THE BUDDHIST

(Organ of the Colombo Young Men's Buddhist Association)

"SILA PAÑÑANATO JAYAM"

FOUNDED 1888

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WHY WE LACK BUDDHIST WORKERS ?

RECENTLY Mr. P. de S. Kularatne, the President of the All Ceylon Buddhist Congress, deplored the tendency among the Buddhists of this country to be inactive and devoid of effort and stated that people could be generally divided into two main groups, viz. those who are "*Kusitam Hinaviriyam*", and those who are "*Saddham araddhaviriyam*". Mr. Kularatne's reference to this division of mankind into those who are indolent and effortless and those who are full of faith and a spirit of endeavour is very interesting, for one cannot help noticing that humanity has to face today the same problems it faced twenty five centuries ago. It was the Buddha who distinguished between these two categories of people in this famous verses in the Dhammapada, which in Max Muller's translation, read as follows: -

"He who lives looking for pleasure only, his senses uncontrolled, immoderate in his food, idle and weak, mara (the tempter) will certainly overthrow him, as the wind throws down a weak tree."

"He who lives without looking for pleasures, his senses well controlled, moderate in his food, faithful and strong, him Mara will certainly not overthrow, any more than the wind throws down a rocky mountain."

If the majority of the people are "*Kusitam hinaviriyam*" today, the reasons are not far to seek. They live looking for pleasure only. The emphasis is on the satisfaction of the senses. The modern life is so fashioned that every effort of man is towards the gratification of his sensual desires. The momentary pleasures which food, music and sex could give man have blinded him to the suffering which is inherent in life and to the evils which only hinder one in his quest for supreme happiness. To him the most attractive philosophy of life is the Carvaka Doctrine of "Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die ". The end all and be all of life to the modern man is what he himself calls "a good time". With every man, woman and child, attempting to have a good time in his or her own way, the world is left an easy prey to Mara.

Let us not worry about the effect of this doctrine on the spiritual life of the individual. It is, let us for the moment assume, a responsibility which is his or her own. The influence it exerts on the life of the community is far more important to us. One has only to go round the numerous Buddhist and social service organizations within the city of Colombo to get a first-hand knowledge of the problem. Who are the men or women behind these organizations? The organizations may be many but you will see everywhere the same faces—the same people in varying capacities, trying to do a job of work which requires a thousand times their number in the least, to accomplish something worth while. There is a deplorable shortage of workers. A few have to do everything and that, too, with no encouragement whatsoever from either the community or those who profess to be the custodians or protectors of the religion!

The modern way of life is not the only reason for the paucity of

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Buddhist workers. We, as Buddhists have never made an effort to train our men young. What we do, in fact, is to frighten the younger element by adopting a rather peculiar attitude in our societies and committees. A few men, who by virtue of the nature of the posts they hold, have to work while the rest, whose only other function appears to be to play the leading role at ceremonials, arrogate to themselves the postition of critics—for which responsible function they often possess no qualification whatsoever. The struggle goes on for ever between the workers and the "critics" and the uninitiated member, who with all the ideals of a young man enters the association, is disillusioned; if he continues to retain the interest he first evinced in Buddhist activities, he is either a hypocrite who is after fame or gain or a man whose love for his religion is too deep-rooted to be shaken by anything. The net result of all these is that fewer men are now prepared to sacrifice an evening or two, which can be more pleasantly spent elsewhere, for the sake of religious work. We will have to do something early to remedy this defect or else we may as well give up.

There is no gainsaying that we need more and more men to work. We need them at various levels for various purposes. We need them to teach our religion, to collect funds for our religious buildings and social services, to prepare and publish religious literature and above all to safeguard the rights and privileges of the Buddhist Community. Let us examine ourselves critically. Let us see where we blunder. Why do we have so many bodies doing the same work? Why do we waste our time on worthless technical details? Let us diligently and sincerely get down to do a job of work Our greatest men like Anagarika Dharmapala and Sir D. B. Jayatilleke who inspired others to follow them, always did a job of work. If we emulate them and begin working, there will be a band of willing workers, especially among the young, who will indeed be "*Saddham Araddhaviriyam*".

ABOUT OURSELVES.

WE regret very much that we have not been able to bring out the issues of "*The Buddhist*" in time during the last few months. This has been due to many reasons, but we wish to apologize to our readers for the delay. In order to catch up with the past months, we are publishing this number as a combined issue for October, November and December, 1958. We propose to issue a similar number for January and February, 1959, and it shall be our endeavour to publish the journal regularly thereafter.

We wish to take this opportunity to acquaint our readers with one main difficulty that confronts us. That is the lack of articles reaching us for publication. We would therefore like to invite our readers to send us articles suitable for publication in this journal. It is hardly necessary to say that it will help us a great deal in bringing out the magaizne regularly.

BUDDHISM AS A RESTATEMENT OF THE UPANISHADS

By VEN. K. DHAMMAPALA THERA

IS Buddhism a restatement of the Upanishads with a new emphasis? An eminent scholar of world repute Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan declares that it is. (Radhakrishnan: Indian Philosophy). According to him Buddha implies the reality of what the Upanishads term Brahman; the latter was only given a different terminology as *Dhamma* to indicate its ethical significance for us in the empirical plane.

The same view is upheld by many Western scholars of Buddhism especially by those who have been nurtured under Upanishadic ideas. It has become customary among these scholars to consider Buddha as a renovator of the old Upanishadic ideas instead of as an innovator of originality. Accordingly his system is described not as a direct protest against the Upanishadic tradition but as a reinterpretation of Upanishadic ideas and tendencies in a new setting. Some even go to absurd lengths of declaring that Buddha was an Upanishadic seer inspired by the same revelation as that of the early Hindu seers and that He represents a deviation rather than a radical departure from the Upanishads.

That the Buddha sought to give a truer and deeper significance to some of the Upanishadic tenets of the day is indisputably true; but that He represents an Upanishadic sage is obviously false. For students of Pali Tipitaka would have noted that nowhere in the texts has Buddha acknowledged his indebtedness to Upanishads or Vedas even though it may be surmised that these latter played a considerable part in moulding certain aspects of his teaching such as Kamma, Nirvana etc. On the contrary one is confronted with the assertion that He is opening up a new path 'untrodden' before, as initiating a new tradition 'unheard of before.' Viewed as an ethical reform Buddhism was undoubtedly the strongest protest against both the hollow ritualism and the metaphysic of the Upanishads, and as a teaching it proclaimed the doctrine of soullessness (anatta) in contradistinction of the atman ideology of the Upanishads.

The cardinal teaching of the Upanishads involves the idea of Brahman or self which is said to be final development of polytheistic and pantheistic speculation contained in the early Vedas and Brahmanas. What is imparted by the Vedas is generally spoken of as the science of Deity (Devata Vidya), that is to say, the recognition of an unseen supernatural essence or power actuating things from within. In the earliest aphorisms of the texts the Deity is variously named Indra, Varuna, Agni etc. which are evidently personifications of natural forces. The tendency towards monotheism was attained in the later Upanishadic texts when the unity behind the diversity and plurality of things was conceived. Still later this monotheism or Katheonotheism as it is termed by Professor Max Muller (*i.e.* the recognition of each Deity as the highest in turn) paved way to pantheism when an attempt was made to identify the aspects of the individual with the macrocosmic divinities. This is clear from the use of devata and atman as interchangeable terms. Viewed psychologically this implies the search for a deeper unifying principle of consciousness (vijnana) underlying alimental states of empirical life. This essence of the subjective was finally identified with the reality of the objective as is expressed in sentences like 'I am Brahman'. (Aham Brahmosmi) 'That thou art' (Tat tvam asi) etc. Thus according to Upanishads reality is conceived in the pattern of a universal core or essence of things (atman) immutable yet related somehow to the fleeting states of experience.

