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**CEYLON'S PLACE  
IN  
ASIAN CULTURE.**

*1925*

BY

**S. T. BHARATHA NESAN.**

WITH A PREFACE

BY

**C. F. ANDREWS, M. A.**



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**Ceylon's place in Asian Culture.**



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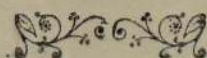
C. F. ANDREWS, M. A.

Bharatha Akam,

vaddukkoddai,

1925.

JAFFNA



By the same author

How's that Umpire? with an introduction by

**Prof. V. Rajagopal M. A.**

Gandhian Rambles in the Realm of the New Test-  
ament with an introduction by

**Rev. J. H. Holmes**



## Preface.

My young friend, who wishes to publish the essays contained in this small book, has asked me to write a few lines by way of preface. I am afraid that my very limited leisure makes it impossible for me to do so with any care or thoroughness, yet the subject which he has chosen interests me so deeply and my heart is so set upon the cultural reunion of India and Ceylon that I do not like to refuse him altogether. It must be understood that the views that he expresses are his own and that while I am in general sympathy with his main position there are points in detail where I might possibly disagree. I would also add that the book is the work of a beginner and must be judged accordingly.

C. F. ANDREWS.

Santinektean.



# Introduction.

BY

**T. Muttucumaru B. A. Hons (Lond)**

The present age is with the young all over the world and Jaffna is no exception to the rule. That young Jaffna is not behind the time is amply borne by the Ceylon Student Movement that had its beginning in the North. The creed of the Student Congress is the revival of National Literature Art and History. This creed manifests strongly and unmistakably the spirit of the times. Young men are taking up seriously the study of Literature and History of their motherland.

In which direction the wind is blowing can be clearly seen from the nature of the subjects discussed in the literary societies of our schools the contributions made by students to college periodicals and in the noble and promising attempt at original literary productions made by the more enthusiastic and talented young men fully acquainted with thoughts of the noblest masterminds of the modern world.

One of the pioneers in this field of activities is the author of "How's that Umpire?" and "Gandhi—" an Rambles in the Realm of the New Testament one who in his humble way is trying to realise the cultural unity of Mother Lanka with Bharatha Matha—and that he does so appears from the name he has taken to himself ever since he began authorship.

The present contribution of his to national literature though in a foreign language is I hope the forerunner to other forthcoming books written in our sweet tongue and interpreting the great ideals of our historic race to the world at large. That Ceylon has a place of no mean order in Asian culture cannot of course be adequately treated in a small booklet like the present one. But the writer tells me that this booklet is written with the purpose of inviting other thinkers and writers to do the work of bringing out in an extensive scale all the factors that give Ceylon a highly honourable position in the ancient East. Now that the author has set the stone rolling he expects with hope that others also would come in.

Before freedom had her birth among the hills of Greece Ceylon of old had attained a very high standard of political freedom. A study of the political and social history of Ceylon throws a flood of light in grasping how the democratic institutions which are the proud boast of Modern Occident had been in vogue in several ancient countries of the Orient

In writing an account of the Democracies of the East a writer would find sufficient basic materials in Tamilic India and Ceylon and hence arises the imperative necessity for the more careful study of and research in Tamil, Pali and Elu literatures than what hitherto done.

An introduction need not enter into a detailed discussion of the subject as it is anticipated

that this book would be so thought provoking as to encourage the author himself and other lovers of Lanka to make an assiduous study of Ceylon's Art, Literature and History and to prepare themselves for such work that is needed of them to make their country play her role in the comity of nations of a united world that is to be.

One think remains sure that an era of hope and action has already dawned. The students Congress and the literary attempts like those of Bharatha Nesan herald the brighter day in national life. May young Ceylon march ever onward.

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### Author's Note.

"Go little book, God send thee passage, good and specially let this be thy prayer, unto them that will read or hear, Where thou art wrong, after thee to call, Thee to correct in any part or all"

It is with these lines of the Poet that I launch this little attempt of mine to the public. Being a school boy's cargo it may not be worthy of recognition by the outside public yet the author though conscious of the many wantings and imperfections is not at a loss to understand some of the very little benefits that could arise at least to his fellow school mates in whom the author perceives the symptoms and throbbings of a national awakening that could result in a creative national reconstruction on lines of Indian thought and

genius. What Ceylon greatly needs today is not reserved seats or gallant knights but leaders who practice what they preach based on ideals which have arisen from the subsoil of Indian culture, those that have been developed from a study of Asian spiritual values of life moulded on the bed-rock of national character. That spirit must manifest which could be productive from the inspiration arising from the awakening of national consciousness through a study of the Motherland. The author need not harp at length on the study of the Motherland which subject forms a considerable portion in the text. That which the author expects as a token of gratitude for his humble attempt is a conviction in young Ceylonese minds of their innate strength to say—"I love my Motherland's ideals and would brook no insult to her for I am an Indian"

In this little attempt the author has consulted all available books within his reach besides the very valuable suggestions of his teachers and his dear collegemates to whom he owes a deep debt of gratitude for their patient hearing and unprejudiced criticisms and suggestions by way of encouragement. The author publicly expresses his deep thanks to Mr. C. F. Andrews for his words of benediction and one or two dear friends of his for the great interest and help rendered by him to the author in the publication.

