



THE BUDDHIST

“Sila Paññānato Jayam”

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

Assistant: D. N. W. de SILVA

Vol. XX.

MARCH, 1950

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

No. 11

LORD SOULBURY IS IMPRESSED BY THE RELIGIOUSNESS OF OUR PEOPLE

“BUDDHIST TEACHING ENABLED CEYLON TO PASS FROM DEPENDENCE TO INDEPENDENCE SO TRANQUILLY”

LORD SOULBURY, the Governor-General, in an Independence anniversary broadcast to the people from Radio Ceylon on February 4, said that one of the chief causes of their political stability and successful self-government was that they were profoundly religious.

Lord Soulbury said: “The second anniversary of her Independence finds Ceylon firmly established as a free country, successfully working a democratic constitution, and in full and equal partnership with a number of other states, each of which enjoys the same form of government and which together composes the great association of peoples known as the Commonwealth of Nations.

“Ceylon’s membership of that association, in company with two other Asiatic states, gives the Commonwealth greater power and influence than it has hitherto possessed; and marks one of the great turning points in history.

“Eastern and Western peoples are now linked together for the first time by bonds of similar political usages, principles, and ideals. They share and are organised to promote a common faith in personal liberty, and in the right of every man and woman to lead a life free from fear of coercion by dictators or oligarchies.

“The meeting in Colombo of the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers can be interpreted as a signal to the world that, whatever be the creed or colour of the hundreds of millions of people in the Commonwealth, and no matter where they live, all are determined to uphold the freedom of the individual.

“It is the purpose of us all to resist any attempt to undermine the liberty of thought and speech and conscience

that belongs to every human being, and to substitute the rule of law for arbitrary and irresponsible control by powerful groups or persons.”

Continuing the Governor-General said: “Since Ceylon attained freedom, the management of her affairs has borne striking testimony to the merit of democratic institutions and the democratic way of life. But while democratic government in the form adopted by Ceylon and other nations of the Commonwealth is, in my judgment, the best and fairest form of government yet devised, it is also the most difficult to practise with success. For it calls for a spirit of compromise, tenderness to minorities, consideration for others, and a willingness to give and take.

“Two years ago, I had the privilege of broadcasting to you a message of congratulation on the celebration of your freedom. In it I observed that ‘of all social services education must play the largest part in producing and developing citizens competent to run a modern democratic State like yours.’ The power to govern is now in the hands of the people—in your hands—through your elected representatives.

But, power without knowledge can be very dangerous. A great responsibility, therefore, rests upon every educational administrator and teacher. For it is his task to train the electors of the future to perform their important duties with intelligence and rectitude.

“They will, I trust, be taught not, as in some other countries, what to think, but how to think. Thus will they become critical of slogans and catchwords, and difficult to mislead by specious appeals to emotion and self-interest.

“But, far more important than the education of the intellect is the training of the character. Character must always be the test of political life. Character is a fruit of religious teaching and discipline. That the people of Ceylon have been, and, I believe, still are, a profoundly religious people is, in my opinion, one of the chief causes of their political stability and successful self-government.

“For 2,500 years there have been instilled into them, the noble ideals of peace and gentleness, tolerance and kindness and hospitality, the care of the sick and the weary, the pursuit of the good and the beautiful, and compassion towards all that lives and breathes.’ I am quoting from a broadcast delivered to you years ago by a distinguished citizen of Ceylon, and the passage concludes: “It is Buddhism’s proud boast that not a single drop of blood has ever been shed in its name.”

“I believe that you owe to that example and teaching the restraint and moderation that have enabled you to pass from dependence to independence so tranquilly, and the good temper, good manners and courtesy that have won the friendship and respect of other nations.

“Without the inspiration of these ideals and the religious spirit that has inspired all communities in this Island, the story of the last few years might have been very different.

“But there are difficult times ahead not only in the political but in the economic sphere. Man cannot live by politics alone. It would be fatal to relax and contemplate your new freedom

(Continued on page 128)

MR. DAYA HEWAVITARNE'S MESSAGE TO BURMESE BUDDHISTS

MR. DAYA Hewavitarne, who accompanied the Sanchi Relics to Burma, on behalf of the Maha Bodhi Society, addressing the Buddhists of Burma in a broadcast talk on February 18, said :—

I am indeed very grateful to the authorities for giving me this opportunity to speak to you on the significance of these sacred relics which we have brought to you. My friend the Diyawadane Nilame has just told you about the sacred relics that have been brought by him from Ceylon, so let me tell you of the Relics of Arhans Sariputta and Maha Moggallana, the two chief disciples of the Buddha, which I and my colleagues had the privilege of bringing from the Maha Bodhi Society of India.

History of Sacred Relics

It was in 1851 that General Cunningham, the then Commissioner of Archaeology in India, while excavating a number of ancient Buddhist Shrines at Sanchi, in the State of Bhopal came across these sacred treasures. They were removed to England, where they were lying at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London until 1947, when they were handed back to the Buddhist World. We must indeed be thankful to the Maha Bodhi Society for getting us these relics, and there is no reason whatever to doubt that these relics are those of the two chief disciples of the Buddha.

It might seem strange to some why the Buddha should assign the place of chief disciples to two new comers instead of giving those exalted positions to his senior pupils. We need not seek far into this if we remember that Sariputta was the only disciple of the Buddha who could expound the Dhamma with the same depth of meaning as the Master himself. His intelligence was unequalled by any other disciple. Likewise in Idhi power or supernatural power, Maha Moggallana was the greatest of his disciples. It is clear, therefore, that the Buddha knew of all these potential qualities in his two new disciples when he assigned to them those high places and he looked to them to keep the Sangha pure.

An Extraordinary Event

It is stated in Buddhist books that after the cremation of Arhan Sariputta's body, these relics gathered from the funeral pyre, were brought to the Buddha at Rajagriha, who received them in both his hands, paying at the same

time a high tribute to the memory of his greatest disciple. These relics are, therefore, doubly sacred for they are the only objects existing today which have been touched by the Buddha.

I wish to bring to your notice another fact which is significant. There is no record to show that the Buddha's bodily remains and those of his two leading disciples were ever brought together. This extraordinary event is taking place today and I do not know how many centuries ago that our ancestors had the privilege of witnessing what we are enjoying now. If those sacred relics succeed in fostering even to some extent unity and goodwill among your peoples, I for one, will consider their return after nearly a century in foreign lands a very great blessing indeed. I shall be happy in the thought that I had the privilege of bringing these sacred relics home.

Religious Ties with Burma

Our religious ties with your country are not new. They date from time immemorial. The bringing of these sacred relics to you is not simply an event, but symbolises the renewal of religious intercourse between our two countries. The present century has been one of reawakening and renaissance in all fields of Buddhist culture and we the Buddhists of Ceylon feel proud that we have been privileged to participate in that reawakening and renaissance of this ancient culture which is our common heritage. I might here mention that the All-Ceylon Buddhist Congress is now organising a World Conference of Buddhists to be held in Ceylon commencing from the fullmoon day of Vesak, May 23rd of this year, and I would like to extend an invitation to the Buddhists of Burma to send Delegates to this Conference.

The teachings of Buddha showed a new path to the world 2,500 years ago and it is gratifying to see signs of a revival of Buddhism all over the world, which means a new outlook in life of men and a permanent solution to the troubles of the world. The war-scarred world needs peace and rest and that peace and rest can only be achieved through the Teachings of the Buddha. It cleanses your heart and purifies your mind. The Buddha taught us, his followers to extend Maitriya to all and it is my fervent hope that Maitriya will extend over the whole of Burma and there will be no room in this Buddhist country for

rife and oppression. Let us, therefore, strive to extend in all directions the religion of love proclaimed by the Buddha and rise above the passions of the animal world. Just as one is conscious of his own sorrows and sufferings, so should one be conscious of the pain or misery of others. A careful realisation of this truth will prevent a very sinable man from inflicting pain upon his fellow-beings.

Your Prime Minister is a devout Buddhist. It was only a few days ago that he visited Ceylon as a humble pilgrim and visited the places of religious worship in that country. With such a man at the helm of your Government, he will guide you through to your cherished goal. But he cannot do this alone. You must help him. With your co-operation and with the Law of Righteousness in his heart, we will see once again a prosperous Burma, the Land of Golden Pagodas. May you all live in peace and may you be happy.

