



THE BUDDHIST

"Sīla Paññānato Jayam"

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THE WORLD FELLOWSHIP OF BUDDHISTS

(By a Special Correspondent)

THE Convention, as it may well be called, which brought into being the World Fellowship of Buddhists, was held in Ceylon from May 25th to June 6th. It was an event of great significance, unique in the history of Buddhism, unique also in the history of the world. For, a gathering like it had never been held before. Nor would it have been possible for such a gathering to be held because of the practical difficulties involved, chiefly the problems of travel. It is worth while recalling that when the Chinese traveller and scholar Fa Hsien visited Ceylon it took him ten months to do the journey by sea. The overland route through India would have taken him ten years or more, and the perils involved were incalculable. Yet, we may pause awhile to pay tribute to those intrepid spirits who did undertake such hazardous journeys in the dim past, because it was their courage and devotion which carried the teachings of the Buddha across mountains and seas into lands far removed from each other.

To the World Fellowship of Buddhists there came some 127 delegates from 29 countries, as far removed from each other as Finland and Hawaii, Dar-es-Salaam in Africa, and Japan. Practically every country in the world in which Buddhist communities are to be found, whether large or small, was represented. The delegate from Korea could not reach Ceylon in time because his journey took him more than two months and he arrived a week too late. When he came he was in tears, his disappointment was so great. The only country of importance that was not represented was Russia. It is well-known that several millions of Buddhists live in territories belonging to the Soviet Republics, but we

were not able to get into communication with any Buddhist organisations there which are in a position to send delegates. The irony of the situation was that there is actually in Ceylon a Russian Buddhist, not far away from Colombo. We did not, however, know of him till after the Convention and he was too modest to ask us to be allowed to come as a delegate.

Of the delegations that came from the various countries, some might be described as Royal or State delegations, because they came under the patronage of their kings or the heads of the States concerned. Such, for instance, were the delegations that came from Thailand and Cambodia, Laos, Sikkim and Bhutan and Viet Nam. The delegation from East Pakistan was also sponsored by the Government authorities there and the very large and representative delegation that came from Burma, though it did not come as representing the Government, was carefully chosen by the Prime Minister and came with his blessing. Of the delegates, about half were bhikkhus or monks and among them some were the Sangharajas or Supreme Patriarchs of their own lands, e.g., the Sangharaja of Cambodia and the Chief of the Bonzes of Viet Nam. Of the three delegates who came from Japan one was the Head Abbot or Archbishop—as he is called in Japan—of the Zoto sect which is one of the largest and most influential Buddhists in that country. His Eminence Ven. Takashina is the spiritual head of some 14,600 monasteries in Japan.

The inaugural meeting of the Fellowship was held in the sacred precincts of the Dalada Maligawa (the Temple of the Tooth) in Kandy. The Ven. the Mahanayaka Theras

of Malwatte and Asgiriya presided over the meeting and the resolution setting up the Fellowship was formally moved by the Diyawadane Nilame, as the first Buddhist layman of Sri Lanka. It called upon the delegates, who represented the Buddhists forming one-fifth of the human race, to bring about unity and solidarity among the Buddhists of the world "to make our utmost endeavour to observe and practise the teachings of the Lord Buddha, that we may be radiant examples of the living faith, to strive with all our might and main to make known the sublime Doctrine of the Buddha so that its benign spirit of service and sacrifice may pervade the entire world inspiring and influencing the peoples of the world and their governments to lead the Buddhist way of life which is for all ages and climes, so that there may be peace and harmony amongst men and happiness for all beings."

The next day, May 26th, there was a public meeting at the Racecourse in Colombo to welcome the delegates. The Rt. Hon. D. S. Senanayake presided and the Hon. Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike made the speech of welcome. The gathering present to welcome the delegates was one of the biggest ever seen in Colombo. The Grandstand of the Racecourse had been converted into a temporary shrine with a large sedent image of the Buddha dominating the scene. The head of each delegation brought to the meeting the greetings of his co-religionists and made a very brief speech.

The next two days were devoted to Conference meetings of the Fellowship, which were held in the Hall of the Colombo Y.M.B.A. The first of these was presided over

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BUDDHISM OF THE FUTURE

IS Buddhism of the future going to differ in any significant way from Buddhism of the past? Or has it necessarily to differ for any reason? Or rather, if Buddhism does not undergo a "Sea change, into something rich and strange," is it going to suffer eclipse for that reason? These are questions that rise with rapidity on reading a view on "The future of Buddhism."

Bhikkhu Rahula writes: "If Buddhism decides to make alliance with reactionary elements which are tottering, the future of Buddhism will be dark. It will be discarded as a thing of the past and of no use to the modern world. But if it decides to march forward into the future with progressive elements, it has every quality required of a "religion" that will fit into the future world. Buddhism must be so scientific, so rational and so progressive that it will be a pride for a person to call himself a Buddhist in the new world. In fact, it must be more scientific than science, more socialistic than socialism, more communistic than communism and more progressive than all other progressive elements."

By reactionary elements Bhikkhu Rahula obviously means the upholders of the Capitalistic and imperialistic elements of the right side of world or local politics as against the forces of the left. There is difficulty in agreeing with the conclusion he draws that "Buddhism will be discarded as a thing of the past and of no use to the modern world," if it does not adapt itself to the "progressive elements" of the leftist ideology for economic reorganisation. If Buddhism moves out of its natural and normal orbit to concern itself with things of government and matters economic its eternal values will be lost and Buddhism itself will be lost with the impermanent economic and governmental system with which it may identify itself.

The river that flows into the desert must dry up. This result is inevitable not for the reason that the elements referred to as reactionary are tending to decrease in numbers and because the contrary elements are gathering numerical strength or because Buddhism

fails in some way to change its values to accord with the leftist ideology. The sterility that will overtake Buddhism if it becomes the handmaid of government or economic sovereignty, has nothing to do with numerical majorities of people who support one or another view of world or local politics. The stagnancy resulting from political or economic identification will ensue from a betrayal of the truth. Bhikkhu Rahula rightly emphasises that "Anicca, is one of the fundamental truths of Buddhism." If Buddhism hugs the values of politicians as regard economic and governmental plans, which are subject to change, deserting eternal principles like Anicca, it must perish with the politics and the economics it has chosen to espouse or support.

By
A. MIVANAPALANA

So much for the politics of the right side.

