a corner with a smile, weighed down by responsibility, is the General Secretary, Mr. V. S. Nanayakkara.

After a heavy lunch, again provided by Mr. and Mrs. Ariyatilake, and a tea, which followed almost immediately, given by Mr. Edmund Samarasekera, President of the Matara Y.M.B.A., we left Matara and reached Colombo well in time for dinner.

Whilst thanking Mr. V. S. Nanayakkara and Mr. L. R. Gunatilake for the splendid arrangements made which left

STUDENTS' SINHALESE ELOCUTION CONTEST

The finals of the Students' Sinhalese Elocution Contest conducted by the Colombo Y.M.B.A. were held on Saturday, December 3. Mrs. Chandra Godakumbure, who presided gave away the prizes. The judges were Mudaliyar Edmund Gooneratne, Mr. Victor de Lanerolle and Mr. Lionel W. de Silva.

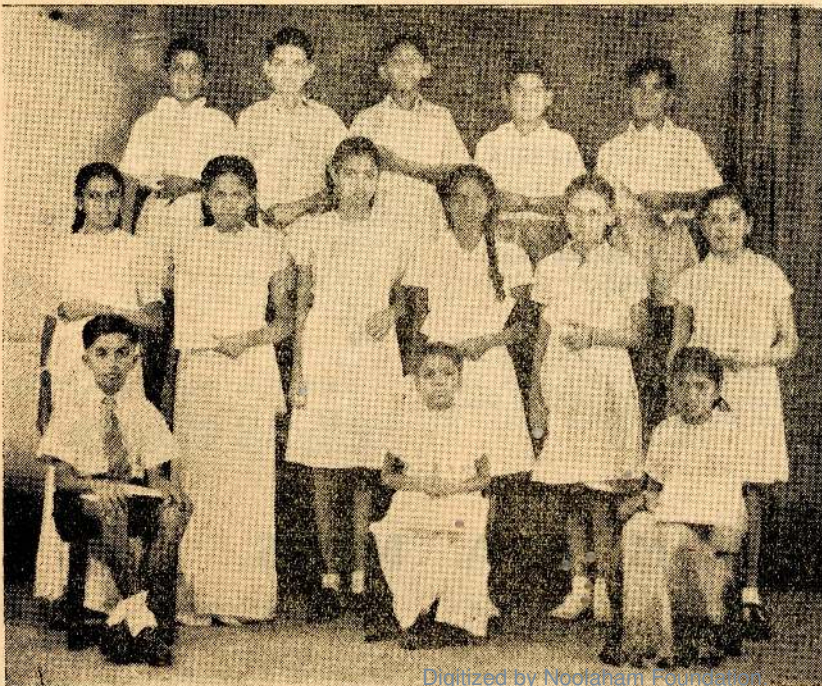
The results were:—

Senior Boys: (1) Peter Mendis (St. Sebastian's College, Moratuwa); (2) A. B. Perera (Government Central School, Piliyandala); (3) P. V. Nandasiri (Sri Sudarma Sunday School, Dematagoda); Hon. Mention: K. A. S. Kalyanaratne (Wesley College).

Senior Girls: (1) Kusuma Ratnayake (Musaens Practising School, Colombo); (2) Swinitha Nanayakkara (Ananda College, Colombo); (3) Karunawathie Kuruwita Arachi (Ambatale Government Girls' School); Hon. Mention: Soma Kalpage (Mahinda Sunday School, Dematagoda).

Junior Girls: (1) K. D. Indra Padmini (Dharmaparayana Buddhist Sunday School, Grandpass); (2) Sirima Weerasingha (Wellampitiya); (3) Monica Laticia Moonasingha (Mahinda Sunday School, Dematagoda); Hon. Mention: June Alagaratne (Presbyterian Girls' School, Dehiwala).

Junior Boys: (1) W. Dhanapak Dissanayake (Vajiraramaya Buddhist Sunday School, Bambalapitiya); (2) D. Dharmaransi (Gunananda Vidyalaya, Kotahena); (3) Newton De Alwis (Vajiraramaya Buddhist Sunday School, Bambalapitiya); Hon. Mention: N. Lincoln Bastian (Sri Sadharmodaya Buddhist Sunday School, Welikadamulla).



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The Winners

We are grateful to these donors towards the prizes:—Senator Cyril de Zoysa, 50/-; Mr. Rajah Hewavitarne, 50/-; Mr. B. H. William, 50/-; Mangala Ph'o, 50/-; Mr. N. J. V. Cooray, 25/-; Mr. M. D. Gunasena, 25/-; Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya, 20/-; Mr. Daya Hewa. vitarne, 20/-; Mr. K. T. Wimalasekera, 10/-; Dr. B. S. Jayawardene, Rs. 5/-

NEW MEMBERS:—

22.11.49: K. Gunasekera, Kandu-mulla, Udathuripitiya, Gampaha; V. R. Jeyaretnam, 17, Lily Avenue, Wella-watte; W. S. Karunaratne, c/o Police Station, Kotahena; Vernon Wijetunge, 21, Deal Place, Kollupitiya.