BUDDHA RELICS LEAVE FOR BURMA

THAKIN NU, the Burman Premier and his family and other Burman, including Sir U. Thwin, Trustee of the Shwe Dagon Pagoda, who came to Ceylon on a pilgrimage towards the end of January, left on February 3rd.

While the Premier and his family left by air, the Diyawadane Nilame of the Dalada Maligawa, Kandy, accompanied by other pilgrims, went in H.M.S. "Kenya," taking with him 150 B-saplings and some Buddha relics on loan to Burma. Government Security Officers accompanied the relics which were offered the customary pooja on board.

The relics from Ceylon reached Rangoon simultaneously with the Sanchi Relics, loaned by India, which were taken in H.M.I.S. "Tir," in which Mr. Daya Hewavitarne, who accompanied Premier Thakin Nu, travelled.

All relics were received by the Burmans with veneration and many thousands of devotees continue to worship them at the Rangoon University Hall.

The Diyawadane Nilame hopes to bring back the relics from Ceylon about the beginning of April.

BURMA—THE LAND OF MANY FESTIVALS

IT has often been said by foreign observers not without a touch of good-natured humour that the Burmese people have the happy knack of turning holy days into holidays and holidays into holy days.

Another good-natured remark made by observers is that Burma is a land of festivals. This, to a certain extent, is quite true because throughout the year, according to the Burmese lunar calendar, there are festivals, each with its own significance.

Burmese festivals can be divided into two main categories, those connected with the religion of the people and, secondly, those celebrated in some parts in honour of some particular spirit or *nats*.

Historically, spirit worship dates back to the time just preceding the coming of King Anawrahta about 1,200 years ago as the first and one of the most powerful kings of old Burma.

PAGODAS

After the introduction of Buddhism into Burma, King Anawrahta engaged himself in enriching Buddhism by conquest and by gifts from other countries with Buddhist literature and relics. Pagodas began to be built and in each of the pagodas sacred treasures and relics were usually deposited. This practice was handed down from generation to generation of Burmese kings until we come to the time of the Pagan period which may be aptly described as the age of Pagoda builders.

In old Pagan, the capital of Burma, it has been said that every vacant spot in and around the city was filled with Pagodas. The greatest of the Pagoda-builders of Pagan were Kings Kyansittha and Alanngsithu. The former's Ananda Pagoda and the latter's Shwezigon Pagoda are perhaps the best known today and have earned the admiration of foreigners as two of the greatest and most beautiful religious structures in Burma with a style and architecture that are unique.

Also among the Pagoda-builders of the latter period can be mentioned Bodaw Paya, the eldest son of King Anawrahta. He built what may be called the biggest pagoda in a place called Mingwun on the Irrawaddy and opposite Mandalay. Unfortunately, the King's superstitious nature was imposed upon by a prediction that when the construction of the Pagoda was completed the builder would die. Consequently the building of the

huge pagoda was left unfinished in the state of what has been described as the biggest "pile of bricks" and an earthquake gave the finishing touch to it by shaking down a part of that structure.

ITS OWN HISTORY

Each town in Burma boasts its own pagoda and every big pagoda in Burma has a history as well as a legend attached to it. Perhaps, the four greatest pagodas in Burma are the Shwe Dagon Pagoda of Rangoon, the Maha Myatuni of Mandalay, the Shwesandaw of Prome and the Shwemawdaw of Pegu.

Festivals are generally celebrated in connection with all the pagodas in Burma and throughout the year; a few days are reserved for the observance of a particular pagoda festival. Thus, festivals are held in Rangoon and Mandalay in the months of March and April respectively in honour of the two great pagodas in these two towns, while Prome holds its festival in about October or November in honour of its great Pagoda, Shwesandaw.

The great Pagoda at Pegu was destroyed by an earthquake in the year 1931 and all that remains of it now is its huge base. Nevertheless, the townfolk do not fail to observe their usual festival in about February each year. These pagoda festivals are really great fairs or *Melas* as they are known in India, and are often the centre of much merry-making and commercial activities.

SPIRIT WORSHIP

Apart from Pagoda festivals, there are a few spirit-worship festivals throughout the year and the most noteworthy of some of these festivals are those held in honour of the two *Nat* brothers, popularly known among the Burmese as the *Taungbyon Nats*.

This *Nat* festival is usually held in August of each year in a village called *Taungbyon* near Mandalay, followed by another festival in honour of the Ogress mother of the two *Nats*, in a place called *Ratanagu* near *Amarapura*, an ancient capital of Burma.

The main religious festivals are the Water festival, the Kason festival, Waso festival and the Lighting festival. The water festival begins about April 13 or 14 of each year according to the Burmese lunar calendar and goes on for three days, during which much watery salutation prevails.

The custom of pouring water during the festival is believed to have a Hindu origin and it is believed by the Burmese

people that by pouring water on one another in festive mood it is to wash out the old year and to bring in the fresh new year which usually comes after the end of the Water festival.

The Kason festival, the Visakha Day of India and the Vesak Day of Ceylon, is celebrated to mark the birth of Lord Buddha, His enlightenment, His renunciation and His passing away to Nirvana. In Rangoon and other places, during the Kason festival the centre of attraction is invariably the Bo-Tree, or in its absence the best known Pagoda of the place.

Carrying pots of water, village and town belles wend their way to the sacred Bo-Tree and after reciting prayers they pour water on to the Bo-Tree praying for all creatures to be free from all evils and also for themselves to be cleansed of all sins and evil thoughts.

A couple of months after the Kason festival comes the Waso festival which is really celebrated to mark the beginning of the Buddhist Lent. It is a day especially revered by Burmese Buddhists as the day on which the Lord Buddha preached His first sermon in the Deer Park in Benares to His five earliest disciples and that first sermon is known as the *Damasakra*.

After Waso festival there is a break of four months, during which Buddhist people spend most of their time fasting on Sabbath days and the Buddhist clergy confine themselves to their respective monasteries and concentrate on learning Buddhist philosophy and literature. These four months also correspond to the time of the cultivation season in Burma when Burma's peasantry get busy in their fields.

There is a taboo on matrimonial alliances and amorous ventures during the lenten period and to stress the need for a strict observance of the convention older people maintain that during this period even animals abstain from mating.

The end of the Buddhist Lent is welcome for many reasons. For the more worldly people and lovers and the clergy it means the lifting of the taboos and restrictions, while to the farmers it means that harvest time is approaching with its crops doing fine after four months.

At the end of the Lent, we have the *Thadingyut* or the Lighting festival which is celebrated annually in the middle or about the end of October each year. For three days houses are lit up

(Continued on page 127)

VIEWS ON BUDDHISM AND CHRISTIANITY

[A reader sends us the following symposium. We publish it as being of topical interest.—Editor, *The Buddhist*.]

(An extract from "*Apologetics and Catholic Doctrine*." *A Course of Religious Instruction for Schools and Colleges*.)

—By *The Most Revd. M. Sheehan, D.D., Archbishop of Germai.*

"... Its adherents are said to number over 400 millions. This, however, is quite inaccurate. Under the name of Buddhism are included very many sects with irreconcilable doctrines and divergent forms of idolatry and superstition. Probably pure Buddhism, if indeed it still exists, is now professed by 140 millions at the outside, and probably by considerably less. In any case it has no claim to be considered a universal religion. It is restricted to Eastern peoples. The admirable spirit of kindness which it once possessed evaporated long ago; it no longer has any thought for the hideous poverty and suffering so prevalent in the countries where it has a controlling influence. *Its vague and unsatisfactory doctrine of the Nirvana and many others of its doctrines are mere absurdities or mere gratuitous assertions without a reasonable basis and could not possibly receive any countenance except among men of a low grade of civilization.*"

Says T. H. HUXLEY

"BUDDHISM is a system which knows no God in the Western sense, which denies a soul to man, which counts the belief in immortality a blunder,

which refuses any efficacy to prayer and sacrifice, which bids men to look to nothing but their own efforts for salvation, which in its original purity knew nothing of vows of obedience and never sought the aid of the secular arm; yet spread over a considerable moiety of the world with marvellous rapidity—and is still the dominant creed of a large fraction of mankind."