It is against this atman tradition of the Upanishads which stimulated the growth of the famous six orthodox systems of Indian philosophy that Buddhism represents a direct protest. For Buddhism espoused the diametrically opposed *nairatmya* (anatta) tradition out of which were evolved the six heterodox systems. Never did Buddhism either in its earlier dogmatic pluralism or in its culminating phases of Idealism and Negativism uphold the doctrine of atman in whatever sense. Dr. Radhakrishnan's hasty conclusion is perhaps precipitated by a confusion of the twofold senses in which the term atta has been used in Buddhist texts. It is wrong to interpret the term *atta* used in sentences like 'Attahi attano natho' and 'Attadipa bhikkhave viharatha' as a metaphysical atta in the Upanishadic sense for the obvious reason that the occasion under review was one in which the Buddha was giving a simple ethical discourse instead of a metaphysical sermon. Elsewhere the Buddha has clearly made a distinction between two kinds of truths which He resorted to while preaching the Dhamma-*Sammuti* or *vohara* which is relative or true only from the human standpoint, and *paramattha* which is truth as it is, transcending empirical standpoints. In ordinary discourse while preaching to the unintelligent folk He used the term in the former or conversational sense and when He denied the existence of self as an underlying metaphysical principle He meant the Upanishadic term atta vogue at the time. Towards the latter part of her life Mrs. Rhys Davids too is said to have attempted to trace a thinly disguised atta in Buddhism but this is evidently the result of her failure to understand the particular context in which it was used by the Buddha.

Buddhism arrives at the notion of anatta not with the polemic of a dogmatist but with the perfect impartiality of a free thinker or rationalist. With scientific accuracy the Buddhist psychologist analyses personality into its component parts or aggregates (khandas) *viz.* form, feeling, perception, dispositions and consciousness (vijnana). The last four are collectively termed mind and correspond to, in common parlance self or atta as a principle of subjectivity. By form is meant body

governing these was shown to eb change or flux. As the modern soiences of physics and psychology would affirm none of these mental cr bodily factors is to be taken as permanent, self-subsisting and *ipso facto* cannot be taken as soul (atta) in a static sense. The Surangama sutta gives an interesting account of Ananda's attempt to locate soul in the various parts of the body in much the same way as medieval thinkers in Europe made attempts to locate it in the brain, nervous system, heart and the like. But it was shown by the Buddha that not even so much as the small quantity of dust in his finger was there to be found anything permanent stable by nature unchanging in rupa. Ettakampi kho bhikkhu rupam natthi niccam, dhuvam, sassatam" (Mahasikha sutta: Khanda Sanyutta).

There are also certain passages in the Tipitaka which students are prone to interpret in an agnostic sense, but this should not be taken as adequate reason for inferring that Buddha confirmed the reality of atta. For instance when questioned by Ananda as to why He has not given any answer to the questions put by the wandering monk, Vacchagotta, the Buddha said, that if He had answered in the affirmative to the question "Is there the ego?" He would have confirmed the doctrine of samanas and brahmanas who believe in permanence and, that if He had answered in the negative He would have only confirmed the doctrine of annihilation.

Nagarjuna in his commentary on Pragnaparamita sutra says:- 'When He preached that atman exists and is to be the receiver of misery and happiness in successive lives his object was to save men from falling into the heresy of nihilism (Ucchedavada). When He taught that there is no atman in the sense of a creator etc. his aim was to save men from falling into the opposite heresy of eternalism (sassatavada)"

Thus it would be clear that Buddha did not accept the theory of atta as taught by the Upanishads but preached from motives of expediency both the existence of atta, in the *sammuti* sense as well as its non-existence in the *paramattha* sense. As far as other teachings are concerned such as the existence of sorrow, the law of karma etc. Buddhism is said to share much in common with Upanishads but this is only at a superficial level and if one probes deeper into these teachings the differences will appear to be more radical. Herein it would not be irrelevant to mention the three levels or strata of reality taught by Upanishads and Vedanta which is somewhat analogous to the Buddhist conception of Sammuti and Paramattha truths. The first stage *Pratibhasika* corresponds to *sammuti sacca*. Here existence is regarded as illusory as snake in the illusory perception of a noose. In the second stage *Vyavaharika* things are considered to be practically or empirically real so as to render possible ordinary activities and experiences of daily life. The highest stage of reality is termed *Paramartika*. The absolute homogeneous unity of Brahman alone is real. Truth is thus relative to the inquirer; the wider one's outlook the more analytic is the apprehension, and in the purest monistic knowledge subject object and even activity (nous, noeton, noesis) merge in Brahman.

In Buddhism the notion of ego (atta) is the greatest obstacle to spiritual progress since it enlarges the possessive impulse and prolongs the round of birth and death (samsara). By eradicating this greatest delusion alone can Nibbana be attained. In contrast the Upanishads seek the attainment of Mukti not by negation of the ego but by its universalisation. The Upanishads declare that atman alone is real, but its identification with the particular, the matter is unreal. Buddhism replies that in whatever sense it is conceived, the idea of self tends to egoism and must be totally eradicated in the attainment of final release. Hence the negative features attributed to Nibbana in Buddhism in opposition to the Upanishadic or Vedantic idea of Mukti, which is described as a positive attainment of existence (sat) consciousness (cit) and bliss (ananda)

Y. M. B. A. LIBRARY

Members will be pleased to learn that the Library at the Y. M. B. A., Borella, is being re-organised.

Suggestions in writing are invited before 1st March, 1959, in respect of the purchase of new books and other matters connected with re-organisation work.

Donations of books and periodicals are also very welcome. It will be appreciated if such gifts are received before 1th, February, 1959, as it will facilitate classification and cataloguing work.

D. C. SRI DILLIMUNI
Hony. Secretary,
Literary Activities.

THE ANAGARIKA DHARMAPALA

By
S. KURUPPU

IN 1956 a statue of the Anagarika Dharmapala was unveiled at the Silver Jubilee celebrations of the Maha Bodhi Society at Saranath.

Saranath was the last scene of his activities and saw the fulfilment of one of his cherished hopes. Here again in Ceylon where he began his agitation for a revival of Buddhism, yet another statue was unveiled last September.

The Anagarika was born in the year 1864. He came of a Sinhalese family whose parents were devout Buddhists. Young David Hewavitarne, for that was his family name, grew up in a deeply religious atmosphere nurtured in a passionate devotion to his national faith.

It was an age when the national language had come to be looked upon by elite society here as a medium best suited for kitchen parlour gossip, and the national religion an inveterate superstition better adhered to by domestic servitors.

Young Hewavitarne soon began to realise that the then low ebb in our national life had been due to the decay of the national religion that had fed the culture of the nation for so many centuries past, a condition that had been brought about by foreign domination of the people for a period of well over three hundred years. During that time Christian missionaries enjoying the patronage of the State had secured for their religion a position of advantage and affluence to the displacement of the national faith.

Such foreign influence had resulted in the adoption of western modes of thought and living as the recognized standard, to the entire neglect of what had been even the very best in the national culture.

An educational policy fostered in the interests of a colonial government unsympathetic if not hostile to the national religion had stifled the growth of truly national leadership.

In the repressive atmosphere of such an age, the dynamic personality of David Hewavitarne began to unfold itself. He soon changed his name into the national and Buddhistic appellation of DHARMAPALA *i.e.* one disciplined by the Dhamma.

He saw in anger and began to view with resentment the disabilities imposed by colonial rule on the national aspirations of his people. That of course had been the logical outcome of a policy directed towards the exploitation of a subject race.

That was a time when, of which it has been said a tavern had begun to crop up under every other coconut palm, while the excise revenue went to replenish the coffers of the colonial treasury.

Dharmapala saw, and seeing his spirit rebelled. He now became seized with a partriotic fervour that galvanised him into launching a militant crusade to regenerate the race and to revive its religion.

He would have no doubt been influenced by the events that had followed the advent in the Island of that great American Col. H. S. Olcott who founded the Buddhist Theosophical Society in 1880.

The work of pioneers like Migettuwatte Gunananda would have no less inspired him.

Dharmapala believed that any movement then for the emancipation of the people here, would have best gone hand in hand with a revival of the national culture, traditionally Buddhistic.

In the firm faith of his convictions he now started a campaign with the object of infusing into the habits and thoughts of his Buddhist brethren his ideals of a national renaissance. That even included a reform of dress.

He began to exert such an influence that very soon Sinhalese ladies of birth and breeding began to abandon the Portuguese jacket and Dutch skirt for the more becoming folds of the Aryan saree.

He unleashed his scathing tongue in venom and in scorn on those English educated classes encrusted with a superficial veneer of an alien culture and their apish imitation of western manners.

He carried his message from town to town, shaking his rebellious fist even in the face of his colonial masters. That was indeed a very brave thing to have done then.

But Dharmapala was a man who did not know the meaning of fear; not even the fear of a mighty British Raj. He sneered and he even snarled, in the face of the big British Lion. He used to say, "Take a sack, paint it white, mark out a figure upon it and kick it every morning. You will then get rid of that fear you have for the white sahibs."