29.11.49: D. A. S. Nanayakkara, Civil Servant, Tanganyika, "The Walauwa," Nugegoda.

29.11.49: D. A. S. Nanayakkara, The Walauwa, Nugegoda.

6.12.49: A. E. Perera, Headquarters, Inspector of Co-operative Societies, No. 330, Union Place, Colombo; P. Leanage, Clerk, Registrar-General Office, No. 17A/8, Sylvanvilla Gardens, Dematagoda Road, Maradana; Y. R. Piyasena, Merchant, "Piyasewana," Parakrama Avenue, Kalubowila, Dehiwala; B. S. Fernando, Merchant, "Wijithasiri Hotel," 91 and 93, Cotta Road, Colombo 8; W. Karunatileke, Clerk, Education Department, No. 11, Ramya Road, Bambalapitiya.

13.12.49: Francis S. W. Fernando, Student, "Sriyakara," 475, Buller's Road, Colombo 8.

20.12.49: W. G. Fernando, Clerk, Government Stores Department, No. 11, Karlsruer Gardens, Borella; S. Samararatne, Student, 19/6, Dematagoda Place, Colombo; K. C. Karunaratne, Under

Guard, C.G.R., No. 1, Circular Road, Nawala, Rajagiriya.

RESIGNATIONS:—

Mr. Joseph Perumal, Mr. M. Sarlis.

FILM SHOW

Through the courtesy of the High Commissioner of India in Ceylon a film show was held on Monday, December 19, at the Y.M.B.A. Hall. Among the pictures shown were the following:—

Bharatha Natyam, Kathak Dance, Musical Instruments of India, Saga in Stone, Shanthi Nikethan and Indian Art Through the Ages.

The thanks of the Association are due to the High Commissioner for providing this entertainment.

NEWS AND NOTES

FUNCTION AT BUDDHA-GAYA

Buddha-Gaya,
December, 14.

THE newly constructed parapet wall and ornamental iron gate of the Resthouse at Buddha-Gaya were ceremonially opened by U San Thin of Burma, on December 13 in the presence of an assembly of pilgrims from Ceylon, Burma, Tibet, China and England and inhabitants of the locality. Portraits of the Ven'ble Anagarika Dharmapala, Founder of the Maha Bodhi Society, and Ven'ble Eriyagama Sri Dhammananda Maha Thero of Polgahawela, Ceylon, the donor of the parapet wall and gate, were then unveiled by Dr. K. M. Palith and U Po Shin respectively.

The meeting commenced with the administration of Pancha Sila by the Ven. Talwinne Sunanda Thero of Malwatta Temple, Kandy, Ceylon.

Welcoming the audience on behalf of the Maha Bodhi Resthouse, the Ven. N. Sri Dhamananda Thero referred to the intimate association with the Buddha-Gaya Temple which the Sinhalese Buddhists had had for many centuries, and described how the Ven. Anagarika Dharmapala had constructed the Resthouse for the use of the resident Buddhist monks and visiting Buddhist pilgrims. He added, "Since at that time no Buddhist monks were available at Buddha-Gaya to look after the Resthouse the Anagarika Dharmapala handed it over together with a sum of money for its maintenance, to the District Board of Gaya. We shall remain ever grateful to the District Board of Gaya for the unselfish and praiseworthy services which they have thereby rendered to the Maha Bodhi Society for so long. But since Buddhist monks are now permanently resident in the Resthouse we hope that our sympathetic friend the popular Chairman of the Gaya District Board will soon transfer both land and building back to the Maha Bodhi Society who will manage it in accordance with Buddhist principles."

Continuing, the speaker said that the parapet wall and gate had been erected by the Maha Bodhi Society with a sum of Rs. 5,000/- donated by the Ven. E. Dhammananda, Maha Thero, of Ceylon, whom we thanked for his generosity.

The donor himself then addressed the meeting, remarking in the course of his speech that "We who have come from Lanka have much in common with you the sons of Bharata. These two independent countries of ours will find many ways of working together for the common good."

The Ven. M. Sangharatana Thero, Secretary of the Maha Bodhi Society of India, urged Hindus and Buddhists to work together for the restoration of Buddha-Gaya to its original glory.

He was followed by Samanera Sangharakshita, an English Buddhist monk, who dwelt on the religious and cultural importance of Buddha-Gaya, and suggested that the newly constituted Managing Committee should appoint Buddhist monks to conduct the temple worship, which was at present improperly performed, and invite the Archaeological Department to renovate the shrines and stupas in the compound area.

The Ven. D. Sasanasiri Thero spoke in Sinhalese for the benefit of the pilgrims from Ceylon, and, after describing the purpose of the meeting, praised the generosity of the Ven. E. Dhammananda Thero.