BERTRAND RUSSELL ON CHRISTIANITY

"You know of course the parody of that argument in Samuel Butler's book, *Erewhon Revisited*. You will remember that in *Erewhon* there is a certain Higgs who arrives in a remote country, and after spending some time there he escapes from that country in a balloon. Twenty years later he comes back to that country and finds a new religion, in which he is worshipped under the name of the 'Sun Child' and it is said that he ascended into heaven. He finds that the Feast of the Ascension is about to be celebrated, and he hears Professors Hanky and Panky say to each other that they never set eyes on the man Higgs, and they hope they never will; but they are the high priests of the religion of the Sun Child. He is very indignant, and he comes up to them, and he says: "I am going to expose all humbug and tell the people of *Erewhon* that it was only I, the man Higgs and I went up in a balloon." He was told: "You must not do that, because all the morals of this country are bound round this myth, and if they once know that you did not ascend into heaven they will all become wicked"; and so he is persuaded of that, and he goes away quite quietly.

That is the idea—that we should all be wicked if we did not hold to the Christian religion. It seems to me that the people who have held to it have been for the most part extremely wicked. You find this curious fact, that the more intense has been the religion of any period and the more profound has been the dogmatic belief, the greater has been the cruelty and the worse has been the state of affairs. In the so-called ages of faith, when men really did believe the Christian religion in all its completeness, there was the Inquisition, with its tortures; there were millions of unfortunate women burnt as witches; and there was every kind of cruelty practised upon all sorts of people in the name of religion.

"You find as you look round the world that every single bit of progress in humane feeling, every improvement in the criminal law, every step towards the diminution of war, every step towards better treatment of the coloured races, or every mitigation of slavery, every moral progress that there has been in the world, has been consistently opposed by the organized Churches of the world. I say quite deliberately that the Christian religion, as organized in its Churches, has been and still is the principal enemy of moral progress in the world.

"I cannot myself feel that either in the matter of wisdom or in the matter of virtue Christ stands quite as high as some other people known to history. I think I should put Buddha and Socrates above him in those respects."

(Extracts from "*Why I am not a Christian*").

TWO DHAYANI BUDDHIST STATUES FOUND

TWO Dhayani Buddha statues have been discovered in the Ruwanweliseya premises while the workmen of the Restoration Society were dismantling some of the large stone-slabs around the inner Maluwa of the great dagaba, for the purpose of resetting them.

According to Dr. S. Paranavitana, Archaeological Commissioner, the extensive stone-paved platform, on which the great pile stands, is one of the adjuncts of the main shrine.

This shrine is of greater interest to the student of art and archaeology than the dagoba itself, and the hope has, therefore, been expressed that in dealing with it and the various other adjuncts of the stupa, such as the frontispieces known as Vahalkadas at the four car-

dinal points, the flights of steps and the gateways which gave access to the vast stone-paved platform and the Prakaras which enclosed the shrine, those responsible for the restoration will pay more heed to antiquarian and aesthetic considerations than they have done so far in the course of the work.

Mr. G. Dahanayaka, Office Assistant to the Government Agent, Anuradhapura, who has seen the two statues, says that "the discovery of the Dhayani Buddha is of great importance. These statues are works of art which exhibit strong Greek influence."

Mr. Dahanayaka adds that "the work about the great Ruwanveli, which was also a site of prehistoric culture, must be done with the pen knife and the

trowel of trained experts, not left to the mamoty of workmen accustomed to wield that implement on the manioc patches in their back gardens."

The two statues, which are of very beautiful workmanship, were discovered close to the eastern gateway of the Maluwa, about 40 feet from the dagaba. Both are heavily gilded. The big statue is nine and a half inches by nine inches, while the other one measures three and a half by three inches. The bigger statue weighs about 30 lbs.

The statues, which are in a perfect state of preservation, are considered to belong to the second century, whereas the image that was discovered a few years back was put down as a work of art of the fifth century by Dr. Paranavitana.

BROTHERHOOD WITH BUDDHIST BURMA

MANY are those devotees who come at various times to this "Pearl of the Orient," the Dharma Dvīpa (Isle of Dhamma) to quench their thirst from the ever-bubbling fountain of the "Buddha Dhamma." The recent visit of the pilgrim Premier, Thakin Nu, of Burma, and his retinue of followers to this Isle of Sri Lanka, marked another important milestone by linking the age-old friendship and goodwill, thus creating an everlasting Burma-Ceylon relationship.

In his parting message the Premier of Burma said: "An ambition of mine was cherished as soon as I stepped the holy soil of "Dhammadvīpa." I shall never forget the cordial relationship between these two Independent countries."

In conjunction may I reproduce the Independence message of Mr. Tint Swe, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary for Burma in Ceylon, who said "I must confess I have come to this country with dreams in my heart. To me Ceylon is Tambapanni—the golden land which Vijaya discovered twenty-six centuries ago. To me Sinhalese are a race of lions, still fearless and strong. To me, the Light which illuminates this heavenly Island is still the Light which Asoka's son brought from India. Both Ceylon and Burma are free again. In my opinion, this freedom will be worth while only if we could renew the long friendship which we have enjoyed in days of yore and revive the old spirit of give and take which had always marked the long historical relationship between our two countries. You have your "Ramanna" and "Amara-pura" schools of thought in your midst to remind you of Burma's goodwill in the past. On this, the second anniversary of Ceylon's Independence, it is my fervent prayer that, like the two-thousand three hundred year old Bo-Tree at Anuradhapura, the glory and grandeur of Ceylon may flourish and be green for ever and evermore."

The above is a resume depicting the close relationship as expressed by two of Burma's leading statesmen. From long past Ceylon had connections with Burma both religious and political and the imagination of an Air-service with the Burmese Government will foster better relationship and good feeling among the people of both countries. Burma, as we all know, is a Buddhist country. She was born and nursed in the Cradle of Buddhism. Buddhist Burma is a land of golden pagodas, and a shining symbol in the world of Buddhist Nations. It is the ambition of every Burman to visit this holy soil of

Lanka and worship the Tooth-relic of the Sakyamuni reposed in the sacred sanctuary of the Kandy Dalada Maligawa.

The Burmese are well-known for lavish contributions to the welfare of Buddhism. They have practised "dhana" (giving) to the very letter. The immense help by way of wealth and jewels for the upliftment of the Buddha sasana is an inborn inheritance of every Burmese. Even though the average Burmese is far apart from our language, customs and race, the only link that keeps us well bound is the "Dhamma." It is said that Buddhism took root in Burma during the reign of King Dharmasoka. During this time the Buddhist Bhikkhus took the rite of the "Upasampada," to Burma. This transgression is fully described on a stone-slab in Pegu by King Dhamma Chetiya. As this act of "Upasampada" took place on the banks of the Kelani river the inscription was named "Kalyani Silalipi." This is written in Pali using Burmese letters. All the historical and religious publica-

By J. P. PATHIRANA

tions found in Burma are adaptations of Ceylon's historical records. The only publication of note of Burmese origin is the "Sadda-Neetiya," edited by Chief Pandit Aggavansa Maha Thero.

The Buddhist monks of Burma are well-known for learning by heart all sacred Buddhist scriptures. They are well versed in their "Vinaya." During the recent past when a difficult problem arose from the Vinaya, I think the readers are aware of how that Burmese Buddhist monk Jagara Thero tackled the problem with ease and even today the name of Bhikkhu Jagara is held in high esteem.

A very common book which can be found in every household in Burma is the much publicised "Rasa-vahiniya." As the "Vessantara Jataka" is to the Ceylonese, the "Rasa-vahiniya" to the Burmese is ambrosial food. Both the clergy and the laity could quote with ease, passages of this book depicting the series of the robber "Haranthika" and the "Ceylon Bhikkhu."

Buddhism in Burma varies from that of Ceylon. It is the custom of every male in Burma to seek refuge in the Sasana for at least a week in his role of life. Buddhist monks in Burma exceed far

Burmese umbrella used by the Buddhist monk signifies that they are a sect out of the ordinary. The Burmese slippers and the Burmese "Koseiya" robes are some of the adaptations that our Ceylon monks copied through migration. Burma serves as a gulf and a steady link to Ceylon in the propagation of the "Dhamma."

There is a thirst for Dhamma both in the East and West. What better method is there than fostering a brotherhood with Buddhist Burma? Thakin Nu, Prime Minister of Burma, in his recent visit to this holy Island showed us the way, and it is to us in Ceylon and the Buddhist societies in particular to join hands and inaugurate Buddhist missions by sending them abroad to kindle those dim lights of the World with the "Light of Asia" of the Tatagatha.