Bhikkhu Rahula has made out an excellent piece of logic. What of the so-called progressive elements with which Bhikkhu Rahula thinks Buddhism can and should identify itself to "fit" itself into the future world? By way of parenthesis, before launching into this question may I draw the reader's attention to the words of Bhikkhu Rahula himself in this connection. "But if it (Buddhism) decides to march forward into the future with the progressive elements it has every quality required of a "religion" that will "fit it into the future world." Here we have Bhikkhu Rahula's opinion that Buddhism has "every quality required of a religion to fit into the future world." In other words of Bhikkhu Rahula, it must march in the vanguard of scientific, political and economic adventure—"more scientific than science, more socialistic than socialism and more communistic than communism"—so that as it goes along it can keep on agreeing with the majority view gaining continuity and surviving by opportunism and the time descending what is

tending to be unpopular and embracing that which tends to become popular, or in the alternative agreeing with the economic and governmental ideology of the left to gain continuity and survival thereby. This is how Bhikkhu Rahula will have humanity exercise its liberty to question authority or practise the freedom in Buddhism which leaves us free to question the teachings of even the Buddha before reaching conviction.

On this criterion, it was absurd business for the Buddha to have braved ritual-ridden Brahminism without accommodating himself smugly into a majority viewpoint as some teachers of his day chose to do. Obviously the Buddha's teaching did not concern itself with questions of survival or continuity for its existence by sacrificing its fundamentals. The vitality and the freshness of the Truth experienced by the Buddha and which he called upon every one to try immediately and experience for himself by direct experiment gained a natural momentum which broke all bonds and smashed the stupendous structure of age-old Brahminism. The minority of one became the minority of five. The numbers increased in time till it swept the bounds of India and spread into the other parts of the then civilised world.

"Akālika" is one of the attributes of the Dhamma. The teaching is above and beyond "time." It is not caught up in the framework of "time." Past and future has no meaning. In the light of the Buddha there is only the ever fresh present.

What is this talk of a "future of Buddhism?" Truth is eternal. That which is changing cannot be the truth. That which is changing is compounded, component, created by man through mind or hand—and therefore perishable. Bhikkhu Rahula sees a changing Buddhism—a Buddhism that will fit into a changing social or economic system. Does such a Buddhism exist in the Dhamma of the Sakya Muni? Or is it found only in the fevered imagination of a perverid and misguided politician of the right or of the left? Must we in our mis-

taken enthusiasm pervert Buddhism to suit the fancies of politicians honest or cunning, of the right or of the left? The long parenthesis may be pardoned, as the question I set myself has become partly answered therein. To repeat the question, what of the so-called progressive elements with which Bhikkhu Rahula links Buddhism can identify itself with "to fit into the future world?" Obviously the progressive elements he refers to are the elements of socialism and communism, which are essentially reorganised structures of government and economics—things created by man's mind and hand—things caught up in the process of time—therefore—impermanent—by no means eternal and foreign to the timeless—foreign to truth and hence a betrayal of the Truth.

Politics and Economics of the right and of the left are both similar in so far as they are impermanent. Bhikkhu Rahula would have Buddhism hitched on to a waggon on the left to save itself from eclipse which would result from Buddhism hitching itself to a waggon on the right. Both waggons are of time, in time and must perish with time. So will all things hitched on to those waggons of the right and the left. Buddhism needs no waggons, needs no numerical majorities. Truth eternal is an automotive force that will energise and keep green all who have come within its orbit.

Thus there is no question of the future of Buddhism which has neither past nor future. Buddhism is ever of the present—here now—as a way of life—there is no question of adjustment or accommodation. Buddhism is Dhamma—Norm—the normal behaviour of phenomena of which Anitya, Dukka and Anathma are eternal characteristics, without reference to time or its products like economic and governmental plans. Politics and economics are concerned with rearranging the effects of the man's greed (tanha) and ignorance (avidya) in the stupid belief that rearrangements of results will create a change in the causes—greed and ignorance. Politics and economics are wasting human effort by dealing with secondary causes and their effects leaving the primary causes to weave ever revived tangles out of the same ancient problems of man's greed, ignorance and ill-will in variegated forms and shapes.

The world has come to what it is today by the repeated process

of rearranging effects—each rearrangement being a new set up of government based on a new economic plan or principle. And Bhikkhu Rahula says that the process "must" continue. Wherefrom is derived the imperative of that "must?" "Adapt or perish," as Nature's imperative, is the reply furnished. That is the imperative for things material, things compounded and component. They are the things of time subject to the universal principle of Anitya. So the governmental and economic plans have toppled and must topple including the economic and political millenium of the left. Bhikkhu Rahula sees Buddhism as a physical entity compounded or component, subject to decay and dissolution, capable of continuity through transmutation and adaptation. He fails to see that Buddhism consists of a discovery of the cunning operation of this process and exposes the process in all its frailty. He fails to see that through the Buddha way of life comes the understanding of this process with its primary causes Lobha, Dosa and Moha, which fall away of themselves with the dawn of full understanding. With the withering away of the primary causes, the effects which become secondary causes cease to come into being. So individual realisation at the centre, at the root of all problems, dissolves the problems without allowing them to arise. This is purely individual—not to be achieved by mass hypnotism, mass action, mass movement or any intoxicated group, not even if the intoxicant is new and alluring.

Politicians of the right and of the left in turn seek to exploit Buddhism by wanting to save it from eclipse by identification with the opposite camp and making it the handmaid for each side to keep or gain power.

Innocent misguided people want government patronage for Buddhism and even suggest making it the State religion of the government in power. Buddhism has no need to lean on politicians. Only official and organised Buddhism represented by group interests or individual vested interests can feel such a need. The understanding of the Dhamma the Norm, is an individual affair, not a group or mass infatuation.

Buddhism has only to guard against those who will interfere with man's freedom of thinking, experiencing and living an innocent,

POSON DAY MESSAGE

By U TINT SWE, Burmese Minister in Ceylon

I AM so happy and proud to be in Ceylon at this moment. I see very important events taking place in this country. Thanks to the unremitting efforts of my indefatigable friend, Dr. G. P. Malalasekera, and many others of his admirable spirit and boundless enthusiasm, the great World Buddhist Fellowship is now in full swing—and is, I am sure, soon producing far-reaching results. Allow me to take this opportunity of congratulating the people of Ceylon upon this most valuable contribution to the revival and resuscitation of the Buddha Dhamma in this war-weary world.

I have a feeling that this most beautiful Island of yours will play a very important and conspicuous part in all future international activities connected with the strengthening and consolidation of the Buddhist faith. On this Poson Day, we must all try and remember the fact that Buddhism is a world religion and that it belongs not to you and to us alone. Over 2,000 years ago, you and we received this great golden gift from the land of Buddha's birth. The light has since spread to other lands also, and now the Light of Asia has become the Light of the World. And, this Light shines not only for the human race but for all living beings under the sun.

Today, I want the people of Ceylon to know that the people of Burma are with them in their noble desire to keep the torch of truth burning bright for ever. The recent Sacred Relics Mission to Burma has brought the two countries even closer than before. I have no doubt that, whatever the future may hold for you and for us, the two countries will always go forward together in the best spirit of co-operation, mutual aid and give and take which has so happily marked all our past relationship since the days of your King Vijaya Bahu the first and our King Anawratha of Pagan and even earlier than that.—(In a Radio Ceylon Talk).

free life. Such persons are generally found in controlling groups in governmental and economic organisations, imposing regimentation of education, publication, expression,

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"WHITHER BUDDHIST CEYLON"

MR. RAJA HEWAVITHARANA'S excellently outspoken article "Whither Buddhist Ceylon?" that appeared in the May issue of your valuable journal provides one with something to think over.