Dr. K. M. Palith, Mr. M. B. G. Dissanayaka and the President, U San Thin, then addressed a few words each to the meeting, after which a vote of thanks was proposed by the Ven. Pandit B. Nanawimala Thero of Ceylon.—*Cor.*

JAPANESE PEACE DELEGATES AT SARNATH

The Rev. Riri Nakayama and Dr. Mrs. Kora, Member of House of Councillors, Vice-President, Indo-Jap Association, delegates to the World Pacifist Conference held at Sarnath, Japan, visited Sarnath on pilgrimage and received

by Bhikkhu M. Sangharatana, Secretary Maha Bodhi Society, Sarnath where they stayed as guests of the Society. During their stay they devoted most of their time in meditation and worship.

Dr. Mrs. Kora addressed the students of the Maha Bodhi Higher Secondary School and in the course of her talk she traced the development of Buddhism in Japan and the present form in which it exists this day. She also spoke about the industrial development of the country with special reference to handicrafts and the way in which the students of Japan are trained for that purpose. She also gave a gruesome account of the wide destruction and devastation caused by the fall of Atom Bomb. She spoke very highly of the hospitality she and her colleague Rev. Nakayama received from the day they set their foot on the Indian soil and wished for the establishment of cordial relations between the two countries.

HEAD LAMA OF MANSAROWAR LAKE

Sarnath.

The Head Lama of Saloon Gumpha of Mansarowar Lake, Kushok Gynanashri and Yome Dorjee along with fifty followers visited Sarnath recently. They walked from Mansarowar to Simla in a month's time and from Simla they came to Sarnath by rail. From Sarnath they went to Buddhagaya.

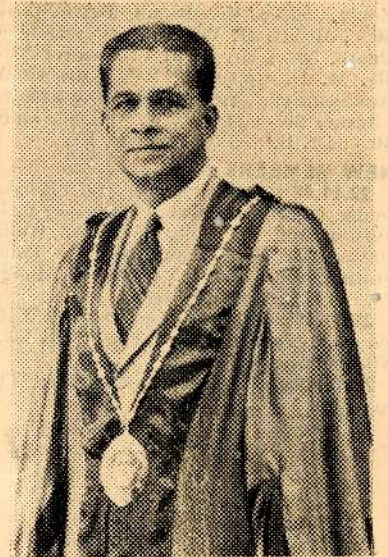
The Lama said that there were four Gumphas (Monasteries) at the four corners of the Mansarowar (Anotatta) Lake—(1) Chugu; (2) Dirifu; (3) Sudufu; (4) Janta.

In the middle of the above-mentioned Gumphas is the Saloon Gumpha. This Gumpha has been constructed by Lamas themselves and is as big as the Mulagandhakuti Vihara, Sarnath. In all there are about 500 Lamas in the above Gumphas. Their maintenance is made by the Buddhist Society named Depayun. The Lamas devote all their time in meditation only and no one can go there and see them.—*Cor.*

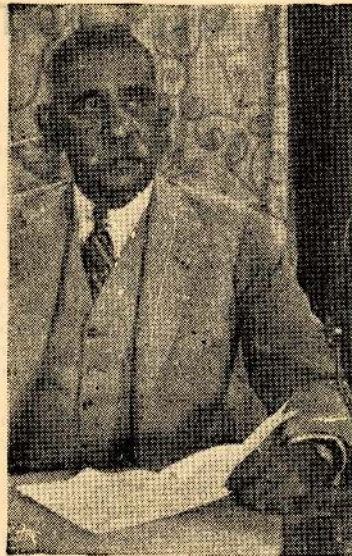


Mr. U. A. Jayasundere, C.B.E.

IN NEW YEAR HONOURS LIST



Mr. W. A. B. Soysa, M.B.E.



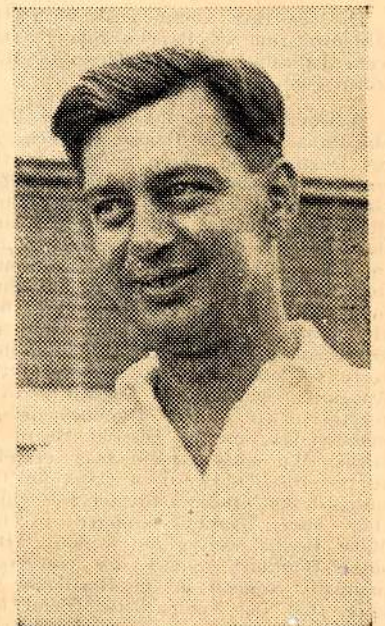
The Rt. Hon. D. S. Senanayake



Dr. P. B. Fernando, O.B.E.



Mr. W. Aron Fernando, M.B.E.



Mr. F. C. de Saram, O.B.E.