BURMA—THE LAND OF MANY FESTIVALS

(Continued from page 125)

with candles and electric lights as offering to the Buddha and during these three days both villagers and townsfolk, in their gala dresses, go to Pagodas and visit the homes of their elders and do obeisance and ask for their blessings.

The more sophisticated younger people, however, look forward to the time when they will receive presents, often in the form of hard cash, given to them by their elders and parents in return for the gifts often of small value the younger people bring.

Immediately following the Thadingyut festival are other religious festivals that have little to do with Pagodas or Nats. These festivals usually held in about November are in all probability born of convention or custom. A popular Burmese nursery rhyme runs: "Old man, bent old and double, please don't die yet, wait and see Tazaungdaing Pwes."

HAPPY SMILES

It is during this festival known as the Tazaungdaing or Katein held in the month of November or Tazaungmon in Burmese that Yellow Robes are offered to the monks and individuals and religious societies vie with one another in trying to organise the best show in the villages or towns. With the beginning of Thadingyut or the end of Buddhist Lent the festive mood of the people once again comes to the fore and Pwes, music, dances and merry-making are seen and heard everywhere and the land is once again filled with merry laughter and happy smiles of the people.—*Times of Ceylon.*

WHAT ATTRACTS ME TO BUDDHISM

By CAPTAIN H. N. M. HARDY

[The writer of this interesting article is a learned English Buddhist, residing at present in Switzerland. As the distinguished leader of the Buddhist Group in Lausanne he is rendering an invaluable service to the few sincere Swiss Buddhists in making them live ideal Buddhist lives.—*Ed.*]

My dear Tony,

You ask me what attraction I can possibly find in Buddhism, a difficult question to answer in a short letter. Briefly I find in Buddhism the reply to many conundrums; a system of absolute justice; a system with no supernatural or miraculous aids; a system which holds each one of us strictly and solely to account for his own development; and finally a system of unbounded optimism.

I will take these points in order. I used often to ask myself how it came about that one child was born to healthy parents, with every advantage that money could buy, while, not far away, another was born in a slum to parents so diseased that the child never appeared to have a chance to grow into a healthy, useful member of the community. It seemed unfair, and no Church could give an explanation which satisfied me, whereas the Teaching of our Lord Gautama sounded above the confused clamour of creeds like the note of a silver bell: each one of us is as he has made himself; there is no chance, no "accident of birth," for if a man is born in poor conditions it is because he has so formed himself in past lives that these are his circumstances—he receives just what he has earned, no less and no more.

Is this not just? Is it not logical? Even so with the answers given by the Dhamma to similar questions, you will find a simple explanation, and a logical one—and always and everywhere man must depend on his own efforts to emerge from the swamp in which his own ignorance has put him. It is strictly just and this I think is what frightens many people away—the idea of justice untempered with mercy appals them, for they dare not face the thought that there is no power to whom to appeal if they have made a mistake. But it is just this inflexible justice which attracts me and, I think, should appeal to any man who feels that he is "captain of his soul" and therefore solely responsible for his acts.

In the Dhamma there is no compromise; "as a man sows, so shall he reap" and if a man thinks that he can cast the responsibility of his deeds on the

shoulders of another, he is deceiving himself—nor can any radiant being from another world choose one here and one there to be "forgiven their sins." Is it not just?

In the Dhamma you will not find that you are expected to believe in any miracles, not in any thing which outrages the laws of nature and common sense, for the essence of the Doctrine is that there is one universal law, that of cause and effect, and that this law runs all through Nature, in the intellectual and moral spheres just as much as in the material. And as it is the Law, to it there are *no* exceptions.

I have already said that each one of us is responsible for himself, and I hope I have made it clear that divine or diabolical intervention in our affairs, *i.e.*, a miracle, would be a breach of the Law, and as such is incredible to any Buddhist who must look to himself for his own salvation.

You see, Tony, it puts into our hands the power to govern our own development, to say which road each one of us will travel—but if a man choose the wrong road, be sure that he will suffer.

A child may not know that fire burns, but if he puts his hand to the flame, his ignorance of the nature of fire will not save him. So in our own develop-

ment: the law is the law, and is not rendered inoperative by ignorance.

No doubt my statement that Buddhism is optimistic will surprise you, as it is so often referred to by the ignorant as a system of pessimism.

Well, I would only ask you to remember this: In Buddhism there is no such thing as eternal damnation, and we know that every living creature can eventually attain Nirvana. Is this pessimism? To know that the Great Peace awaits all beings at the end of the long road, surely this is more than hopeful, this certainly. Or do you prefer hell fire or Sheol or the nothingness of those poor pessimists who believe in utter extinction?

Buddhism is the most glorious optimism there ever could be, as you will realise when you know more of it.

But, my dear Tony, do not imagine that Buddhism can be grasped by you, or anyone, in a week or a month. If you wish to grasp it, you yourself must work at it, for it cannot be pumped into you like water into a tank. Think over what I have said, and if you find that Buddhism attracts you—well, be prepared to do some hard thinking, real thinking, for in this as in everything else, no one can help you but yourself.

Yours in the Dhamma,
JOHN.

THE VEN. METTEYYA THERA

The death of the Ven. Metteyya Thera, of Vajirarama, Bambalapitiya, is a great loss to the Buddhists of Ceylon.

Entering the Sangha in India, he returned to Vajirarama where he became a loved pupil of the Ven. Pelene Vajirañāna. By his exemplary life, strictly in accordance with the canons of Buddhism—sometimes far too strictly—he earned the regard, respect and reverence of not only those who came to know him, but of many thousands who only knew of him.

For almost ten years he suffered from an ailment which he originally contracted in India during very austere days. The code he set for himself was such that even in the most critical days of his illness he would not deviate from the minutest Vinaya laws. And so he passed away on February 7, leaving a name which will for all time be remembered as that of a noble Buddhist.

LORD SOULBURY IS IMPRESSED BY THE RELIGIOUSNESS OF OUR PEOPLE

(Continued from page 123)

with self-satisfied complacency. The testing time is now and in the days to come and much of your future happiness will depend upon your ability to develop to their full extent the material resources of your country.

"Therefore, the maximum effort is needed to increase the national output; and the responsibility rests on every soul to do his best to make Ceylon the most peaceful, happy, and prosperous land in Asia!

"I pray that, as each year goes by you will draw ever nearer to the realisation of that goal, and I wish you very many happy returns of this day."

The cremation took place at the Kanatte Cemetery on Sunday, February 12.

WANTED: A NEW BACKGROUND~~~~~By ZEN

THINKING, progressive and modern Buddhists, are in agreement over the fact that Dhamma requires a new and more modern background and that the early one—which has remained unchanged throughout the many centuries—needs discarding and replaced by one more in keeping with modern ideas and needs. We also note with dismay that the increasing study of more or less useless languages; creates swelled heads for the Sangha but not necessarily supermen! No, the Sangha has turned to the culture of the brain instead of the culture of mind in experience of the Dhamma's Truth!

Surrounded as Dhamma is by the philosophy of materialism, all Buddhists must remember that "Man" comprises something which not even the spirit of man which is in him knows. And it

is for that knowledge and the way to it, that Buddha taught his Dhamma.

If the Sangha would but take the lead in that realisation, materialism would lose its influence; by such a lack, materialism becomes stronger in its hold and influence.

Amidst all current theories to the opposite, let us see Dhamma, not as an intellectual search, nor as a rational scheme. Let us see Dhamma as an experience—or nothing worth. Some systems of religion come to an end at Death, but Dhamma, like Nature, does not come to an end where the senses cease to register it and our minds become incapable of dealing with it; for the influence in life when Dhamma is fulfilled, is to give the highest value to our Personality—and that is the value which counts, here and hereafter.

Today it matters profoundly what view is taken of the human individual. Only if we are intellectually convinced that it extends beyond the limits of its atomic consciousness and reaches out, potentially, to that for which the ordinary name in Dhamma is Nibbana, can the future of Dhamma be secure, for, until man touches "the abyssal depths of his personality" to quote St. Augustine, can he realise the possibility of a mystical union with his God, of a limitless inheritance and the hope that in literal truth immortality will be his lot.