The people in Ceylon today pay far too much attention to the ceremonial side of Buddhism and mere outward demonstrations. Nothing is done in a temple without a big fuss—A perahara, a pan-pinkama, a huge thorana, Kandyan Dancing, firework displays and what not? What are all these for? Are these insignificant details going to lead anyone anywhere?

We all start our Education in the Kindergarten Class where we learn our lessons with the help of pictures and stories. If we stick at this can we ever expect to reach the higher forms? This exactly is the position of Buddhism in Ceylon today. The people are for ever in the elementary stages, praying for and depending on external help from deities. Some even go to the extent of requesting the Buddha to grant favour. Others are under the impression that the mere offering of flowers, observing oil on Poya days and reciting a few gathas, the meanings of which are foreign to them, would lead them up to their goal. Who is the student who would successfully pass all his examinations; the one who the whole time showers presents on the teacher but pays no attention to his lessons or the student who pays more attention to the lessons although he may now and again present the teacher with something or other? Undoubtedly the latter would be the successful student. Most Buddhists expect the Buddha or the Dhamma or the Sangha to grant them their salvation without any exertion on their part.

On his death-bed when he saw the flowers on the twin sala trees showering down like rain, heard celestial melodies resounding in the air, what did the Thathagatha say? "Ananda! Behold what a spectacle! Heaven and earth vie with each other to honour the Thathagatha. But this is not the right adoration, the right veneration, the right glorification due to a Buddha. Those of my disciples and lay-followers who ever live in the spirit and in truth and faithfully follow the Dhamma; those only render me

the right honour, the right veneration, right glorification."

And the last words spoken by the Buddha were: "Be ye your own Refuge, Guide and Light. Have none other but yourselves. Work out your own salvation with diligence."

Then, is this, what we have in Ceylon the Buddhism that the Buddha preached? What most Buddhists have is blind faith, a thing never recognised or demanded by Buddhism. How many practise the Dhamma as the Buddha wanted, and how many live their lives accordingly? They are filled with ignorance with none to show the path.

This unsatisfactory position of Buddhism in Ceylon today is largely the result of having a Sangha, the majority of whom have not realised the purpose of the Master's teaching and are in consequence unable to guide the laity. How many of them really feel that life is suffering and unsatisfactory and that the cause of this suffering is desire? If they did, could they aspire to fight for Nayakaships, ownership of temples and lands, some even going to the extent of fighting in law courts and threatening to fast to death? For what? The Buddha or the Dhamma or for the possession of a material thing like a temple with its revenue and prestige? What are these priests doing in the temples? Some stagnate there surrounded by their enormous wealth. There only outing is to a few selected places. These are the Nayaka priests and the big-owners of temples. What is all this? Is it not mere vanity? Then there are the others who find it difficult to attend to their priestly duties because they are busy studying History, Mathematics and Geography for public examinations. To become clerks or what? Then the Sangha is not in their place. How many of the Bhikkhus know the meanings of the pirith they chant? Their only aim is to say it "beautifully" and better than the Bhikkhus of the other temple or Nikaya. What is the benefit that one gets from such meaningless chantings? How many of the Bhikkhus preach Bana of their own accord travelling from place to place to the few or many that gather round them. If they did this how could

they make sure of their Pujas? How many in the course of their preachings teach the people how to practise the essential thing in Buddhism—Bhavana. (How many practise it themselves?) and exhort them not to pay so much attention to mere ceremonies and outward show, but live their lives according to the Dhamma? But in the Mahavagga, Vinaya Pitaka it is said "Go, ye, O Bhikkhus, and wander forth for the gain of the many, for the welfare of the many in compassion for the world, for the good, for the gain, for the welfare of gods and men. Proclaim, O Bhikkhus, the Doctrine glorious, preach ye a life of holiness, perfect and pure." Now, how many of the present-day Bhikkhus follow this advice? Furthermore, is it necessary for me to comment on the life of the monks who appear as astrologers, physicians, politicians, businessmen and those who live in their own bungalows. Are all these a part of a Bhikkhus life? If it is so the Buddha did not preach the Vinaya Rules we know.

With all this nonsense on the part of some pseudo-monks in the order how can Buddhism flourish? The handful of good monks lose their good repute because of the large number that betake themselves to the Order as the best profession and means of livelihood with the minimum of qualifications.

Who is responsible for this corrupted state of the Sangha? The Buddhist leaders of the country quite tolerantly ignore these grave faults of the Bhikkhus and try to hush up all their misdemeanours. How can these leaders see to all this? They don't care. They are interested only in their individual fame, their grand speeches, their books, their garlands and pandals. Mr. Hewavitharana says that the majority of the Ministers and Members of Parliament are Buddhists. I say that, of this majority, another majority are Buddhists to gain the confidence of the people and hence their votes. All excellent tactics.

To put an end to this disgusting state of the Sangha there should be a Buddhist Council—not composed of self-interested and prejudiced Nayaka priests and laymen but composed of some real selfless and unprejudiced Buddhist Leaders and genuine monks of the

type of Venerable Heenatiyana Dharmmaloka Thera, Venerable Lokanatha Thera, the Vajirarama priests and the Dodanduwe Hermitage priests. They should see to it that the Sangha should not be the abode for the criminal in disguise, the unemployed, the businessman, the student who wants to pass his examination at others' expense, the ugly duckling of the family and the Oriental scholar who grabs the edition and publication of books for profit. Before entering the Order let the Bhikkhus-to-be undergo a severe test. See whether they really feel that all things are empty shows. Teach them to practise and preach the Dhamma as the Buddha expected them to do. Then let the monks in this Council and not any other monk, ordain them, in stages. Finally, let them "wander forth for the gain and welfare of the many proclaiming the pure Dhamma" and teaching the people to mould their lives accordingly, without wasting their time in temples. The Council should also have full rights to excommunicate

any monk, whether he be a Nayaka or a novice, if he fails to live up to the rules and requirements of the Order. Another very important thing that this Buddhist Council should see to is that Bhikkhus should not be allowed to hoard up wealth for their personal benefits. The property and income from the temples should be taken over leaving just what is necessary for the Bhikkhus daily life and used for public purposes such as building of schools, hospitals, feeding the poor, propagation of Buddhism, etc. In short this Council should control the country's Sangha.