His utterances were marked with the fire of a revolutionary.

Dharmapala had very naturally thrown himself into the temperance movement that was then the predominating movement in the nationalist struggle.

When the riots broke out in 1915, many leaders of that movement were cast in jail. Governor Chalmers in that connection had chosen to refer to him as "the notorious Dharmapala". The Maha Bodhi Society itself of which he was the founder became deeply suspect of disloyalty to the Crown. Dharmapala lay in concealment in India during those disturbances. Had he been found here he would no doubt have suffered the fate of other of his compatriots who had been shot or imprisoned.

Dharmapala was however soon to return to the fray not long after Martial Law had been withdrawn.

A staunch nationalist, the sincerity of the patriot inspired his mind. But Dharmapala's religious zeal and his desire to revive and propagate the Buddhist religion was to him a more compelling force than the compunctions of any political faith, however national. It was a fire that burned within him.

The following words of a contemporary British Buddhist Bhikkhu Ananda Metteya (Allen Bennet) spoken at his own ordination could have as appropriately have been put on the lips of Dharmapala:-

"Herein lies the work that is before me, the cause to which I have devoted and consecrated my life, to carry to the lands of the West, the Law of Love and Truth as declared by our Master."

The revival of Buddhism in his island home, the Dhammadipa, was but a prelude to his dedication to missionary endeavour in an ever widening field. His religious ardour bordered almost on the fanatical, but nevertheless Dharmapala was a man who had vision. It was the concept of his faith as a World Religion.

"Go forth, O Bhikkhus" the Master had exhorted his disciples, "For the good of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit of gods and men. Let not two go one way: preach, O Bhikkhus, my doctrine glorious in the beginning, glorious in the middle and glorious in the end. Proclaim the Holy Life, perfect and pure."

These words uttered well nigh two thousand years before now began to ring in ears of the zealous Dharmapala. In truth under such an impulse of missionary fervour he had conceived of the Maha Bodhi Society.

He was now indeed the "Anagarika" or the "Homeless One" with the wide vision of a spiritual home of a great brotherhood of nations.

He cast his gaze on the birth place of his faith, India of the teeming millions, the once Buddhist Jambudvipa. Not content to further confines, to remote Honolulu, distant America, farther Europe and the utmost British Isles.

He was the Buddhist delegate to the World Parliament of Religions held at Chicago in 1893.

The Maha Bodhi Society to-day occupies a prominent place among the Buddhist nations of the World. Its work and achievements speak in most eloquent testimony to Dharmapala's religious ardour and proseletysing zeal. No reference to the foundation of that institution would however be complete without mention of Mrs. Mary Foster of Honolulu whose munificience enabled Dharmapala to inaugurate that enterprise.

Her contributions in furtherance of that cause have been truly described as "a romance of unparalleled generosity."

The headquarters of the Society are in Saranath. That was the spot on which the Tathagata first set in motion, The Wheel of the Law (Dhamma Cakka).

When Dharmapala visited the site in 1891 it was a virtual jungle privately owned and used as a breeding ground for pigs.

Appalled at the sight of such desecration he resolved to revive it as a centre of Buddhism. He stayed over and purchased a plot of land with one donation given by his mother and another by an Indian Prince.

The foundation stone of the Mulagandhakuti Vihara was laid in 1922 and the building itself completed in 1931. It is now a fast growing centre of Buddhist learning and religious pilgrimage.

Today the air of that hallowed spot has once again begun to sound to the chant of Buddhist stanzas.

It was his untiring efforts that also secured Buddha-Gaya for the Buddhists.

The Anagarika Dharmapala had carried the Light of the Dhamma to far distant climes. He relayed back to India the torch that the Thera Mahinda had brought hither two milleniums ago. He rekindled that Light in the land of its birth.

It is indeed significant that not so long after he has passed away that Light has begun to burn more brightly than ever. The movement set afoot by the late Dr. Ambedkar is taking immense strides. Many thousands in India have begun to embrace their ancient faith.

The Anagarika had been the greatest pioneer of the Buddhist Revival in modern times.

Not very long before he died he received the full ordination of a Buddhist monk as Devamitta Dhammapala. He died on the 29th April, 1933.

In the manner of every well disciplied Buddhist he was resolved at the moment of death in an Adhitthana or purposeful resolution. It was his consummate wish that he be reborn in the land of Jambudvipa to fulfil the mission he had undertaken in the present life.

In a different setting a man of his character and temperament might have played a not so pacific role. But the faith of the Buddha had been a message of peace.

For Dharmapala had indeed been a revolutionary, yet one that had caused no blood to shed. He had indeed been a rebel, yet one that had carried no arms.

The Anagarika had been a man with a mission.

Dharmapala might sometimes appear to-day a very controversial figure, but his life and work are best assessed against the background of the age in which he had found himself.

Y. M. B. A. COLOMBO

The 61st Annual General Meeting of the Young Men's Buddhist Association (Incorporated), Colombo, will be held on Saturday, February 28, 1959, at 3 p.m. at the Association premises.

AGENDA

1. Notice convening the meeting.
2. Minutes.
3. Annual Report and Accounts.
4. Election of
   (a) Office bearers.
   (b) 7 members of the Board of Management.
5. Appointment of an Auditor.
6. Any other business.

Nominations for election of office-bearers and seven members of the Board of Management should reach the office of the Hony. Gen. Secretary not later than 6 p.m. on Friday, February 6, 1959.

Notice of any resolutions to be moved should reach the office of the Hony. Gen. Secretary not later than 6. p.m. on Friday, 13th February 1959

D. L. Dissanayake,
Hony. General Secretary

BUDDHISM AND ITS RELATION TO RELIGION AND SCIENCE

By

R. G. de S. WETTIMUNY

CHAPTER VI.

LIVING EXPERIENCE

WITH that I come to the point from where Buddhism starts me off on my search. This starting point is no *a priori* premiss as that of Religion, demanding belief therein, nor is it something that has to await confirmation before it is to be accepted. No *petitio principii* is involved here. No taking some imaginary point in the untraceable past and starting off in the fashion: "In the beginning there was. . . . . ," and so on.

This starting point is right here and now, just as I am. That part of actuality which only is wholly and truly accessible to me, this living moment - that is the starting point. Insight into what this living moment is, into the arising of this living moment, its passing away, and the reason therefor - throwing me into that, Buddhism takes over. In other words, Buddhism starts me off from right insight into what life is. What is life? What is living experience? What is nutrition? How come this succession of living moments, this succession of the moments of Consciousness? How functions this process of conceiving? On the answers I realize to these questions will depend all further advance. To get wise to the problem that is embraced within these questions, - that is the task, for all now depends on it.

Now, Religion expounds life to be the function of a Self. Thinking, eating, sleeping, walking, etc., - all these are, Religion teaches, mere functions of this Self, also called by names such as Soul and Ego. The Vedanta religion calls it *atman*. It is said to be the "centre of self-conscious activity which thinks, reacts on the personal or external phenomena, and consciously performs the functions of life, " and is a permanent and unchanging entity, immortal, enduring, undying, and existing independently of the body. Scalpels and microscopes have no doubt greatly disturbed this doctrine, though in all fairness to Religion, it must be said that scalpels and microscopes alone cannot disprove it.

And here lies the contradiction. For on the basis of a Self, Religion attempts to work out an ethical or moral code of action for this same Self. But actually, no such code is at all necessary for such a Self, simply because it is a Self. "And the Exalted One took up a tiny crumb of earth in his hand and said to the monks: 'Not even so much as this, monks, permits of being attained of a Selfhood that would be permanent, stable, eternal, by nature unchanging, like unto the eternal, so that thus it will stand fast. If, monks, even so little would permit of being attained of a Selfhood that would be permanent, stable, eternal, by nature unchanging, then the living of the life of purity for the destruction of all Suffering would not be set forth. But inasmuch, monks, as there is not even so little that would permit of being attained of a Selfhood that is permanent, stable, eternal, by nature unchanging, therefore the living of the life of purity for the destruction of all Suffering is set forth." (*Samyutta Nikaya III*).

What is the necessity for, and where is the possibility to purify something that stands eternal, unchanging? How shall one describe something to be unchanging and imperishable, and yet at the same time claim a possibility of cleansing it? For the mere fact that it is being cleansed or stained proves it to be subject to change. And that which is subject to change is a process of action of whatever kind it be. To further claim an immortality to all this, one must have sufficient reason. And that sufficient reason can be found only in this - the sufficient reason for the process. Where the sufficient reason for the process has not been penetrated into and comprehended, there one can say nothing of an immortality or a cessation to the process. All this dogmatizing of Religion is nothing but Ignorance nourished by Thirst for existence.