The main purpose of any Path taught by Buddha, is to bring out, develop, evolve, all the possibilities latent in our Personality, which will, if developed, give the Buddhist a new background of thought; and at the same time reveal more than the average unthinking Buddhist even dreams of! And the following of the Path will daily show things happening which are different in demonstration from those of the world of sense perception.

To bring this about we must discard all unprogressive thought. Increasing knowledge means an ever-changing world as all Buddhists know and admit. If Dhamma is to survive, it must somehow keep its hold upon this rapidly changing world of thought, for the mind of modern man is probing deep. If not, then Dhamma will enter the Museum and become a curiosity!

We now see Dhamma, though an ancient thought now fossilized or petrified, and made orthodox, is by no means a closed thought but meets and is open to the best of modern thought—which strongly advocates the enhancement of Personality. In such a way Dhamma proves a refreshing inspiration to all who wish to arrive at the Truth of Life and draw out the Hidden Truth which is inherent in all.

To such, awaits Immortality—beyond which lies—? And in such a vision or experience we can clearly understand the Udana which records Buddha as saying: "There is O Monks, an unborn, uncreated, unoriginated, unmade; if there were not there can be no escape from the born, created, originated, made"! and "He that sees me sees Dhamma; who sees Dhamma sees me!"

O Blessed Dhamma! Great in Wisdom,
Love, compassion, kindness to all;
Thy way O Dhamma, points to
Bodhi,
Nibbana in all its beauty;
But greater still it cures our ignorance
And bids us turn our mental eye
To search for that which is Nibbana's source
That lights up mind to see the way
From this deep larkness to endless day
That is Nibbana, wisdom's end.

EMBELLISHMENTS OF EASTERN ROYALTY

By E. T. GOONEWARDENE

THE accomplishments of Eastern royalty included a knowledge of the "Sixty-four Sciences" among which were the following:—

Grammar, Theology, Classical Literature, The Vedas, Jurisprudence, Prasody, Logic, Rhetoric, Philology, Botany, Astronomy, Physiognomy, Astrology, Medicine, Mythology, Customs and Traditions, History and Biography, Fencing, Archery, Mineralogy, Drawing (Chitra), Music (Gandharva), and Cookery (Supa).

The art of cookery, (*Supasastra*) (whence, without question, *soup*), occupied an honourable place in the roll of Eastern Science. King Parakrama Bahu III, who ascended the throne of Lanka in A.D. 1267, was, it is recorded, celebrated for his proficiency in the Sixty-four Sciences.

Ancient Eastern royalty had also to be versed in the four schemes of statecraft,—force, punishment, diplomacy and intrigue. They had to have the seven graces rendering the throne illustrious and powerful, *i.e.*, (1) prime minister, (2) an ally, (3) treasure, (4) territory, (5) a stronghold, (6) an army, (7) people. The ten Kingly-virtues were uprighteousness, practice of pious observances, almsgiving, tenderness, compassion, patience, evenness of temper, liberality in presents, peacefulness, addiction to religious austerities. The four rules of guidance, or four chief moral virtues, were almsgiving, affability, promoting the welfare of others and loving others as ourselves.

The three royal prerogatives were power to inflict punishment, great personal energy, command of counsel.

What Easterners considered a fully-equipped army, *Chaturanga*—the four-fold force, consisted of cavalry, infantry, elephants and chariots. Chess takes its name from *Chaturanga*, itself being a mimic "battle" with all the four "forces" employed. The game, tradition asserts, owes its origin to Lanka, having been invented during the terrific siege of Sri Lankapura, the Capital of Lanka, described in great Eastern epic *Ramayana*.

It will thus be seen that the life of an Eastern monarch of old was no sinecure; it was not all "beer and skittles."

Now-a-days the tendency is to copy from the West what the West has learnt from the East and developed by dint of enterprise and perseverance.

"Gauda" (Calcutta or India) was known as the "Treasury of all Sciences." "Treasury" did not mean the place of origin, however.

In one of the Jataka stories of pre-Gautama lore (*Ummagga Jataka*) you read of a subterranean tunnel—constructed at the instance of an Eastern King—in which doors were opened and closed, lights were put on or off merely "touching a nail." This was clearly the harnessing of electricity for human use. Then again, aerial warfare is mentioned in *Ramayana*.

The "*Dhanu-monara Yantra*" was the name given to air-ships of olden days. "*Monera*" meant peacock—a large bird of flight.

Ancient Eastern royalty had accomplishments which present day hereditary kings could scarcely boast of.

THE PATH TO NIBBĀNA

ACCORDING to the Buddha's teaching all beings are subject to decay and death. All beings and any other things are subject in this or any other world to impermanence. We as Buddhists do not believe in an eternal god who governs the world.

Looking at the impermanence of the world we see and we realise that everything is subject to suffering and that the beginning and end of anything is sorrow.

Three things such as transitoriness, suffering, and non-egoity are taught by the Buddha to be signs or marks of all that exists; the Buddha says that by knowledge one is purified. The mind of a person which is given to sensual lust and passion is defiled. If a person wishes that his neighbour or enemy be unhappy he is committing an injury to himself, and his mind is far from purity.

According to Buddhism each one of us can attain the highest state of development by earnest effort. Each man makes himself miserable according to his views

or thoughts. The person who governs himself according to the law, strives against giving way to lust, greed, sloth, hatred and ignorance. He observes and practises the five precepts. He abstains from falsehood, from slanderous and harsh words, and from vain talk. Such a person's speech is pleasing and charming to the ear and worthy to be remembered by others.

A person who is devoted towards the teachings of the Buddha is very careful to protect his sense-organs from the attraction of external objects. The general appearance of a woman or of a man or any other desirable and agreeable form is not powerful enough to provide a basis for the corrupting of his thoughts. Buddhism is different from all other religions by its vigorous application of the doctrine of causality to the mind as well as to the body.

According to the Buddha the causal law holds good throughout the three divisions of time—past, present, future. There have been causes set going in

previous lives, hence there are effects in this present life. And the causes set going in this present life will produce their effects in future lives. Thus the wheel of causality circles round and round, from past to present, and from present to future without ever coming to an end except in Nibbāna. The true follower of the Buddha enters upon the path which breaks all worldly bonds, through meditation. Although other religions teach means and ways of attaining temporary states of mental purity, it is the Buddha alone who has taught the way which helps men to attain a complete and lasting state of purity. It is this final pure state of mind that is called Nibbāna.

May all beings be happy.

ASTRID PERERA.

"Suriya-Sevana,"

Kirillapona,
February 15, 1950.

(We would welcome more contributions from our young readers.—Ed.)

THE SEAT OF CONSCIOUSNESS

By TRUTH

IT is clear that the Buddha has not definitely assigned a specific basis for consciousness as He has done with the other senses. The cardiac theory prevailed in His time, and this was supported by the Upanishads.

Amratabindupanishad states—"When the mind, with its attachment for sense-objects annihilated, is fully controlled within the heart and thus realises its own essence, then that Supreme State (is gained)."

Brahmopanishad says—"Within the recess of the heart is the Ākāśa of consciousness."

The Buddha could have adopted this popular theory, but He did not commit Himself. In the Paṭṭhāna, the Book of Relations, the Buddha refers to the basis of consciousness in such indirect terms as, *Yam rūpam nissāya*, depending on that material thing. What that material thing is, the Buddha did not positively assert. But according to the views of commentators and writers like the Venerable Buddhaghosa and Anuruddha Theras the seat of consciousness is the heart.

One wonders whether we are justified in presenting the cardiac theory as Buddhistic when the Buddha Himself did neither reject nor accept this popular theory.

In reply to the question—What and where is Hadayavatthu? Bhikkhu Silācāra writes:—

"I do not know, but I *guess* that it is an organ made of some finer order of matter than gross physical matter, and is situated somewhere in the neighbourhood of the physical organ, the heart. But *this is only a guess, a speculation*, on my part. It is certainly very striking that all prominent writers in many widely different countries always speak of the heart as being the seat of our deepest thoughts. I could quote from Pascal, Bible, and many European writers on this point. Shwe Zan Aung, here, however, thinks that the Buddha simply adopted the views about the seat of thought current in His time and country without necessarily endorsing them or denying them either. He adopted popular physiology the same as He adopted popular cosmology, without troubling much about it, His real interest being only psychology.

"Hadayavatthu is to be distinguished from the brain in this, that it is the primary, original source whence thought springs in a human being, whereas the brain is only the organ whereby thought is fitted with a body of words, so to speak, and made possible of communication to other minds than our own. In short: Thought originates in the Hadayavatthu; the definite formulation of thought in words originates in the brain.