Before we start spreading Buddhism in other countries let us organise ourselves. When the average Buddhist of this so-called Dhammadvipa, reputed to have pure Buddhism does not prove by practice the efficacy of the Dhamma, how is the non-Buddhist to judge? They see not the Buddhism they learnt and expected to see but something contrary to it—Empty words, vain pageantry and a cor-

rupted clergy. They ask themselves: "Are these Buddhists who follow such a noble religion any better than ourselves? Do they practise what they preach? The answers are "No." They see mockery at religion. Crime is on the increase, gambling is encouraged, and drunkenness prevails. Money is spent aimlessly on projects of no earthly use or on functions to please some self-interested individual. Cannot this money be spent for a useful purpose? See—the masses suffering without food, clothing and shelter; the hundreds of uneducated poor children; the bad state of the hospitals and the neglect of the poor; and all this in a Buddhist country? Is this what Buddhism teaches?

With this state of affairs how can we expect to propagate Buddhism with any success. It would be like a butcher preaching Ahimsa!

C. N. De ZOYSA.

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Kolonnawa.

BUDDHIST BHAVANA (MEDITATION)

MEDITATION has become a much-neglected art amidst the pre-occupations of a materialistic world. Hatred, avarice and ignorance with all their brood of attendant evils thrive in consequence embittering both individual and national existence to a great degree. Before the devastation wrought by the last international strife could have been repaired, the same sort of undisciplined thinking may, it is feared, bring about another catastrophe.

The only hope for the world seems to lie in the development of systematic thinking—meditation. Habits formed in early life endure. If mass meditation is taught and practised in schools, the future of the world will be secured from crime and war.

For a Buddhist the attainment of his goal—Nirvana—depends on control of the mind. Meditation, therefore, is essential for the purpose. His future mental make-up will depend on what he thinks today. His past habits of the mind has made him what he is:

"Our thoughts shall rise with us
from afar,

What we have been makes us
what we are"
sings the poet.

Control of the mind is achieved through meditation. The dross of sinful thought is sifted away; the golden gleam of Truth is perceived and a new and supra-mundane consciousness is attained.

By

M. K. SIRINUS,

Registrar-General's Office

The following excerpt from a foreword by Dr. Evans Wentz to "Buddhist Meditation" by Miss Constant Lounsbury may be read with interest:—

"I can do no better than to employ as my text the words of the Enlightened One, the Master of Meditation, the Buddha Gautama: 'Without Knowledge there is no Meditation; without Meditation there is no Knowledge; and he

who hath both Knowledge and Meditation is near to Reality.'

In order to comprehend the significance of these words of the Buddha, it is necessary, first of all, to take into account some of the more outstanding views concerning man and the Universe which are in large measure peculiar to Buddhism.

Firstly, Buddhism, unlike the three Semitic Faiths, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, teaches that the sorrow of the world being the direct karmic outcome of man's own actions can be overcome only by man himself and not through the intervention of a Supreme Deity. In other words, man having made himself and his worldly environment precisely what they are, must himself remake and then transcend them, by treading the Path of the Higher Evolution, which has been trodden and demarcated by those, like the Buddhas, who have gone ahead and become the Guides of Humanity.

Secondly, Buddhism emphasizes that the realization of Truth is incomparably more important than belief in Truth; that religious faith

and devotion being merely the first steps on the Path, are of themselves not enough ; that if Truth is to be realized there must be Right Belief, Right Intentions, Right Speech, Right Actions, Right Means of Livelihood, Right Endeavouring, Right Mindfulness, Right Meditation.

Thirdly, Buddhism distinguishes a higher or supra-mundane Wisdom, which differs fundamentally from Dogmatic Theology. And it is in virtue of having arrived at this Wisdom, or Right Knowledge, that the devotee transcends the lowly human state of existence and attains Emancipation from Sorrow and Complete Enlightenment.

According to Bhikkhu Parawahera Vajiranana Thero, of the Theravadin School, the Buddha realized Reality, attained Final Release (known in Pali as Nibbana and in Sanskrit as Nirvana), by means of Right Meditation ; and by Right Meditation there is produced that purity and mastery of mind which lead to inner illumination.

In the Pali Canon, Buddhist Meditation is called Bhavana : and this is the term to describe it which is most popular in the Theravadin, or Southern School. Of Bhavana, which implies systematic training of the mind, there are two stages, namely, Samadhi-Bhavana (which is preliminary), and Vipassana-Bhavana. In the former, the meditator attains mental fixity, or one-pointedness of mind ; is unaffected by the stimuli born of sensuous objects ; and enjoys internal quiescence. In the latter, he attains intuitive vision of Reality. It is by these two methods that one arrives at Right Understanding and Right Knowledge.

As Miss Lounsbery's treatise on Buddhist meditation sets forth, there are forty objects for use in practising Bhavana ; when adequate progress has been made there is no longer dependence upon external objects in arriving at mental concentration, and the meditation becomes wholly subjective. Then, the mind having

become thoroughly purified and disciplined, and all sensuousness having been transcended, there dawn the Four Ecstatic States, which Buddhism calls the Four Jhanas.

The Four Jhanas correspond to four stages progressively reached as a result of success in the practice of Samadhi-Bhavana. In the fourth, or highest stage, one experiences transcendental blissful and complete tranquillity of body and mind. In that condition, one is able to exercise the Five Abhinnaas, which are profound intellectual attainments synonymous with the Siddhi of the Yogins. These are classified as (1) miraculous (or supernormal) accomplishments (or powers), (2) divine vision (or clairvoyance), (3) divine hearing (or clairaudience), (4) memory of previous births, and (5) insight into the mental processes, or thoughts, of others.

The aspirant who desires to develop the meditation further than this, should meditate upon formless or purely mental objects. These are called Arupa-vacara. By this means he reaches the four bodiless states of existence known as the Arupalokas, which, however, like the Five Abhinnaas, are neither to be striven after nor clung to if attained, for they are not the True Goal.

The candidate for Nibbana having reached the Fourth Jhana, should next turn his mind toward Vipassana-Bhavana, or Intuitive Meditation. Thereby he will come to understand intuitively the Three Characteristics of Conditioned Existence, which are transitoriness, sorrowfulness, and the voidness (or illusiveness) of all phenomenally-existing things constituting the Cosmos. Then he should proceed to cultivate the Thirty-five Principles of Knowledge, known as Bodhipakkhiya Dhamma. By success in this practice, his mind becomes freed from every attachment to sangsara (or karmically-conditioned) existence ; the Happiness of Nibbana is won. This alone is the True Goal of all Buddhist Meditation.

Thus by introspective analysis of the psychic content of one's own mind, together with profound meditation—examination of each of the complex elements and activities which constitute sensuousness (or sangsaraic consciousness) in its manifold expressions—man

know himself in the sense taught by the Great Mysteries of Ancient Egypt and Greece. In other words, Meditation is the royal highway to man's understanding of himself—of all the innumerable karmic predilections resulting in mental impulses and actions both 'good' and 'evil,' and of the whole of sensuous being in the many worlds of the Sangsara, or Universe of Life's Dominion. This method is, however, to be differentiated from that of the psycho-analyst, who analyses some other person's mind rather than his own.