In a word, the problem here resolves into this: Either there is a self-existent entity by itself and then there is no falling into relation with the external and being influenced by the external, or there is a falling into relation with and being influenced by the external and then there is no self-existent entity by itself.

Many theories have been formulated and attempts made to prove the existence of a Self. It is the main task for Theology. But being an impossible task, Theology falls back on faith. And in all its attempts at proving the existence of a Self, such as through those sophisms relating to "external evidence", "internal evidence", "univer sal ideas", "immaterial concepts", "essential ideas", "reflex ideas", "free will", and so on, one sees a subtle presupposition of this same Self, the existence of which is to be proved - a being guilty of a *petitio principii*. Addressing Ananda, the Buddha explains the groundless nature of this assumption of a subject by itself:

'Herein Ananda, to him who affirms: 'My soul is sensation', answer should thus be made: 'My friend, sensation is of three kinds. There is happy sensation, painful sensation, and neutral sensation. Of these three sensations, look you, which do you consider your soul is?'

"When you feel a happy sensation, Ananda, you do not feel a painful sensation, or a neutral sensation. And when you feel a painful sensation you do not feel a happy sensation or a neutral sensation, but just a painful sensation. And when you feel a neutral sensation, you do not then feel a happy sensation or a painful sensation; you feel just a neutral sensation.

"Moreover, Ananda, happy sensation is impermanent, a product, the result of a cause or causes, liable to perish, to pass away, to become extinct, to cease. So too is painful sensation. So too is neutral sensation. If when experiencing a happy sensation one thinks: 'This is my soul', when that same happy sensation ceases, one will also think: 'My soul has departed'. So too when the sensation is painful, or neutral. Thus he who says: 'My soul is sensation', regards as his soul, something which in this present life, is impermanent, is blended of happiness and pain, and is liable to begin and to end. Wherefore, Ananda, it follows from this aspect: 'My soul is sensation', does not commend itself.

"Herein again, Ananda, to him who affirms: 'Nay my soul is not sensation, my soul is not sentient', answer should thus be made: 'My friend, where there is no sensation of anything, can you there say 'I am'?"

"You cannot, Lord."

"Wherefore, Ananda, it follows from this aspect: 'Nay, my soul is not sensation, my soul is not sentient', does not commend itself.

"Herein again, Ananda, to him who affirms: 'Nay, my soul *is* not sensation, nor is it non-sentient; my soul has sensations, it has the property of sentience', answer should thus be made: 'My friend, were sensation of every sort or kind to cease absolutely, then there being, owing to cessation thereof, no sensation whatever, could one then say: 'I myself am'?"

"No, Lord, one could not."

"Wherefore, Ananda, it follows from this aspect: "Nay, my soul is not sensation, nor is it non-sentient; my soul has sensations. it has the property of sentience', does not commend itself."(*Digha Nikaya* 15).

Sensation, or feeling, constitutes what is called life. If I do not feel anything whatsoever, through the five senses or the mind, I cannot say 'I am'. And all my feelings without an exception are subject to change; are things that arise and cease.

There is a curious problem invented by metaphysicians and theologians which runs thus: Does the fact that I do not perceive a Self mean that there is no Self?

It is for the benefit of such thinkers that the Buddha teaches: 'Where there is no sensation, can you there say 'I am?'" Put in terms of perception, where there is no perception of anything whatsoever, can one there say 'I am?' If I do not perceive anything whatsoever, I cease to exist. That is all there is to it; and that is all that can be made of it. To say that there can be a Self even though I do not perceive it, means to say just this: There is in me a possibility, which, though, is not a perceptibility. But the mere fact that it is an imperceptibility cuts out the question of a possibility or an impossibility.

Is there a Self which is not perceptible? Is there no such Self? These are impossible questions. Much as they have worried minds for a long time, dwelling upon them has not been of any profit. Reflecting on such questions have not effected any progress. That is why the Buddha calls such questions as "not tending to edification". What those who ask such questions need is not answers, but right instruction.

Living experience does not point to the existence of a Self. A Self-ness in things is not to be found. "If to the question, 'Is there a Self?' I had answered, 'There is a Self'," says the Buddha, "Would that have been in keeping with the knowledge of the Non-Selfness of all things?" (*Samyutta Nikaya IV*).

Yet the first reaction with which life sets in is with the I-concept, a concept that is aggravated by the thirst to lay hold of, "I want to exist!"-*I.I.I.* That is the main thing. "I don't care about an existence that has to be proved to be mine before I can believe it." Anything that has the faintest trace of consciousness says it. It is not the cry of just one individual. It is the incessant cry of all existence. The will to live, the desire to exist, the craving to become, notwithstanding all the suffering there is, accentuates the concept of a separate individual subject by itself.

Where then does the *I* actually hide itself? Where does the concept of a Self find a footing?

It finds this footing in the fact that not only do I experience a sensation, but I also *know* that I experience a sensation. It is in this knowledge that goes hand in hand with the *memory* of similar sensations that the Self-idea seeks refuge and finds its best support.

As with all other things, the phenomenon of living experience can be viewed rightly or wrongly. I view it wrongly if only I look upon knowledge as from a standpoint outside of sensation, a standpoint which actually is not possible. The knowledge that I experience the sensation is also something that arises *along with* the sensation. No sensation arises for an I-Self to feel the sensation and to know that it has arisen. *The process of arising of the sensation embraces within itself the knowledge of its arising.* No proof here is possible, and no belief is necessary. One experiences it by himself. And it is the non-realization of this fact that makes one think in the fashion: "The soul (*atman*) is not the same as ego (*jivatman*), but it is the knower of the ego. It is not the same as '*I*', but that by which we know ourselves, by which we say: I am standing here, I am hearing, that is our true self; that is the *atman*." But where one sees this fact, there one finds absolutely no necessity to postulate the contradictory concept of a subject by itself falling into relation with the external and being influenced by the external.

To Buddhism, knowledge is also a sensation, mind-sensation. Mind becomes the sixth sense, and so it is that the texts always refer to six senses instead of the normal five. Of these six senses, the mind stands eminent. If I absent-mindedly look out of the window, I will not see even though my eyes be intact and the field of vision unobscured. But yet, my eyes may be closed, and there still can be a picture within me, such as is referred to as a mental image. The same applies to my hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching.

"There are friend, these five faculties with various provinces and various pastures, which do not enjoy one another's pasture and province; that is to say, eye-faculty, ear-faculty, tongue-faculty, nose-faculty, and body-faculty. The meeting place of these five faculties with various provinces and various pastures, which do not enjoy one another's pasture and province, is mind; and mind enjoys their pasture and province." (*Majjhima Nikaya*).

Life is living experience. Living experience of eating is this: I eat and I know that I eat. Living experience of thinking is: I think and I know that I think. Every aspect of living experience is to know that there is a sensing.

If now, when I eat, I comprehend the knowledge of that eating, or the becoming aware of that eating, the cognizing of that eating, as something that has a standpoint or a footing or a support outside of that eating, I will be leaving room for all the metaphysical speculation of the possibility of a Self. It would then aggravate the I-concept. But if I realize that that knowledge of the eating is embraced within the very process of eating, I will find myself on firm ground. I will then find no necessity to postulate a Self and so lead myself into the contradictions that follow therefrom.

Apart from the process of eating there is no knowledge of that eating. Certainly, after I have had living experience of that eating there is in me some knowledge of that eating which I can recall later. But at such a time I would only be thinking of that past eating. It would then be an instance of having living experience of *recollecting*. I would be recollecting a past eating along with the knowledge that I so recollect.

Again, here I am doing something; some action is going on. My life at this moment is the living experience of this particular action. I am doing something and I know that I am doing that something. My knowledge of this action is embraced within the very process of the action. If now this knowledge is the function of a separate Self, then once the action has ceased the Self would also have ceased; simply because this supposed Self is entirely arisen due to the very knowledge. Immediately after this action there would be some other action, and with that action will arise the knowledge of it. There will then arise another Self; another, because this latter will be a different living experience, or a separate period of living, though of course it had a dependence or a connection with the former. In other words, with a series of living experiences, which is in fact what life is, and each living experience arising from the immediately preceding one, life would be a series of I-selves. My life would be a series which is comprised of an *infinite number of functions pertaining to an infinite number of I-selves*, each function having its own I-self. That of course contradicts the very meaning of the supposition of a Self that is immortal and enduring.