OUR LIBRARY

The following books were presented to the Library by Mr. F. A. Weerasooriya of 35, Elibank Road, Colombo:—

1. A Treatise on Buddhist Philosophy or Abhidharmaya, Vol. I.
2. Buddhist Psychology by Mrs. Rhys Davids.
3. A Manual of Buddhism by Mrs. Rhys Davids.
4. Guide Through the Abidharmapitaka, by Nyanatiloka.
5. The Message of Buddhism by Subdhra Bhikkhu.
6. Compendium of Philosophy by Rhys Davids.
7. Dialogues of the Buddha, Part V., by Lord Chalmers.
8. Buddhist Psychology by Rhys Davids.
9. Discourses of Gotama the Buddha by Silacara, Vol. I.
10. Buddhist Psychology by Mrs. Rhys Davids, Vol. XII—Pali.
11. Sacred Books of the East by F. Max Muller, Vol X.
12. The First Fifty Discourses of Gotama the Buddha by Bhikkhu Silacara.
13. The Mahavansa (English) by L. C. Wijesingha.
14. Maha Satipattana Vistharatha Varnanava.
15. Do.
16. Do.

A THOUGHT FOR THE ANIMALS

IT has been well said "Every action was first a thought." Perhaps we do not always realise this and are apt to conclude that it is only the action itself which counts whereas really, though perhaps unconsciously, we first have the idea to do certain things.

Let us just consider how it comes about that each year we now celebrate a special time with the title of "Animal Welfare Week."

A hundred years ago such an event would not have occurred. The idea had not been born. It is only because thought has progressed with the years and as man, the higher animal, has progressed he has developed to a greater extent his feelings of sympathy towards the animals below him in the scale of being.

Richard Martin proclaimed aloud his thoughts about the way animals in general were treated. His thoughts were "catching." Other people began saying "Animals can feel and suffer; we must stop this cruelty." That was the beginning of legislation to protect horses; other laws have followed. Since then people have gone on extending their kinder feeling by forming the various societies you know to exist today. But what is at the bottom of all this great endeavour, surely nothing but man's thinking!

You may be asked: What do you think about animals? How do you regard them?

If we look at the two opposing lines of thought on this subject it may clear the way for your answer and possibly fill you with more desire to choose the better of the two following lines.

THE ANIMALS AND OURSELVES

(1) Is there any real family relationship between us? Or

(2) Are we separated from them by an impassable gulf?

Anyone holding the second view will probably argue that animals were created specially for the use and benefit of man, and that man is within his rights in taking advantage of their strength and obedience and even in sacrificing their lives if, by so doing some benefit may be gained for human beings. And yet such a person may, in some ways, be quite kindly; he would not, for instance, ill-treat his own horse, dog or cat, but if he has been brought up amongst people who go in for "sport" he thinks with them that fox-hunting, stag-hunting, shooting birds, etc., are all admirable pursuits.

The pleasure of riding a horse in the beautiful country air is not exciting enough for the man who thinks the fox himself enjoys equally with the hunter the pursuit of the hounds on his trail and his efforts to escape from them. We must suppose these lovers of so-called sport honestly think that foxes are "sent" to minister to their pleasure. Others, also holding the "wide gulf" view, uphold the trapping of wild animals for the sake of their fur and skin, the caging of them for travelling shows and the use of many tame and sentient creatures for experiments which involve great suffering. All these come from

their thinking about animals not as our kith and kin but as beings apart, to be petted and liked if convenient, or to be made use of for food, clothing or amusement.

Now, if people really believe that animals were created simply for our use all such conclusions would seem quite reasonable.

But, supposing you cannot accept that line of thought, then quite naturally you are led to act differently. You are not called upon to explain *Why* animals exist on this earth. They are here and it is plainly our job to help them on their way even though we may not see always what good they are to the world. It might as easily be asked of many humans what good are *They* in the world!

Your answer to the question, How do you regard animals? will no doubt be that you think of them as being different in many ways and yet as very like to ourselves in other ways. That you believe in the *Great Kinship* which binds us all together and that *Thought* is enough to urge you on to actions which prove the sincerity of your thought.

Perhaps this may be your last year of school life and you will be going out into the world to face the world's opinion but, happily, your power of thinking need not stand still. There is yet much more of reform to accomplish; more nobler thought to bring into activity, and the great hope for the future development of Justice to All lies in your hands, in your thoughts and actions. You—the young people of today.

JESSEY WADE.

II

EARLY EDUCATION

WE are all working for humane education to be introduced into schools, but it is necessary to remember that from the very cradle the child is nourished in barbaric ideas, which have to be eradicated before humane teaching can get a foothold in the young mind. For example, children early learn "Three blind mice," and lines of a similar character. They are amused by the jingle of the "Three blind mice," and it does not convey to them that the cutting off of the tails caused the mice any pain. In fact, children are more likely to get the notion that it is the proper thing to do with mice. Birds are seldom mentioned in our old rhymes without a gun or a bow and arrow; the idea would seem to be that a bird was made to be shot. Is it any wonder that when children see a bird or, in fact, a cat or other animal, their hands reach out for a stone?

As well as actively cruel rhymes, there are suggestive ones, such as "Ding, dong, bell." An instance was reported in the daily press a year or so ago of a child who fell into a well and was drowned. The inquest showed that the child, after singing the rhyme, had thrown her kitten into a well, and lost her own life the following day in an attempt to recover it.

A short time ago some children in an English school were asked to write an essay on three words, "cat, baby, mother." Almost without exception the essays were cruel. The cat scratched the

baby, and the mother came in and punished the cat, or something like that. There was not a single essay in which the baby was depicted playing with the cat, and the mother coming in and giving both of them some milk. Practically all of them suggested cruelty.

The idea was copied in a Chinese school with opposite results. With one or two exceptions the essays bore no sign of cruelty. Perhaps the Chinese baby does not learn such lines as occur in "The house that Jack built," where the cat kills the rat, the dog worries the cat, and the cow tosses the dog. In his verses the cat and the dog may lie by the fireside together!

We all have a certain respect for nursery rhymes on account of their associations, and because they have been beloved of children for countless generations, but surely it is time to free them from their discordant features; that the mother, teaching their pleasant jingle to the young child at her knee, can know that she is instilling those thoughts which will pave the way for the joy that comes of kinship with all that lives, and the growth of qualities that make for good citizenship, rather than with the savagery of past ages.

TOYS

Let us now consider the question of toys and games for children, bearing in mind the fact that recreation plays as large a part as education in moulding the young mind.

One of the first toys put into a child's hand is a popgun, with cork attached as innocent and amusing plaything in itself, but for the suggestion that lies behind. This gives place to a bow and arrow, and later to the catapult and deadly airgun, which takes its toll of the bird life of the neighbourhood. All along the teaching is to shoot, to destroy.

Another early toy is a whip, to "make the old horse go," and the wooden horse is vigorously lashed. Small wonder the living horse is but a machine, which the whip "makes go" in many thoughtless minds. Toy menageries, with gaily-painted victims behind bars, do not serve to impress on the young the horror of what John Galsworthy calls "the saddest place on earth," and hunting outfits, with scarlet caps and horns, fishing-pond and race games all teach a disregard for animal life and suffering, and help to make generation after generation oblivious to the cruelty of "blood sports."

This list could be lengthened almost indefinitely, but just one example to show the demoralising type of game which is on the market as a pastime for young people. This consists of a board, embellished with pictures of cats in various attitudes of fright, pain and anger. An erection representing a wall is set up with cardboard cats balanced on it. The game consists of flicking toy dogs at the wall to dislodge the cats, the player whose "dog" throws down the greatest number naturally wins. What is one to expect of thoughtless, and unfortunately often naturally cruel, young people who have such a game as this given to them?

(Continued on page 134)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

ALL-CEYLON BUDDHIST CONGRESS

Sir,

Upon reading Dr. Malalasekera's Presidential address at the All-Ceylon Buddhist Congress 31st sessions, I was particularly struck by what he had said with regard to Ceylon's traffic in intoxicants. The traffic in drink which is carried out in this land which is famed as "Dhamma-dvipa" is undoubtedly a blot upon its good name, and the arguments he has adduced in favour of prohibition are very convincing, but to them I should like to add the following further argument.