When by these means man attains to Right Knowledge, he sees with clear vision the cause and the cure of the unsatisfactoriness of every conditioned state of Beings, in heavens, hells, purgatories, and worlds ; he is enabled to value, at their true worth, all the things of this world ; and, like an adult who has outgrown the playthings of childhood, no longer do the troubles of the passion-fettered and pleasure-seeking multitude interest him. Like one standing on the summit of a mountain, he looks down on the domain of transitoriness and suffering, he has transcended every attachment to sangsaraic existence. He has emerged from the darkness of the Cave of Ignorance and rejoices in the light of the Sun of Understanding. No more will he enter the Cave ; he has burst asunder the cocoon of karma, which he himself had spun during uncountable cycles of repeated birth and death ; he is Emancipated.

But, as he looks out over the Sea of Life, there arises, from the depths of his innermost consciousness, an overwhelming desire to descend once more to the Plane of Earth that he may point out to his fellow human beings the Path of Light, even as it has been pointed out throughout the aeons by the Great Ones who have entered the Portal of the Higher Evolution and taken the Vow of the Bodhisatva. Or, as the Tibetan Sages teach us, 'after having attained Liberation, there cometh infinite compassion for all those sentient beings who have not as yet recognized the true nature of their own mind.'

And in like manner may everyone who enters upon the Way of Buddhist Meditation, as set forth in this volume, come to realize the promise conveyed by the words of the Enlightened One and thus attain the Nirvanic Goal."