Once more: I act with the knowledge that I so act. If I comprehend this knowledge as something that has a standpoint or footing apart from the action, then there will arise in me the concept of a Self behind the action. But actually, no such footing is possible. The knowledge arises *together with and dependently on* the action. There is a dependent-together-arising (*paticcasamuppada*), and hence so possibility for a Self to lie behind

and do all the knowing. The *I* is identified with the action, and the knowledge that arises therefrom. I cannot go out for a walk while *I* sleep. I-consciousness is the action that matters, knowledge included. "Void is this of Self, or ought of the nature of Self" - *sunnan idan attena va, attaniyena va* (*Majjhima Nikaya* 43). In the all-embraciveness of becoming, it is action without an actor, a knowing without a knower, a dramatizing without a dramatizer, an experiencing without an experiencer. In the sense of an everlasting knower or experiencer, there is nothing to be found.

But this assertion is not very palatable to logic. It would of course be no surprise, for logic cannot work without definitely conceived objects definitely circumscribed. The uninstructed man of the world - uninstructed in the Buddha-word - sees things as entities, as things by themselves. He thnks of a tree as a self-abiding "tree", as some kind of thing that stands by itself. It is only when one can break away from this usual mode of thinking, and reflect, that one can comprehend a tree as what in actuality it is; that is as nothing more than a process of botanical nutrition. It is only through the impulse of the Buddha-word followed by such reflection that I shall be able to cognize myself as a special "process of nutrition without a nourished"; as a process of thinking without a thinker; as a process of grasping without a grasper.

Long ago there was a time when I had no knowledge of eating. That was when I was a new-born baby. Till I had my first drink I had no knowledge of drinking. With the eating and the drinking also grew the knowledge of eating and drinking. Till I first saw blue and red I did not know what blue and red were. They are all things that grew in me by virtue of certain causes, of certain processes of nutrition. There was no immortal soul or Self-call it whatever one wishes to - that got into me at the moment of conception with all this knowldege stored behind it, or possessing the knowledge of what is right and what is wrong as is conveyed by the idea of a "conscience"; nor is it that on the dissolution of this body that same immortal Self will leave it and depart to exist somewhere else for all time. Just as my body has grown, so also has my knowledge, my memory, my thinking, my sense of right and wrong, and good and bad, and all else that I am comprised of. It is all a growth; a growth that will go on so long as the necessary nutriments are available; a growth without anything everlastingly abiding therein.

Religion would make its final bid to defend itself thus: The Self is that which is aware of and knows the entire process. That is, the Self - which is metaphysical - knows that there is a sensation and a knowledge of that sensation. But what would only be an assertion of knowing knowing. And he who makes such an assertion might equally well follow up the thread further and assert a knowing knowing knowing, and so on, - all of which remains nothing but the same act of cognizing.

Whatever form life takes, it remains a particular mode of sustenence, a particular mode of nutrition. And what the nutriments or the conditions being applicable to this particular mode of nutrition are, that the Buddha teaches.

To Science, fettered as it is by experimental procedure, life also is a purely materialistic mode. It can do no more than interpret life in a materialistic fashion. That which I recognize as sound, to Science, is purely the result of the impact of sound waves on my ear-drum, and life as a process of nutrition, is nothing but the assimilation of material food to the living body. All those amazingly selective functions of the stomach are pure and simple material modes. Keeping within such a materialistic explanation as it does, Science fails to explain much with regard to the phenomenon of life.

Emphatically rejecting the doctrine of Self or the doctrine of a cuase-in-itself which Religion teaches, the Buddha teaches that all things in whatever mode they appear, are subject to the one *dhamma* (nature). "What is the single doctrine? (*katamo eko dhammo*). All beings exist through nutrition; all beings persist through conditions (*sabbe satta aharatthitika sabbe satta sankharatthitika*). . . .. The one question, the one statement, the one explanation, was said because of this." (*Anguttara Nikaya V*, and elsewhere).

Within the material world Science has with amazing success applied this one explanation that Buddhism teaches. It has applied it in the form of a fall between two grades of potential. But in trying to apply it in this same form to the Consciousness-mode Science has achieved very little if at all. Buddhism teaches that the conditioning (*aharatthitika*) which applies to the Consciousness-mode does not follow strictly in the same pattern. The methods of mathematical measurement in time and space as applied by Science do not hold good here. For, life, the Buddha teaches, to be neither a function of a Self that is physical or metaphysical, nor a mere fall between two grades of potential, but a *grasping* process (*upadana-kkhandha*). It is a very complicated process of nutrition which swallows up in its nourishing all

logic, all reasoning, all conceptual thinking, and all insight.

Here in this nourishing, there is an upbringing of both the erroneous concept and the hypothetical concept; and these concepts can be seen in their true light only when this nourishing turns away from its normal course of conceptual thought and nourishes on towards clear insight and wisdom. Here remains no defined gap between the object one conceives and the concept that arises therefrom. No possibility here lies for the concept to stand by itself as "concept". No possibility lies for the tearing away of the subject from the object and both of these in turn from the concept, but a drama wherein every one of them becomes the outcome of the growth of the others; an incessant movement wherein the slightest change in one effects the others, only to be changed in turn by that change it caused to the others, leaving in the process no room for a Self whether in the physical or metaphysical sense to remain steadfast for two consecutive moments.

No spectator by himself here lies watching the drama as from a standpoint outside the drama. The spectator becomes just what the drama makes him; for life does not constitute a mere action, but an action which carries within it the knowledge of such action. Life, the Buddha teaches, to be neither a fall between two grades of potential nor the function of a Self, but a drama in the dramatization of which the dramatizer, the stage, and the spectator, all ever and again become the result of the others' growth, a dependent-together-arising (*paticca-samuppada*) of one another, to form one continuous rolling on.

Let none be deceived that this Buddha-word can be easily understood. At least it has not been the case with he who writes this. If it can be so easily comprehended, then it would appear that the unparalleled struggle and sacrifice the ascetic Gotama made to realize this insight was undeserved. Everything in Buddhism would then become very easy, would become mere articles of knowledge. The *anicca* doctrine, the *dukkha* doctrine, the *anatta* doctrine, the *rebirth* doctrine, the *paticca-samuppada*, - they would then all become food for the mere intellect.

But the truth-seeker must understand it if anything worthy is to be gained. And he can understand it if only, freeing himself from the already fashioned concepts, he reflects upon it with patience and determination. His own living experience and the *courage* to comprehend life as what in actuality it is, is all that can help.

INFLUENCE OF BUDDHIST IDEAS AND IDEALS ON EUROPEAN CIVILISATION DURING THE MIDDLE AGES

By
GUNASEELA VITANAGE

In the course of my first article (**The Buddhist - December 1957**) I discussed how Buddhist Ideas and Ideals reached Europe during the Graeco-Roman period and how they influenced European civilisation in that remote age. In the course of this article I propose to discuss the impact of Buddhist Ideas and Ideals on Medieval Europe and how they changed the course of European civilisation.

The Medieval Age or the Middle Ages is a term used by historians to describe the ten centuries between the fall of Rome to the barbarians in the 5th century of the Christian Era and the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in the 15th-a thousand years of European history which divide the classical, ancient world from the modern. This period is again divided into two-the first six centuries *i.e.*, roughly from 5th to 11th century called the Dark Ages-and the second four centuries *i.e.*, roughly from 11th to 15th century called the Age of Faith.

PAGAN CIVILISATION

The very term "Classical" applied to the Graeco-Roman civilisation indicates the very high state art, architecture and literature had reached in ancient Greek and Rome. The Greeks and the Romans loved pleasure and indulged in it. That indulgence was undoubtedly the main cause that led to the fall of those mighty nations; for the spiritual enervation that comes in the wake of self indulgence is fatal to an individual as well as to a nation. The Greeks and Romans loved learning too-and if this love of learning was leavened with moral and spiritual values, the fall may not have come so soon and so rapidly. Destiny however chose another path for them.

Referring to the extent learning was spread during the days of the Roman Empire, the Liberal historian, W. E. H. Lecky says in his book **History of European Morals :**

"During the period of the Pagan Empire intelectual life had been diffused over a vast portion of the globe. Egypt and Asia Minor had become great centres of civilisation. Greece was still a land of learning. Spain and Greece and even Britain were full of libraries and teachers. The schools of Narbonne, Arles, Bordeaux, Toulouse, Lyons, Marseilles, Poitiers and Treves were already famous. The Christian Emperor Gratian in A. D 376 carried out in Gaul a system similar to that which had already under Antonines been pursued in Italy, ordering that teachers should be supported by the State in every leading city."