It is a fallacy to say that the traffic in drink brings in real, justifiable, revenue to the country. We do not increase our national wealth by converting the productive capacity of the coconut and palmyrah palms into intoxicating drinks, for we export little or nothing of such drinks. If instead of the unnatural extraction of toddy from these palms we obtained their nuts, the wealth which will flow into the country from the export of its copra, etc., is real, well-earned wealth. On the other hand, the revenue which the Government collects from the manufacture and sale of toddy and arrack is a vicious form of veiled taxation, and the money so collected is generally the hard-earned wages of the poor which they can ill-afford to squander away in sense-depriving drink. The majority of those who patronise the tavern and the bar do so at the expense of essentials such as food, clothing and shelter. The same may be said of racing and other types of taxed gambling.

The Government seems to follow a vicious circle in their present policy. It induces and tempts the people to bring upon themselves certain ills for the pleasure of doing which they are obliged to pay to Government a certain amount of money, and then Government like a pandering parent spends that same money in curing the very ills it was instrumental in bringing about. Would it not be far better not to cause the ills in the first instance?

Yours, etc.,

N. WICKREMESINGHE.

"Double Jak,"

Hunnaagiriya.

HOSPITALS WELFARE SERVICE

Sir,

The All-Ceylon Buddhist Congress has organized a Hospitals Welfare Service in many parts of the Island during the last few years.

Bhikkhus visit these hospitals daily, or at least once a week, administer Pansil, chant Pirith, preach Bana, and distribute Dhamma pamphlets to Buddhist patients.

Arrangements are also being made to administer the necessary religious services to dying patients.

An annual Vesak treat has been held during the last ten years.

Medicines which are not supplied by Government are given by us to poor patients at their request, and with the approval of the Medical Officers-in-Charge, irrespective of race or religion.

Radio sets and articles needed for occupational therapy have been supplied in some hospitals.

At present this service has been extended to 55 hospitals.

There is a great need for entertainment, by way of concerts, plays, film-shows, etc., and we have done our little bit to supply this want. But a great deal yet has to be done.

May I invite all those who wish to help this noble service by contributions, printing Dhamma pamphlets, supplying conveyances and getting up entertainments, and also Bhikkhus living in the vicinity of hospitals who are willing to organize religious services to communicate with Dr. W. E. A. Fonseka, 549, Havelock Road, Colombo 6, Honorary Secretary.

Yours, etc.,

G. P. MALALASEKERA,
President,

All-Ceylon Buddhist Congress.

12, Longden Terrace,
Colombo 7.

WANTED—YOUNG LEADERS

Sir,

I was very much moved when I read the English summary of Dr. G. P. Malalasekera's Presidential address delivered at Anuradhapura on the 31st Annual Session of the All-Ceylon Buddhist Congress; which appeared in the January issue of *The Buddhist*.

I should like to refer and stress special significance to the above caption. The learned Doctor says: "There is an urgent need for young men and women of education and true piety to qualify themselves as leaders in the promotion of the Sasana." The young generation is the backbone of a Nation and it is left to every young man and woman of Sri Lanka to unite and join together, go arm in arm to regain this lost prestige of ours—and make this little Isle of ours—the "Dhammadvipa." The young of today is obsessed with the idea of different isms; and by adhering to the wild thoughts of some of these revolutionary ideas, our youth is lost in a maze of materialism.

What better remedy is there than the pristine "Dhamma" of the Sakyamuni? WAKE UP! Shun all drowsiness and dear brethren! and sisters! make thy "Dhamma" the Guiding Star.

J. P. PATHIRANA.

100/6, Maligakanda Road,
Colombo, 10.

AHIMSA WEEK—26th YEAR

Sir,

We have pleasure in bringing to you this message of Peace and Kindness which we hope will prove to be a source of happiness to all beings. Life is the most precious gift of all and we have no right on any ground to cut short the life of any being large or small. It is our duty to alleviate the sufferings of both man and animals. If we wish World Peace we must try our best to make all beings happy.

We wish to state that the Ahimsa Movement organized by us on a minute scale in 1925 has made gradual progress during the last twenty-five years. Our main objects are to get legislation introduced to prohibit slaughtering cattle in Ceylon, and to propagate the Ahimsa Week all over the world within two years.

At the request of Miss Margaret E. Ford, Hon. Secretary, World League against Vivisection, London, we celebrated for the first time the World Animal Day on October 4, 1948. At our request meat-stalls were closed at eight places in Ceylon on that day. We are happy to mention on that day last year, meat-stalls were closed at fifteen places.

As this movement is universal and it is neither political nor sectarian we kindly request all to co-operate with us in observing the Ahimsa Week, which falls in the first week of May every year. The following three precepts have to be observed during the week:—

1. To abstain from killing
2. To take only vegetarian diet
3. To give rest to animals from 10.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and to abstain from travelling in vehicles drawn by animals during that time.

Further, in order to increase food products in the country and to keep our fellow-men gradually away from eating flesh food we kindly request all to plant as many food-producing plants as possible commencing on May 1st at 6.30 a.m. and continuing through May and June. We kindly request the authorities of all the churches and temples to announce the time by ringing bells twenty-six times at 6.30 a.m. The co-operation of priests and teachers of all religions and associations is earnestly invited to make this movement a success. We have pleasure to state that this movement has spread to India, Burma, England, France, Switzerland, Canada, United States of America, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand.

Yours, etc.,

W. S. FERNANDO,
Principal,
Universal College.

Panadura,
Ceylon.

COLOMBO Y. M. B. A. NEWS

ANNUAL DINNER

The annual dinner of the Colombo Y.M.B.A. was held at the G.O.H., Colombo, on Friday, February 24 and was attended by a fairly large gathering of members and their wives. Sir Ernest de Silva, President, was Chairman, and the guest of the evening was Dr. Kumaran Ratnam, Mayor of Colombo. The other guests of the Association were Mrs. Kumaran Ratnam, Sir Frank and Lady Gunasekera, Sir Arunachalam Mahadeva and Mr. A. M. A. Azeez.

Dr. Ratnam proposed a toast to the Y.M.B.A., and in doing so commended the good work done by Association



Dr. Kumaran Ratnam, Mayor of Colombo, who was the chief guest at the Y.M.B.A. 52nd Anniversary Dinner at the G.O.H. on February 24, arrives with Mrs. Ratnam. On the extreme right is Sir Ernest de Silva, President of the Association.

from the time it was started by a band of young Fort workers. The Association had been safely and wisely piloted for nearly half a century by that patriot and leader, the late Sir Baron Jayatilaka. The Y.M.B.A. was fortunate in having in Sir Ernest and equally enthusiastic President, in whose capable hands the future of the Association was assured.

Mr. V. S. Nanayakkara, General Secretary, replied.

Mr. Walter Wimalachandra, Advocate, proposed a toast to the guests, on whose behalf Sir Frank Gunasekera replied.

Sir Arunachalam Mahadeva gave the toast of the Chairman, to which Sir Ernest responded.

COLOMBO Y.M.B.A. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 52nd annual general meeting of the Colombo Y.M.B.A. was held in the Association Hall on Saturday, February 25.

The following office-bearers were duly elected:—

President: Sir Ernest de Silva; Vice President: Mr. D. S. Senanayake, Mr. R. L. Pereira, K.C., Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya, Senator Cyril de Zoysa and Dr. G. P. Malalasekera; Hony. General Secretary: Mr. V. S. Nanayakkara (re-elected); Hony. Treasurer: Mr. D. W. G.

A NOBLE GIFT

Mr. D. A. Dharmadasa, retired Arachchi, Fiscal's Office, Colombo, has set apart a sum of Rs. 250/- in his last will for investment to enable a prize to be awarded at the annual Dhamma examinations of the Colombo Y.M.B.A.

NEW MEMBERS

31.1.50: M. A. David, Biyagama Pahala, Malwana; I. P. Nanayakkara, Wirawila Farm, Tissamaharama; G. A. Martyn, 31, Karlsrue Gardens, Campbell Place, Borella; P. Ambalavanar Raja, 529, Biyagama Road, Kelaniya.

7.2.50: M. R. Rupasena, 13, Narahenpita Road, Nugegoda; M. W. Munasinghe, 39/48, Nelson Lane, Colpetty.