LANKA AND HER NEIGHBOURS—II.

~~~~~ INDIA ~~~~~

By  
G. P. MALALASEKERA

**R**ECORDED history, as given in our Chronicles, would make out that the connections between Sri Lanka and her big neighbour India began only with the advent of Vijaya in the 6th century B.C. Vijaya was the founder of the race that came to be called Sinhala and it is not surprising, therefore, that his arrival should be spotlighted by the Sinhala historians. Before Vijaya's arrival, Lanka is said to have been occupied by Yakshas and Nagas, who are described as non-humans. On the other hand, we have the accounts of the great epic, the Ramayana, which relate to events very many centuries earlier in the dim distant past. The accounts given of Lanka and of the court of Lanka's mighty king, Ravana, credit the Island with a highly developed civilisation. Ravana's rape of Sita, which forms the main topic of the epic, was to avenge an insult done to his sister and, in spite of all his faults, Ravana stands out as a person of great courage and chivalry. Of course, the impression left is that Ravana was a non-human but that is accounted for by making allowance for poetic romancing.

There are also the accounts of three visits made to the Island by the Buddha. These are undoubtedly due to the survivals of racial memories of intercourse between the two countries from the most ancient periods. And it would be surprising if it were otherwise. For, only a bare twenty miles or so of rather shallow sea separate India and Ceylon and the crossing can be made in that most primitive of sea-going craft the Kattamaran which is only a hollowed-out log. One can almost imagine adventurous folk swimming from one side of the straits to the other. Even today, in spite of the great vigilance of Customs officials against smugglers, the number of those who escape detection is by no means small. So easy is the passage from one shore to another. The places mentioned as having been visited by the Buddha are significant: Mahiyangana on the banks of the Mahaveliganga, Kataragama on the south, Nagadipa on the north and Kelaniya on the west. He also went to Samantakuta or Sripada in the centre of the Island. These were

probably the chief centres of population in pre-historic times and almost all of them are associated with the trade in gems and other precious things for which Lanka was famous.

It is now generally held that the Yakshas and Nagas of the legends were the aboriginal tribes who had affinities with the aborigines of South India and probably belonged to the same racial stocks. The Vedddhas of the modern day are their remnants. When mention is made of intercourse between the two countries in more historic periods, it is with North India that the connections are stated as having taken place and not with the south. It is only in the later phases of our history that we come into contact and occasional conflict with our neighbours of Peninsular and South India. There is good reason for this, for when the incoming Aryans drove the earlier Dravidian races to the south, the latter took a long time to get stabilised and to form kingdoms of any power and consequence. North India had many well-governed states and even empires long before the Dravidians consolidated themselves. In fact, it is not till the early centuries of the Christian era that we hear of South Indian kingdoms, and that is in the time of the Andhras.

Our earlier dealings were with the north. We cannot be certain where Vijaya came from, but it is now believed that Vijaya's immigration was but one of many similar waves of colonisation that reached our shores about that time. Most of these settlers came from North India, both from the east and the west. They came by sea; there is no doubt that the early Indians were great travellers, witness their journeys to South East Asia and to China, Japan and to the countries of the Mediterranean. Our early political relations were thus with North India. We had dealings too with the South Indian Andhras, already mentioned. After them the Pallavas came into prominence with the disappearance of the Gupta empire in the 7th century. The Pallavas were succeeded in imperial power by the Cholians, who in the time of the 10th and early 11th century under Rajaraja and Rajendra Chola built a mighty

empire urged by ambitions of territorial expansion. The Cholians were an aggressive race and their fifty years' sojourn in Ceylon left behind it a deep impression on our lives. Then came the Pandyan and after that the kingdom of Vijayanagara. Our fortunes, too, were closely bound up with these developments, for our own rulers were compelled to take note of these changes and adapt themselves accordingly.

At first, in the times of the Mauryan empire, whose chief figures were Chandragupta and Asoka, we kept in close contact with North India. In fact, when Asoka's sway spread southwards sweeping everything before it, our king Devanampiyatissa showed great foresight in sending ambassadors with gifts to the mighty emperor and asking for his goodwill.

Asoka responded with great cordiality and the contact thus established proved to be of everlasting benefit to us. For, it was in return for our gesture of friendship that Asoka sent to Lanka the gift of Buddhism through his son Mahinda. He followed this up by allowing his daughter Sanghamitta to go to Lanka with the branch of the sacred tree under which the Buddha had reached Enlightenment. Thus were laid the foundations of our culture which grew into a mighty edifice whose fame and glory spread beyond the seas, and whose beneficent influence shaped our destiny and character for all time. Our debt to India for this incomparable gift can never be repaid.

It is significant that when Asoka received Lanka's ambassadors he sent them back with instructions that the ruler of Lanka should go through a second coronation with due pomp and ceremony. This was done, and it was a token that Lanka acknowledged its tutelage to Asoka. But Asoka had no imperialistic ambitions and we were allowed to retain our independence. It was a symbolic gesture which was followed by later Indian rulers even those very much less enlightened than Asoka. It is true that on many occasions we had bands of Indians invading Ceylon but except once in

the 11th century when the Cholians, intoxicated by their triumphs, captured Ceylon never was the desire shown by Indians to make Ceylon a political part of India. When Jawharlal Nehru assures us, therefore, that India will never swamp Lanka he is merely reiterating the policy of his many distinguished predecessors, who even when they had the ability to annex Ceylon, never showed such a desire, except for the one instance mentioned above, in the time of Rajaraja of overweening ambition. In fact, even in that case, our knowledge of actual events is extremely confused and we have yet to learn the exact details. It may yet turn out that the Cholian annexation of Lanka was stage-managed by some local usurper without the express sanction of the Cholian emperor for his action. In the case of Asoka himself, he was following an earlier example in not wishing to deprive Lanka of her independence. For we are told in the Ramayanaya that after Rama had defeated Lanka's king Ravana, when it was possible to retain Lanka as an Indian dependency, he eschewed that right and handed the country to Ravana's brother Vibhishana to be ruled as an independent kingdom.

The Mauryan empire which reached the zenith of its glory under Asoka was followed by the Gupta empire. That, too, was a period of great enlightenment and the contacts between Ceylon and India were most cordial and intimate. The good relationships that had been established earlier were greatly strengthened. There was evidently much travelling to and fro. The accounts left by Fa Hsien, for instance, indicate quite clearly that the Mahavihara in Anuradhapura was the centre of much international activity. People visited Ceylon from numerous countries, chiefly India, and there was much lively exchange of various commodities, including intellectual exchange. Mahayana Buddhism based largely on the admixture of Buddhism with various schools of Hindu philosophy, had made headway in India. Its influence had penetrated into Ceylon and Abhayagiri was the nucleus of Mahayanism in Lanka.

Fa Hsien's visit to Ceylon was due to his desire to find out the state of Buddhism here and to take away copies of sacred books which were not available in India. Brah-

manism had by then succeeded in some measure in neutralising the revolutionary spirit of Buddhism as against the vested interests of the brahmins; this had been achieved by a process of infiltrating Hindu ideas into Buddhist doctrines. The Brahmins had made of the Buddha an enlightened Hindu and they were well on the way to establish the view that Hinduism could easily absorb all that was new in Buddhism.

Buddhism has always been the religion of enlightenment. It taught that the truth was attained chiefly by the cultivation of the mind. The mind had to be disciplined by right conduct, but it had also to be enriched and strengthened in every possible way. Hence great stress was laid on the necessity of pursuing various branches of knowledge which gave the mind skill and efficiency as well as poise and judgment. The enlightened mind should also be capable of appreciating beauty and goodness, as well as truth. Thus it was that Buddhism gave every encouragement in the development of the Fine Arts and at no time did this urge produce more fruitful results than in the Gupta Age in India. It was the culmination of a process which had begun in the Buddha's own day, gained strength in great measure under Asoka and received nourishment from the contact of Western nations, chiefly the Greeks. Painting, sculpture and architecture, poetry, music, drama and philosophy, all these felt the impact of this great movement and they flourished in a manner that had been unprecedented before and never surpassed later. Ceylon was in very intimate contact with all these developments. Buddhism had gained firm foothold in the Island; the soil had proved fruitful beyond all expectation. It was an era of material prosperity and great intellectual advance. Ceylonese scholars had mastered thoroughly the doctrines of the Buddha and by their own interpretations and explanations given great expansion to their enlightening propensities. Learning advanced by leaps and bounds; it was accompanied by achievements in monumental and other representations which won for Lanka the envy and admiration of the world. Neighbouring countries were sending emissaries to learn of this wisdom and enlightenment at the source.