DARK AGES

But by the end of the sixth century not one of these schools-excepting perhaps a few isolated ones in Alexandria-remained. Greek and Latin learning which had been so widely diffused had almost perished and Europe had sunk into the Dark Ages with the dawn of the Seventh Century.

There were two reasons for this state of affairs.

The first was the invasion and capture of Rome by the barbarians under Alaric in 410 B.C. and the destruction that followed in the wake of that invasion.

The second and perhaps the main reason was the hostility of early Christians towards Pagan learning.

With regard to the barbarians we know that they embraced Christianity not long after their conquest of Rome. They might perhaps have absorbed Greek and Roman learning with equal alarcity, but for the intellectual climate created by triumphant Christianity.

Sir James Jeans, the eminent scientist and philosopher tells us how Christianity asphyxiated learning in Europe in medieval times:-

"Christianity, after starting from the humblest of beginnings, conquered the Mediterranean world more thoroughly than ever the Roman legions had done. The Roman conquerors had introduced a new technique of government, but the Christian conquerors brought with them a new technique of life and a revolutionary conception of human aims and destiny-how revolutionary it is hard for us to-day to understand. Their citizenship was in heaven, their life here only a preparation for a future elsewhere, so that they saw the world of matter only as a prison-house, and the vault of heaven only as a veil; both were transitory and utterly insignificant in comparison with what lay

beyond. Within the lifetime of some of them, a day was to come when the stars would fall from heaven and the sky be rolled back like a scroll to reveal a Judge seated on his Throne. 'Then God whom Jesus had declared to be the loving Father would change his character, reverting to the ferocity and tyranny of his Old Testament habits: even Jesus himself who had once prayed 'Father, forgive them' would now lay aside mercy and deal out justice and vengeance: sinners for whom he had formerly sought as a shepherd for his lost sheep would now be flung into hell and there would suffer endless flames and torments-a spectacle to increase the beatitude of heaven Tertullian had written: 'How shall I admire, how laugh, how rejoice, how exult, when I behold. . . . so many sage philosophers blushing in red-hot flames with their deluded scholars.' What would it profit a man on that last day of wrath that he had spent laborious years in examining how the bars of the prison-house were made, or in studying the heavenly veil that had already passed away? Surely it was better to prepare for the judgement to come?

"Holding such beliefs, the Christians could hardly be sympathetic to the study of science, especially as many of them were narrow fanatics; their religion was their all and, unlike the paganism it was supplanting, it knew nothing of tolerance or of magnanimity towards those of other opinions. This mattered little at first, for the Christians were few and uninfluential. Even at the beginning of the fourth century, only a small fraction of the population was Christian; the pagan writers barely mentioned their existence, even the great moralists such as Seneca and Marcus Aurelius either passing them over in silence or speaking of them with contempt.

"Then came the year 312, a landmark in human history, when Constantine the Great, the illegitimate son of a Roman officer and a Serbian Innkeeper, who had been elected Emperor of Rome by the army in the field, suddenly embraced the Christian religion. In 390 the pagan religion was forbidden by edict throughout the Empire, and henceforth Christianity reigned supreme, save in out-of-the-way country places, where the simple villagers would still assemble to sing hymns and offer modest sacrifices to the gods of their forefathers.

"Twenty years later Rome was captured by Alaric and his barbarians, and when these too embraced the Christian faith, the 'dark ages' fell upon Europe-the ages of domination of all human thought and of most human activity by the priesthood, ages which should probably be placed as the darkest in the history of mankind. A boundless intolerance of all divergence of opinion was united with an equally boundless toleration of all falsehood and deliberate fraud that could favour received opinions Credulity being taught as a virtue, and all conclusions being dictated by authority, a deadly torpor sank upon the human mind which for many centuries almost suspended its action." (The Growth of Physical Science—Pages 71-73.)

"The opposition of the Christians to all non-Christian learning was now becoming formidable, but science was too moribund to attract much of it. The Christians were not concerned with science; their all-absorbing interest was in theological controversy. Maintaining that the holding of incorrect theological opnions was a deadly sin, they devised incredible tortures which they inflicated on one another with a cruelty which the pagan Ammianus said could not be matched even by savage beasts, and the Christian St. Gregory said was 'like hell.' But while we read of their cutting off the ears, noses, tongues and right-hands of those who held different opinions as to whether the Son was of the same substance as the Father, or only of similar substance we read of no one suffering for his scientific opnions. Nevertheless Christianity, with its motto 'Do not examine, only believe', must have provided a powerful deterrent to the scientific spirit of free inquiry.

"In Alexandria least of all were learning and science likely to get any consideration from an all-dominating religion. Its Archbishop Theophilus, 'the perpetual enemy of peace and virtue, a bold bad man, whose hands were alternately polluted with gold and blood' had a special enthusiasm for the extirpation of all monuments of pagan culture, and in 390 a large part of the great library was destroyed, it was believed, by his orders. His nephew St. Cyril, who succeeded him on the archiepiscopal throne, became jealous of the influence of Hypatia, she, a pagan, was reputed to have so profound a knowledge of all the sciences that Christianity itself was in danger. Thus when a band of Christians, mostly monks, murdered her in 415-by tearing the flesh off her bones with sharp oyster shells-Cyril was suspected of having instigated the deed". (Ibid-Page 99).

Professor J. B. Bury says in his book, "A History of Freedom of Thought."

> "During the two centuries in which they had been a forbidden sect the Christians had claimed toleration on the ground that religious belief is voluntary and not a thing which can be enforced. When their faith became the predominant creed and had the powers of the State

behind it, they abandoned this view. They embarked on the hopeful enterprise of bringing about a complete uniformity in men's opinions on the mysteries of the universe, and began a more or less definite policy of coercing thought."

Pagan cults as well as pagan learning which stood in the way of creating this uniformity of belief was suppressed either by Royal Edict or by force of Arms. Between the years 341 and 392, the Roman Emperors issued a series of Edicts prohibiting pagan worship; one of these Edicts made it a capital offence to worship at Pagan shrines. These are now collected under what is known as the Theodosian Code. In the organised destruction of pagan temples all the schools and libraries were destroyed.

In the year 529 Emperor Justinian who now had shifted his seat of Government to Byzantium, closed by a Royal decree the schools at Athens which had flourished nearly a thousnad years, and thus the final act of pushing Europe into the abyss of Dark Ages was completed.

ARAB CIVILISATION

It would however not be correct to say that the entire sub-continent of Europe was in darkness where learning was concerned. On European soil, there flourished a great civilisation, a civilisation which had assimilated the best of Eastern as well as the best of Western learning and which was to exercise a profound and lasting influence on modern European Civilisation. That was the Arab Civilisation in Spain which flourished from the eighth century to the fifteenth century. **It was through the Arabs in Spain that Buddhist ideas and ideals influenced European Civilisation.**

When Prophet Mohamed united the numerous warring tribes of Arabs during the early part of the seventh century and inspired them with the ideal of universalism and with a sense of mission, the Arabs were a semi-barbarous people. They loved their horses, more than their books, and the battle ground more than the lecture hall.

Yet within a short period of two centuries the Arabs were translating Greek and Sanskrit classics into Arabic and writing lengthy treatises on abstruse philosophical subjects. By the year 750 they had conquered a vast territory extending from the Pyranees in Spain to the Himalayas in India. They invaded Spain in 711 A.C. and remained there for nearly 780 years and there they built a splendid civilisation which later influenced the European civilisation profoundly. H. G. Wells says in his Short History of the World:

"Learning sprang up everywhere in the footsteps of the Arab conquerors. By the eighth century there was an educational organisation throughout the "Arabised" world. In the ninth learned men in the schools of Cordova in Spain were corresponding with the learned men in Cairo, Bagdad, Bokhara and Samarkand."

After enumerating the contribution the Arabs made towards European civilisation, "The Historian's History of the World" says:-

"It was thus that the influence exercised by the Arabs manifested itself in every branch of modern civilisation. From the ninth to the fifteenth century the most voluminous literature extant was formed, productions were multiplied; valuable inventions attested the wonderful activity of men's mind at this epoch; and their influence, felt throughout Christian Europe, justified the opinion that the Arabs have led us in all things. On the one hand we find inestimable material for a history of the Middle Ages-narratives of voyages, the happy idea of the biographical dictionary; on the other, unequalled industry, buildings grandiose in thought and execution, important discoveries in the arts. Does not all this reveal the work of a people too long disclaimed?"