14.2.50: K. Thurairatnam, 4, Gunasekera Lane, Norris Avenue, Maradana; P. Don Abraham, "Lakewood," 15, Narahenpita Road, Rajagiriya; F. A. Weerasooriya, 35, Elibank Road, Havelock Town; Peter Perumal, 17, Ambagahawatta, Bambalapitiya; G. H. G. Gunasena, Teacher, Government Junior School, Denipitiya, Weligama; H. D. Bastian, 107, Humupitiya Lake Road, Colombo 2.

21.2.50: N. E. R. Martyn; Hubert D. Peiris, No. 1119, Maradana Road, Borella; V. Sivanathan, No. 41/10, Jaykontha Lane, Thimbirigasyaya; D. H. Kumarasinghe, 44, Courts Road, Gampaha; D. S. Jayasinghe, "Vijeyanthi," 23, Church Street, Nugegoda; M. D. de S. Gunatilleke, No. 780, High Level Road, Gangodawila, Nugegoda.

RESIGNATIONS

R. Fernando; Dr. T. A. Weerasuriya.

SONG RECITAL

Mr. Hubert Rajapakse will give a recital of Sinhalese songs at the Colombo Y.M.B.A. Hall on Friday, March 17, at 6.30 p.m.

OBITUARY

We record with regret the death of Mr. G. Arthur de Zoysa, M.P., for Bala-pitiya.



The late Mr. G. Arthur de Zoysa

In his younger days Mr. de Zoysa was closely associated with the work of the Colombo Y.M.B.A. At different times he served on the Committee of Management, being in charge of departmental work. While a teacher at Ananda College he did much to discipline the lives of the students by organising ata-sil parties on poya days.

Ranasinghe; Committee of Management: Messrs. D. N. W. de Silva, H. S. Gunasekera, A. Jayasinghe, E. S. Amarasingha, D. L. Dissanayake, N. J. V. Cooray, E. de S. Wijeratne, D. S. Samarasingha, W. H. de Zoysa, J. A. Dharmadasa, T. B. Dissanayake, L. R. Gunatilaka, L. Piyasena, Rajah Hewavitarne, Walter Wimalachandra, D. S. Abeyasingha and D. A. S. Perera.

LECTURES

The series of lectures arranged by the Sinhalese Literary Branch on The Future of the Sinhalese Language concluded with a learned talk by Mr. R. Tennekoon.

The first and second of this series were by the late, Bannarama Sri Seevali Thera and Dr. G. P. Malalasekera.

NEWS AND NOTES

BUDDHIST ACTIVITIES IN SOUTH INDIA

RASHTRA-BHASHA Visharada Nil-wakke Somananda Nayaka Thera, the Bhikkhu in charge of the Mahabodhi Buddhist Centre, Madras, spoke on "The Fundamental Buddhist Beliefs," at a meeting of the Maha Bodhi Society, held at Dharmapala Mandir, Egmore, Madras.

Speaking in Tamil the Bhikkhu said that Col. H. S. Olcott, founder of the Theosophical Society, who arrived in Ceylon in 1880, embraced Buddhism, and drafted fourteen items of belief which had been accepted as fundamental principles in both the Southern and Northern sections of Buddhism, by authoritative committees to whom they were submitted by him personally. They had so much historical importance that they were added to the Buddhist Catechism as an appendix. Those fourteen items were submitted for the approval of high priests of the nations which were represent at the Buddhist Conference held at Adyar, Madras, on the 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th of January, 1891 (A.B. 2434). On this occasion the Ceylon representative was Mr. Dhammapala Hewavitarna, who later founded the Maha Bodhi Society. Representatives of Japan, Burma, Ceylon, Chittagong accepted them. After that they were taken to Burma, Ceylon, Chittagong, Japan, and signed by all high priests.

The Buddhism which was flourishing 800 years ago in South India, was Southern (Theravada) Buddhism. To support his statement he mentioned the Tamil book "Mani Mekhalai." It was Col. Olcott who re-introduced Buddhism in South India for the first time, and after that Ven. Anagarika Dharmapala. But the followers had become materialists. They were under the impression that as soon as one embraced Buddhism, one became a Saky (Kshatriya), and they thought that they were also like Arahantas (Jeevan Muktas). They had no conception of re-birth.

The speaker continued, "to propagate original Theravada, a few Tamil youngsters, trained in Ceylon, and ordained, should come back to South India to preach Buddha Dharma.

THE practical application of Christian love, toleration, and respect for others' rights was duly exhibited to the whole world not only in the days of the inquisition, but in our time, when Roman Catholic Italy invaded and captured Abyssinia, poison-gassing and bombing its Christian inhabitants,—when the Christian nations fought each other in two bloody wars, causing the death of millions, and involving the whole world in misery, and when Christian mercy was again glaringly revealed to Buddhist and other non-Christian eyes by the scarcely believable horrors of concentration camps. Not the Christian devil himself could have invented worse.

The home-land of the Roman pontiff was bombed in retribution; and yet, in a Catholic school in Buddhist Lanka, we see on what vain false teaching the pupils are nurtured.

Dean Inge once wrote—"These Catholics have, as their chiefest desire, not the 'saving of souls' or following the steps of Christ's most holy life, but a crude theocratic dictatorship. And when we contemplate the record of the Catholic Church, we must surely say—'Thank God that its pretensions need no longer be taken seriously!' For is there any secular power whose policy has been more uniformly odious and detrimental to human welfare than the theocracy which, whenever it can, burns 'heretics,' silences men of science, supports tyranny, puts divine grace on a tariff, and eggs on barbarous armies to massacre nations which will not submit to it? From the Albigenses to St. Bartholomew, and from St. Bartholomew to the extermination of the Asiatic Greeks, the story has been the same."

WORLD FELLOWSHIP OF FAITHS

THE World Fellowship of Faiths held an International Congress in the Town Hall, New Delhi, on January 6. This Congress had a three-day session, in which almost all religions were represented by the representatives of their religions of the various countries of the world.

Buddhism was represented by Vira Dharmavara Thera (Thailand), Pandit H. Saddhatissa Thero (Ceylon), Dr. Beuson Tseng (China) and Sister Dhammadinna (America).—*Cor.*

NUMBER OF BUDDHISTS IN INDIA

(Based on the census report of 1941)

(We are grateful to Mr. Maniharsha Joti of Calcutta for sending us the following information.—*Ed.*) :—

India (a) Provinces—

Sindh (Pakistan)	111
Bengal (Pakistan & India)	146,560
Assam	8,144
United Provinces	5,478
Central Provinces	70
Punjab (Pak. & India)	247
N.W.F.P. (Pak.)	25
Orisa	454
Madras	1,072
Bombay	1,433
Bihar	648
	<hr/>
	164,242

(b) States & Agencies—

Ajmer—Marawara	6
Andaman	2,818
Nicobar	85
Baluchistan	43
Coorg	33
Delhi	150
	<hr/>
	3,135

Nepal—

Population is more or less 10,000,000. In the opinion of some scholars about 60 per cent. are Buddhists. According to the Government reports about 40 per cent. are Buddhists.

A THOUGHT FOR THE ANIMALS

(Continued from page 131)

It all goes to show how little attention is paid to the fact that animals have rights and feelings, and how much work remains to be done before the great majority, with their blunted sensibilities, recognise their responsibility towards their younger brothers, and the duty of impressing this responsibility on the rising generation.

GERALDINE LYSTER.

III

Miss Edith Carrington has written as follows on the same subject :

A man in the street was selling toy whips the other day. The first was bought by a pleasant-looking young mother for her little son aged two years. He immediately struck her with it. The second whip was sold to a little boy, walking with his nurse. He made use of it by flogging some poor terrified sheep driven by a butcher boy. A third little purchaser at once began to beat a little lost dog, and a fourth attacked a small frightened cat, who was timidly venturing to cross the road. A toy whip at once suggests something to be whipped.

Something to be killed is the idea suggested to a child by a toy gun. A small child may use a toy gun without hitting anything—true; but though he may not hurt anything else, he hurts himself. By the wish to kill, the gun teaches him cruelty.

By-and-by, the cruel plaything will be exchanged for the death-dealing rifle, and when he is old enough, his chief delight will be in the cowardly wholesale slaughter called "sport."

Few fathers and mothers would hand their son a knife wherewith to wound or slay some harmless living thing in his hands, yet they give him a gun wherewith to wound or kill at a distance out of sight, out of mind.