The Mahavihara at Anuradhapura set its face firmly against the contamination of Buddhism by ex-

traneous influences and thereby earned the encomiums of those who honoured purity of religion. The visit of Buddhaghosa was a token of the great esteem in which the savants of India held the scholar-monks of Lanka. The Mahavihara of Anuradhapura had something to give to the world which was unique. Earlier, it was the Indians that came in search of it, to drink deep of the springs that flowed unpolluted at the Great Minister, whose fame had spread far and wide. Not only was Lanka the home of pure Buddhism; it also contained within its shores some of the most precious objects of Buddhist worship:—the Tooth Relic and numerous other body relics of the Lord Buddha, enshrined in those enormous monuments called the dagobas which like so many hillocks dotted the landscape everywhere. As Henry Parker has well expressed, their shape had also been evolved in Ceylon, as did the ultimate form of the Buddha-image. The work of Sinhala sculptors, most of them laymen, but some of them monks, had been acclaimed in many countries as showing superb craftsmanship.

Later, Burma and Siam, Cambodia and even distant China sent emissaries to Lanka to learn religion and to carry back to their homes examples of the skill of Sinhala workers in wood, metal, ivory and stone, together with copies of the sacred books written chiefly in Pali which from having being a provincial dialect acquired universal prestige as the vehicle of Buddhism, mainly because of the labours of the bhikkhus of Ceylon.

The people of Ceylon did not disregard the calls of this world in their search for spiritual happiness. They realised that food and clothing in plenty and amenities for the comfortable living, together those arts of leisure that make human life pleasurable and delightful were also necessary ingredients of happiness. Of these food was the most elementary need and in securing their food supplies they evolved schemes of irrigation the like of which is unique as so ably indicated by Parker sometime Acting Director of Irrigation was not to be seen in India and which therefore evoked praise from Indian engineers. In all matters the connection between India and Lanka was most intimate and lasted throughout the centuries. During the Guptas, the Sinhalese

were allowed the privilege of having their own establishment known as the Sihala Sangharama at the University of Nalanda and a vihara at Buddhagaya. Up till the 14th century, *i.e.*, one-and-half centuries before the Portuguese came here, we still hear echoes of that connection for we are told that Dharmakirti of Gadaladeniya Vihara, who lived during that period repaired a Sinhala temple at Sri Dhanyakataka or Amaravati, the old capital of Andhra.

The tolerance of the people of Ceylon was such that men of various races and creeds found a warm welcome when they arrived in this land and the result was that there was a great deal of mutual exchange and mutual influence. There is a tendency amongst us to give all the credit of our achievements to India who was undoubtedly our Guru in many things. But it would be a falsification of facts to deny that we did make contributions of our own to the culture of India, indeed of all Asia. Just as the Sinhala language grew into a thing of its own, borrowing many elements from various sources, while yet preserving its individuality, so did our arts and crafts while being enriched by ideas that came from over the seas retain distinctive features of their own.

It is significant for instance that while the architectural features of South India influenced us in a great many ways we never slavishly imitated them. That spirit of independence alone can account for the fact that we developed the moonstone on our own lines, that we did not adopt even the magnificent gopuram or gateway which forms so important a part of Hindu temples, that we preserved a smoothness and roundness of line in our carvings unknown in South India, that the Buddha image in Lanka was something that came into being before the Greeks impressed their ideas of sculpture upon the Indian mind. No other country in the world can show such a continuous development of mural painting as is to be found in Ceylon from pre-Christian days up to the present year of grace, an unbroken record, with examples of practically every period available for examination. Indeed the humble Sittara is a pure native artist, uninfluenced by others.

So that while it is true that India both of the north and the south, the India of the Mauryans

and the Guptas, of Andhra, Pallava, Chola, Pandya and Vijayanagara, influenced our thought, our ways of life and our achievements, we yet managed to maintain a certain measure of individuality. Our rulers were patrons of culture and statesmen, too. By careful alliances with the kingdoms of India, they succeeded in maintaining friendly relations with them most of the time and also in helping to preserve a certain balance of power between rival dynasties in India, especially in South India when such rivalry manifested itself. The astuteness with which the king of Lanka entered into pacts with Kalinga and Pandya to keep off the Cholian menace is a case in point. But credit must also be given to the Indians themselves who, as already mentioned, followed in the main a policy of live and let live without attempting to absorb Lanka as part of the Indian dominion at any time of our history. We derived the benefit of the contact of two cultures, one embodied in the Sanskrit language and the other communicated through the many Dravidian forms of speech. The Buddhist culture of India which developed on lines of its own and the Hindu culture of the mainland with its many ramifications exercised their influence over us in many powerful ways but never in such a way as to annihilate our own culture.

After both India and Ceylon went under the domination of Western powers from the fifteenth century onwards, the age-old connections between our two countries began to fall apart and in their place other connections came into being on quite a different plane, the sphere of labour and industry. We ourselves were trained to turn our eyes westwards and look out of windows which faced towards Europe. The Indians who came among us were mostly of the labouring classes and we got accustomed to regard them as strangers within the gates who had been brought here by foreigners for their own purposes. But, happily, that feeling did not last long.

With the awakening of the nationalist movement in India for the winning of freedom we ourselves heard echoes of Indian activities mostly from foreign sources and our own hearts were quickened. Once more we began to draw inspiration from what was happening on the mainland. We began to realise that our own liberation was

intimately connected with India's freedom and we drew courage from the fearlessness and the selflessness of the Indian leaders. Some of them came amongst us for fleeting visits generally on their way to Europe and from them we learnt of their ceaseless struggles and their trials and tribulations. The wells of our culture had almost dried up completely but with the advent of refreshing news of the resuscitation of Indian culture the springs began to flow again and show encouraging signs of activity.

With the gaining of Independence, the two lands have come to realise that the destiny which had linked their fortunes for ages past has not yet finished playing its part, that together they have a responsibility for the promotion of the happiness of mankind. What happens in South East Asia will have repercussions elsewhere in the world and India and Ceylon form a large section of the set-up of South East Asia.

There are bound to be many problems that will crop up, needing adjustment after the alienation that had obtained for three centuries or more, but there is evidence on all sides of plenty of goodwill and a determination that nothing shall spoil the friendliness, nay the affection, that had existed between India and Ceylon for countless centuries. May it be ever thus.

## BUDDHISM OF THE FUTURE

(Continued from page 51)

and above all on thinking. Politics of the right and left to different degrees want to resort to this regimentation and denial of the true freedom of man and have organisations to liquidate and eclipse any one who does not conform to their pleasure by any means—all means being considered good, to bring about the economic and governmental millenium of the protagonist. One calls the other fascist. The other calls the one murderous and revolutionary. Both have beautiful words and beautiful plans. Both are equally callous as to methods. Both seek to exploit every means—including religion.

The Buddhist sails neither with the one nor the other. He, if he is a Buddhist will see the primary causes of all trouble as centred on the individual whose regeneration alone can dissolve the root causes. Effects and secondary causes can only help to diagnose the evil to its root.

# MESSAGES FROM THAILAND AND BURMA

The Buddhist Association of Thailand, under Royal patronage, has sent the following message to the Colombo Y.M.B.A. :—

"On this auspicious occasion of Visakha, the Buddhist Association of Thailand, in the name of all the Thai Buddhists, beg to extend our good wishes, love, and brotherhood to you all.

We Buddhists know that our Lord Buddha teaches and impresses on all His followers the very essential virtue of Metta. Loving Kindness, and we fully realize how Metta is vital to the World peace of today. We Buddhists firmly believe that world brotherhood and good wishes together with the good attitude of settling differences by mutual concession and understanding are the sustaining factors in the attainment of world peace. We are also aware that greed, hatred and delusion are the causes of all sufferings which commonly affect the individual—the community—the nation—and the World at large. The suppression of greed, hatred and delusion is the certain way to peace.

Dear brother and sister Buddhists, let us all join force on this great occasion of Visakha, the most memorable event for us Buddhists all over the world, to start and keep on promoting and propagating the Buddhist virtues to the benefits of all mankind, and let us all work hard to extend the Dhamma—the teachings of our Lord Buddha and the Way to permanent Peace—to the people of the World.