The author goes on to say 'The nations of Europe' says Baily in one of his letters to Voltaire, 'after having grown old in barbarism, were only enlightened by the invasion of Moors and the arrival of the Greeks.' We venture to add-far more by the invasion of the Moors or of those to whom Baily gives the name, than by the arrival of Greeks of the Lower Empire. And, indeed, one of the distinctive and prominent characteristics of the influence which the Arabs exercised on all branches of modern civilisation, is precisely that of having restored to Europe a knowledge of the ancient Greek authors whose language, works and even names, were completely forgotten.

"If we trace the whole history of human knowledge and recall the fact that Greece survived Rome in Alexandria, we may well assign the Arabs the position of guardians of that sacred depot between Greece and the Renaissance 'They merit' says M. Libri 'eternal gratitude for having been the preservers of learning of the Greeks and Hindus when these people were no longer producing anything and Eruope was still too ignorant to undertake the charge of the precious deposit. Efface the Arabs from history and the Renaissance of Letters will be retarded in Europe by several centuries."

F. Montvcla in his History of Mathematics says that:

> "the Arabs were long the sole depositories of learning, and it is due to their commerce that we owe the first rays of light which came to chase away the darkness of the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries. He adds 'During this period, all who obtained the greatest reputation in Mathematics had had to acquire their knowledge amongst the Arabs' Gerbert who later became Pope under the title Sylvester II and Abelard had their education in Arab schools in Spain." It was Pope Sylvestor II who introduced the decimal system of calculation into Christian Europe.

Speaking about the contribution Arabs made to science, Sir James Jeans says:

"Through this combination of acquisition and influx of knowledge the Arabians became curators of scientific knowledge of the world. They excelled as translators, commentators, and writers of treatises and their aim was not so much to increase knowledge as to sweep all existing knowledge into their Empire. In or about the year 800 the famous Caliph Haroon Al Rashid had the works of Aristotle and of the physicians Hippocrates and Galen translated into Arabic while his immediate successor Al Mamun sent missions to Byzantium and India to find what scientific works were available for translation. Conditions being as they were the Mohammedans did no small service to science in providing a storehouse of knowledge as the Byzantium had done before them and assuring that knowledge which had once been gained should not be irretrievably lost." (The Growth of Physical Science—Page 105).

When the Arabs began their rise in the eighth century the light of ancient Greek and Roman learning had gone out-there were few sparks still flickering in Alexandria. The Arabs themselves had no tradition of learning behind them, or a deposit of knowledge with them. Then from whom did the Arabs acquire the knowledge of Mathematics, Chemistry, Medicine, Astronomy and Philosophy which they imparted at their Universities? And from whom did they get the love of learning and inspiration to spread knowledge among mankind in the grand scale, they did?

BUDDHIST INFLUENCE

The period of Arab ascendancy in Europe coincided with the period of Buddhist ascendancy in India and undoubtedly the most enlightened period in the entire history of that sub-continent was the Buddhist period. When the Chinese traveller Fahien visited India in the 5th century A.C. there was already a net work of monastery schools in India- and education was graded, and it was also universal and free. Some of these monastery schools which merited being called Universities had as many as 5,000 students and enjoyed a reputation as great seats of learning and culture even outside India. Scholars from Persia, Arabia and China came to these Universities to acquire knowledge. Nalanda, Taxila, Pataliputra, Udantapura, Purushapura, Saranath, Ujjaini, Vikrmasila, Vallabhi, Tamralipti, Pushkaravali, Tilosrika, Raktamrita, Karnasuarna and Kanchipura were some of the more famous seats of learning that flourished between the 3rd century B.C. and 11th century A.C. It is most likely that the majority of these monastery schools were started during the reign of Asoka. It must be noted however that Taxila was already famous as a seat of learning during the days of the Buddha.

From Vedic times India had always put a premium on learning and the man of letters was greatly honoured. India also had gathered a precious deposit of learning from the days of Rig Veda which go back to 2,500 years before the Christian Era. But it was during the Buddhist period that there was a diffusion of culture and learning. Learning was confined to the Brahmins and Ksatriyas under the old dispensation.

Professor Radha Kumud Mukarji, one time Professor of Indian History at Lucknow University; speaking about the Buddhist monasteries in ancient India says—

> "These monasteries were in charge of the higher education of the country, which was led up to by a well-developed system of elementary education. The monasteries were like colleges, to which students were admitted on completion of their preliminary education, of which a separate account is given by Hiuen Tsang. A child is first introduced to "Siddhin" (which is from the expression "Siddhirastu" may there be success), or a primer of twelve chapters giving the Sanskrit Alphabet and the combination between vowels and consonants. After his mastery of this book, he was introduced at the age of seven to the great Sastras of the five sciences. *Viz:* Viakarana (Grammar) Silpasthna Vidya (Science of arts and Crafts), Chikista Vidya (Science of Medicine), Hetu Vidya (Logic) and Adhiyatma Vidya (Philosophy) which according to Watters, included the Metaphysical and argumentative treatises of the great doctors of Abhidharma. It is thus clear that the elements of both secular and religious knowledge of philosophical and practical subjects, entered into

the elementary course of education meant for the sons of Buddhist parents, so that it provided the necessary basis of a good general culture upon which specialisation could be successfully attempted in the monasteries." "The Buddhist qualifications for the religious teacher or leader" Professor Mukharji goes on to say "demanded a knowledge of the practical arts and crafts necessary in serving humanity, such as a knowledge of Medicine. We read for instance, about "Gunabhadra, that he had learnt in his youth the *Sastras* of those five sciences together with Astronomy, Arithmetic, Medicine and Exorcism. (The Cultural Heritage of India).

"Regarding higher education as imparted by the Monastery Universities, the best details are given by Hiuen Tsang in connection with the Nalanda University. It would appear that instructions were given not only in religious and philosophical subjects, but also in secular subjects. Ayurveda (Medicine,) Salya (Surgery), Rasayana Vidya (Chemistry), Chandas (Poetry), Ganitha (Mathematics), Minitha (Surveying), Sulba (Geometry), Bhiga Ganitha (Algebra), Viyankarna (Grammar), Dharsana (Philosophy) and Arta Sastra (Economics and Civics), were some of the subjects taught at these Universities. Mention is made of 64 subjects. These institutions were neither limited to monks nor to the Buddhists. Lay students called "Manavas" were admitted both from among the Buddhists and non-Buddhists. "The Buddhist monasteries of the time were thus seats of both sacred and secular learning resorted to by **the Buddhists as well as non-Buddhists.** The Buddhist monks, who came practically to have the monopoly in this learning and culture did not limit their sympathies and valued services within the confines of their own church and faith. They recognized in a noble spirit of toleration that the country was above creed, and culture above Church." (Ibid).

Speaking about the Nalanda University the well known Jesuit Scholar Rev. Fr. J. N. Sequiera says:-

"What is of most interest to the student of Indian education in the history of Nalanda is its resemblance to a university in the medieval European sense of the word. From a Sangharama (monastic school) founded by Sakraditya (Kumaragupta I) where Buddhist bhikkus congregated, it gradually grew through the fame of its philosopher-teachers to attract even non - Buddhists(brahmacharins)not only from northern India but even from the south and from Ceylon and China. It was thus a universitas personarum, since it contained teachers and pupils from different parts at least of the East who lived a common residential life in its spacious buildings. Hiuen-Tsing and I-Tsing say that when they visited Nalanda it had about 4,000 students in residence. Other universities, like Vikaramasila, Udantapuri, Jagaddala and Taksshasila, were smaller but had a similar personnel.

"The studies, too, were fairly comprehensive, though a complete universitas rerum was not realized either in Europe or in India during the Middle Ages. Nalanda, like Paris and Oxford, specialized in religion and philosophy, though there is evidence that logic, grammar, and mathematics were also taught there and that its students took part in debating, chariot-racing, boxing, wrestling, archery, acting (mimicking other people's acts) and dancing. The standard of studies must have been fairly high, for the Entrance Examination (conducted by Professors who kept the gate) was so stiff that eight out of every ten 'external' candidates failed in it." **(Education in Ancient India).**

It was to these seats of learning that students from Arabia came-and it was also from these seats of learning that eminent scholars went to teach in the Arab Schools.

Professor Sachau who translated the work of Alberuni, the great Muslim scholar who came to India and stayed there from 1017 to 1030 A.D. says:-

"What India has contributed reached Bagdad by two different roads-another influx of Hindu learning took place under Harun (A.D. 786-808). Induced probably by family tradition, they sent scholars to India, there to study medicine and pharmacology. Besides, they engaged, Hindu scholars to come to Bagdad made them the Chief Physicians of their hospitals and ordered them to translate from Sanskrit into Arabic, books on medicine pharmacology, texicology, philosophy, astrology and other subjects. Still in later centuries Muslim scholars sometimes travelled for the same purpose."

I think I have shown with sufficient evidence and by quoting eminent authorities the connection between the Arabs and the Indians during the Buddhist period. I shall now try to indicate some specific ideas and ideals that reached Europe through the efforts of the Indian Buddhists and Arabian Muslims.

UNIVERSITIES

Perhaps the most important and indeed the most precious Buddhist ideal that reached Europe is the University ideal. As I mentioned earlier, there was a net work of schools during the Greeco-Roman period in Europe but they had perished long before the rise of the Arabs. It was from Buddhist India that the Arabs got the idea of residential Universities, and also the ideals pertaining to the conduct of these seats of higher learning. The first Universities to be established in Christian Europe were those of Salerno and Montfelior in the 11th and 12th centuries respectively and both these were inspired by the great seats of learning in the Arab world. Bolongna, Paris, Cambridge and Oxford came into existence later in the 13th century. The Arabs had established a network of Universities from Basra to Cordova long before the first University in Christendom came into existence.

MEDICINE

By the time of the Buddha appeared, India had developed the science of medicine and surgery greatly. In the Buddhist scriptures we hear of how Jeevaka the Buddha's personal physician excelled both as a surgeon and a physician. But as Professor N. R. Dhar observes it was during the Buddhist period that medicine and surgery took great strides. "The religion of the Buddha" says Professor Dhar, "insists on the alleviation of suffering as an important item of Buddhist faith, and hence hospitals for the treatment of men and beasts alike were built in almost all the monastery universities of Buddhist India. Inscriptions engraved on rocks, pillars etc., describe prescriptions for the treatment of diseases. The Buddhists were the first to establish Hospitals not only for men but also for animals."

Susruta an Ayurvedic Text book which deals primarily with surgery says that it is imperative that students of the science must learn to cut up dead bodies and study them in detail if they want to master the science of surgery. From this we can see how far medical science had developed in ancient India.

W. E. Clerke says in "**The Legacy of India**" according to the **Fibrist** Charaka and Susruta were translated into Arabic about A.D. 800 and about sixteen other Indian works on Medicine were known to the Arabs in translations. Both Charaka and Susruta are frequently referred to by Rhazes, Avicenna and other later Arabic physicians. Arabic medicine was the chief authority and the guiding principle of European physicians down to the seventeenth century."

Charaka, like Susruta is an ancient Ayurvedic Text.

CHEMISTRY

A science allied to medicine in ancient time was chemistry or "Rasayana Vidya" and this science was greatly developed in the Buddhist Universities of India. To quote Professor Dhar again.

"One of the greatest achievements of Hindu medicine is the introduction of metallic preparations especially those of mercury and iron in medicine much earlier than the West. The great Buddhist Scientist Nagarjuna who flourished in the eighth or ninth century A.D. was the first to use the mercury preparations Kajjali (Black sulphicate of mercury) in medicine."

"Alberuni the Muslim scholar who studied in India in the 11th century says 'A famous representative of this Art of alchemy was Nagarjuna a native of the fort Daihek near Somnath. He excelled in it and composed a book which contains the substance of the whole literature on this subject and is very rare. He lived nearly a hundred years before our time." (Cultural Heritage of India)

MATHEMATICS

It is a matter for doubt whether modern science and technology would have become possible, at least whether it would have taken such vast strides if the scientists had to do their calculations with Greek or Roman numerals. It was undoubtedly the use of the so called Arabic numerals that quickened the face of progress of science and technology after the 17th century. The decimal system of numerals was actually the invention of ancient Indians and was in use from Vedic Times (C. 3000 B.C.) Professor Macdonnel says in his "History of Sanskrit Literature" "In science too, the debt of Europe to India has been considerable. There is, in the first place, the great fact that the Indians invented numerical figures, used all over the world. The influence which the decimal system or reckoning dependent on these figures, has had not only on Mathematics, but also on the progress of civilization in general, can hardly be overestimated. During the eighth and ninth centuries the Indians became the leaders in Arithmetic, and Algebra of the Arabs and through them the nation of the West. Thus, though we call the earlier science by an Arabic name, it is a gift we owe to India."

It was during the eighth and ninth centuries that the Buddhist Universities flourished in India and it was from these Universities and from the teachers trained at these Universities that the Arabs learned their mathematics. Thus we see that although the influence of Buddhist ideas and ideals on medieval Europe had been indirect, it had however been most profound and far-reaching.

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Members elected on 6. 9. 58

W. H. S. Samarasekere,
151/2, Cotta Road,
Colombo 8.

Members elected on 29. 9. 58

P. P. P. Jinadasa,
45, Horton Place,
Colombo 7.

D. N. K. Jayawardene,
58, Udahamulla,
Panadura.

K. S. S. Wimalasekere.
11, Elibank Road,
Colombo 5.

Members elected on 27. 10. 58

B. A. D. Gunasinghe,
Panapitiya,
Ampagala,
Ruwanwella,

Members elected on 12. 11. 58

W. D. Fernando,
Printing Department,
Town Hall, Colombo 7.

Members elected on 24. 11. 58

Upali Salgado,
29, Deal Place A,
Colombo 3.

Members elected on 8. 12. 58

B. Dharmasena,
'Senaka'
Mirihana Road, Nugegoda.

D. V. S. Dissanayake
911, Etul Kotte,
Kotte.

Members elected on 22. 12. 58

Nalin Seneviratne
464, Timbirigasyaya Road,
Colombo 5.

D. K. W. Gunawardene,
117/3, Kolonnawa Road.
Wellampitiya.

Donations to Fort Branch Building Fund

	Rs.	Cts.
Mr. B. M. T. J. Wijesiri ..	32	00
Mr. L. S. Lekamwasam .	15	00
Messrs Wijesiri Stores, Hingurakgoda	12	40
,, ,, ,, ,, ..	22	01
Messrs Wijesiri Stores. Pettah ..	3	33
,, ,, ,, ,, ..	4	75
Mr. J. P. Fernando	10	00
Mr. J. P. Fernando ..	20	00
Mr. M. C. S. Perera (from Officers of W. & O. Trust Office)	70	00
Department of Cultural Affairs ..	51,000	00
Ceylon Cold Stores Ltd. ..	250	00
Mr. S. B. Attanayake ..	15	00
Mr. W. A. Wijewardene ..	900	00
P. W. D. Buddhist Association ..	250	00
Mr. H. Leo Perera	15	00
Messrs Wijesiri Stores, Hingurakgoda	88	75
Free Lanka Insurande Co, Ltd. ..	135	62
Anonymous ..	25	00
Dr. G. P. Malalasekera ..	100	00
Mr. D. A. Ranasinghe ..	100	00
Mr. F. Ratnasara ..	25	00
Mr. Punchi Singho ..	1	00
Mr. N. R. Perera ..	15	00
Mr. M. D. W. Jayawardene ..	100	00
Mr. G. W. D. de Silva ..	10	00
Messrs Forbes & Walker Ltd. ..	200	00
Messrs Wijesiri Stores, Hingnrakgoda	6	35

OBITUARY

Dr. W. E. A. Fonseka

There passed away from our midst recently a Buddhist worker of a rare type. We refer to the death of Dr. W. E. A. Fonseka which occurred on the 28th September, 1958. Dr. Fonseka was the ideal Buddhist worker. For over a quarter century, he identified himself very closely with many religious, social, educational and humanitarian activities. At the time of the death, he was the Acting President of the All Ceylon Buddhist Congress. He was a sincere and genuine worker who cared not for honour or fame, but the causes he served. Above all, he was an exemplary Buddhist who inspired others by his geniality, serene personality and sincerity of purpose no less than by his humour and simplicity. His untimely death is an irreparable loss to the Buddhists of this country.

May he attain Nibbana.