We, the Buddhists of Thailand, are prepared to do our share to our utmost capacity; and hereby we beg to extend our traditional love, friendship, and hospitality to the people of the World in general and to you, dear brother and sister Buddhists, in particular.

*May the Dhamma be with you all."*

The Hony. Secretary, Rangoon Y.M.B.A., writes :—

"On behalf of the Young Men's Buddhist Association, Rangoon (Burma), I am directed to extend our joyful greetings and goodwill message to you on this historic and auspicious occasion of the Conference of World Fellowship of Buddhists held at Colombo, Ceylon, from 26th May to 5th June, 1950.

As followers of Lord Buddha, whose main doctrine is universal love and friendship, Ceylon and Burma should bring to the suffering of millions of the present strife-torn world real peace for which the whole world is striving and longing as a saviour of their much varied and complicated troubles.

Your Association needs no assurance of the earnest desire of our members for perpetual friendship and cordial felicitations and request you to accept our good wishes and sincerity of purpose for the complete success of the Conference.

It is our most sanguine hope that this representation of the Y.M.B.A., Rangoon (Burma), consisting of U. Winn Pe, U. Pe Aung, U Ba Than and U Lu Galay, is the harbinger of the unity of the two kindred Buddhist Associations to cement further the bonds of friendship and goodwill that link the two countries together.

May success and prosperity attend your Association in the year to come."

## THE WORLD FELLOWSHIP OF BUDDHISTS

(Continued from page 49)

by Sir Ernest de Silva. Representative delegates gave short reports of the state of Buddhism in their own countries and the chief trends of Buddhist activities there. These will be published in a Conference volume which will be issued in due course. Thereafter the delegates spent five days visiting various parts of Ceylon, including the Sacred Cities, in order that they may get first-hand knowledge of what the Buddhist way of life had meant for a people who had accepted it and striven to follow it for twenty centuries and more. Wherever the delegates went there were scenes of unprecedented enthusiasm, people gathering in thousands and tens of thousands to welcome their co-religionists who had come to Lanka from across the seas. From the highest to the lowest everyone in the land united in giving them an unforgettable reception. H.E. the Governor-General, the Rt. Hon. the Prime Minister and the Mayors of several towns, held special functions in their honour. During the tour,

the delegates were given the privilege of seeing a special exhibition of the Sacred Tooth Relic and a special Kandy Perahera organised for their benefit. Arrangements were also made for them to witness and participate in various religious ceremonies peculiar to Ceylon. The orderliness and the great piety which prevailed everywhere deeply impressed them.

On their return to Colombo, the delegates spent three days to discuss ways and means of fostering the objects of the World Fellowship of Buddhists. Some of the meetings lasted far into the night and a great deal of work was done. Various sub-committees which had been appointed to deal with different aspects of the Fellowship activities sent in their reports and recommendations and these were accepted with only minor alterations. These sub-committees had held their meetings during the delegates' tour and the work was thus greatly expedited. A constitution for the Fellowship was drawn up and unanimously adopted. It was fortunate that in the drawing up of this constitution we had the guidance of two of the greatest constitution-makers of modern times, Dr. Ambedkar who was responsible for the Constitution of India and U Chan Htoon who had drawn up the Constitution of Burma. The deliberations of the delegates were grouped round a central theme: the winning of the World for the Buddhist Way of Life, by example first, and secondly, by making the Buddha's teachings known throughout the world.

It was felt that for this purpose every effort should be made to bring about unity and solidarity among the Buddhists, to make them members of a world-wide Fellowship so that they might play their part in promoting the peace and happiness of the world, effectively and with a due sense of their responsibility. Towards the creation of Buddhist unity and solidarity, several decisions were taken, among them being: (1) the adoption of the six-coloured flag as the flag of the Buddhists everywhere, (2) the adoption of the Dhamma Cakka or the Wheel of the Dhamma as the Buddhist emblem, (3) the celebration of the Buddha Day by Buddhists everywhere on the full-moon day of May, and the adoption of a uniform Buddhist era. The Headquarters of the W.F.B. will be in Ceylon; Conventions of the Fellow-

ship will be held once in two years and the next Convention was tentatively fixed to be held in Thailand in 1952. Regional centres of the Fellowship will be organised in every country and delegates selected from them for the General Council. The administration of the Fellowship will be in the hands of an Executive Council, appointed by the General Council. Several Committees have been appointed to train Buddhist Dharmadutas or Missionaries, to publish literature on Buddhism for Buddhists and for others, to translate Buddhist texts or selected portions of them

into various languages, to secure adequate representation for Buddhists on International bodies dealing with world problems so that the Buddhist-point of view may be heard at their meetings, to see that Buddhists take their due share in the humanitarian, social and cultural activities of the world, and to collaborate into other agencies working for the same or similar ends. It is undoubtedly an ambitious programme, but in view of the fact that the Buddhists form very nearly one-fourth of the world's population it cannot be any less ambitious, for such lessening would be a gross

dereliction of duty.

The delegates have now almost all of them returned to their homes, greatly inspired, and full of determination to work for the furtherance of the objects of the Fellowship. The first Convention has been a success far greater than any one had dared to hope or even to dream. The seed has been firmly planted and the first shoots have already appeared. What the future holds for it no one can prophesy. Let us hope that will grow into a mighty tree under whose shade men and women of the world may find peace and happiness.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### BUDDHISTS IN INDIA

Sir,

I am shocked to read the statement in your esteemed paper of March, 1950, under the heading 'The Number of Buddhists in India' as based on the 1941 Census, especially with regard to the Punjab: The number of Buddhists in the Punjab—Pak. and India—as given 247, is quite incorrect, not even a very small fraction of the exact number.

In the Kangra district of the Punjab Province, especially in Lahul and Spitti, the population is mostly Buddhists except for a few Hindus in Lahul.

A large number of Buddhists are found in the hill states now called the Himachal Pradesh.

In fact, Buddhists abound in all parts of the Western Himalayas from Rampur Bushahr in the Simla Hills in the East to the Chamba state and Ladakh in the West. Besides these, there are a large number of Buddhists monasteries and sacred places where thousands of Buddhist priests (Lamas) live.

The Buddhist population in the Punjab and Kashmir alone, leaving aside other parts of India, comes up to millions if a census is honestly taken.

The reason for classifying Buddhists as Hindus was the communal award of the government under the British Rule. Pro-Hindu officials in charge of the census in 1941 did their best to minimise the number of Buddhists by showing them as Hindus. Similarly in the States under Hindu Rajas, the Buddhists were ignored.

The old history books of India also cannot be much relied on in this respect. It appears that interested people have in the past also tried to minimise the number of the Buddhists in India where Lord Buddha was born and where He preached His religion.

It is merely on this account that the Buddhists in the past suffered a lot socially and politically and are suffering still. But it is hoped that through the efforts of our leaders and various organisations the wrongs will be righted in the near future.

It is a pity that even the Thrice Sacred Day—Birth, Enlightenment, and Maha Pratinirvana—of Lord Buddha is not regarded as a public holiday by our Central and most of the Provincial governments in spite of repeated entreaties and requests of the Buddhists of India.

Yours, etc.,

Mrs. LAJ BODH,  
Hony. Secretary,  
Himalayan Buddhists' Society,  
Kulu, District Kangra.

Dated Kotgarh, 7-5-'50.

### "HONOURS ALBUM"

Sir,

JUDGING from their letters in the April issue of the *Buddhist*, Messrs. H. L. Fernando and D. N. W. have not understood the very basis to my attitude in this matter. Their arguments would have been to the point had I addressed my letter to the ordinary press and not to the Journal of the premier Buddhist Association of the country.

It must be conceded that the function of the *Buddhist* is different

from that of an ordinary newspaper, or of a popular magazine such as *The Times of India*, *Illustrated*, or the *Life*. As such, its pages should be devoted exclusively to matters conducive to the advancement of the aims and objects of the Y.M. B.A., which publishes this journal. It is because of this reason that I considered it failing in its duty, for the *Buddhist* to parade before the eyes of the reader the physiognomies of some people who have climbed yet another rung of their social ladder, for by doing this an impression is created in the mind of the casual reader that "the institution of Honours" has the approval and sanction of the Y.M. B.A., and perhaps even that of the Tathagatha. The very fact that Mr. Fernando misinterprets a well-known saying of Buddha to justify this is proof of the harm done. He forgets the fundamental teaching that "From craving, arise all sin."

All that I ask of the *Buddhist* is that it should confine its activities to its legitimate sphere and leave 'news' matters of this nature severely to the general press. If this is not done, rationalist Buddhists like me will lose the occasional peace and tranquillity one enjoys in reading the monthly issue of the *Buddhist*, and the journal will lower itself in the estimation of such readers.

Yours, &c.,

W. A. de SILVA.

11, Charles Place, Kollupitiya.

(Note.—Should Mr. de Silva be perturbed if *The Buddhist* records news about the members of the Y.M.B.A.—Ed.)