Gandhi Day, April

Jaffna College.

S. T. BHARATHA NESAN.

## The Oneness of Asia.

“Asia is One because Asia has borne witness to the spirit - consciousness through the ages. The culture problem has been approached in the East from diverse standpoints - intellectual, aesthetic, ethical, religious; it has engaged the attention of thinkers and poets and prophets in India, in Persia in China, in Japan, in Arabia in Afghanistan. The problem has been interpreted in diverse tongues and diverse ways, but, there is I believe an underlying unity. It is indicated in a text of the Upanishad,—“The Eternal is one. He hath no caste”. Asian culture is one continuous effort through the ages to interrupt in art and poetry and philosophy and worship of this consciousness of the one Eternal Self in all. Not without significance is the fact that all the world religions have been born in Asia. Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Islam, are Asia in their inspiration and Christianity is a gift of the East to the West”.

(“Secret of Asia” - Prof. - T. L. VASWANI.)

“Asia is one. The Himalayas divide only to attenuate two mighty civilisations, the Chinese with its communism of Confucius and the Indian with its individualism of the Vedas. But not even the snowy barriers can interrupt for one moment the broad expanse of love for the Infinite and Universal, which is the common thought inherit-

ance of every Asiatic race, enabling them to produce all the great religions of the world, and distinguishing them from the maritime peoples of the Mediterranean and the Baltic, who love to dwell on the particular, to search out the means not the end of life".

(Count Kakuzo Okakuru, "Ideals of the East")

## Our Flower Offerings to Mother India.

Hail to thee, Mother! "Worship the Mother" is our Ideal. Each morning and evening our first act is to lay our flower offerings at thy feet. There is something wonderful and mystic in our offering these bundles of beautiful flowers at thy lotus feet. When we lay the beautiful white rose we promise thee that we will lead a life of self-sacrificing purity in thought, word and deed and dedicate our lives for thy service. Our service for thee is nothing but the manifestation of our love for thee. As soon as we deck thy beautiful feet with the red lotus, we tell thee that we are prepared to lay down our lives and shed our blood for thy cause for we are bound to thee by the ideal of self-sacrifice. By the offering of the little violet flower and the evergreen leaves we signify that we would be humble even as this little blue flower that droops under its leaf and that we would be as constant in our actions as the ever-green. Mother, our flower-offerings to thee serve not only to adorn thee but they are a blessing from thee and an initiation into the high-

est call of Duty and Obedience. Truthful and sincere would we be to thee as the yellow golden flower—the emblem of Truth which alone satisfies the whetstone of Service. By worshipping thee both morning and evening we learn lessons of Courage and Boldness for if we have not the moral courage to worship thee, how on earth could we worship the feet of Him who is enthroned in the hearts of all mankind! Flower Offerings to thee are our Love—Offerings. All Hail to thee! Worship the Mother. **Bande Matharam.**



## India and Ceylon—the Links that bind.

### Arguments,

1. Cultural Unity—the oneness of the spiritual evolution of India and Ceylon in all national aspects.
2. Geographical unity.
3. The Ramayana connection—Rama Raj and Sita Devi.
4. Queen Mandodhari—one of the panchakanyas, adored by Indians and Ceylonese alike.
5. Yalpanam—the land of the lyre poet—the consciousness of the unity with India.
6. Ceylon's world Contribution of Buddhism.
7. The ties of Buddhism with India.
8. Indian Buddhist Teachers in Ceylon.
9. The coming of Vijaya.
10. Linguistic ties—Sanskrit—Pali
11. The Pandavas in Ceylon.
12. A Ceylonese Opinion—Dr Ananda K. Coomaraswamy.
13. An Indian Opinion—Hon. H. B. Sarda.
14. Ceylon the centre of Asian commerce—her influence on Indian trade.

15. Ceylon's economic dependence on India.
16. India's influence in other phases of Ceylonese life.
17. A Vision of the daughter's relationship with Bharathavarsha.
18. The influence of places of pilgirimage and prayers resulting in a living unity with India and Ceylon.
19. Ceylon the home of Buddhist Art.
20. The Swaraj Ideal.
21. The Study of the Motherland.
22. The 'Samadarsana' of India and Ceylon.

# Ceylon and India — the Mother

## The links that bind.

### I

India is a great land. Sweet and musical is it when we Ceylonese think and hear of this beautiful land of ours, this 'punyabhoomi, of seers and sages of yore. There is something in our very life blood that tells us that we Children of Lanka, the resplendant Isle are Indians-sons and daughters of Mother India. We have a divine faith as it were in Indian humanity and are one with her in her Cosmic Life.

What then is the great link that binds us to this lovely Motherland. Cultural unity is the great link that unites us. We are bound by the common ties of a great culture and religion, art and philosophy. All our progress in national and social life rests solely on that of India. As the poet Rabindranath Tagore, the great Apostle of the Vishivabharathi Ideal rightly emphasized, "Ceylon if she would do herself justice must acknowledge that her intellectual and spiritual history runs in one stream with the cultural history of India." India and Ceylon is one in spirit. The links that bind the two are eternally indestructible. Ceylon has from times immemorial worshipped the spiritual vision of its oneness with India and today Ceylon could discover

her soul though Indian Nationalism and not though reserved seats or memorials to Downing Street. She must play her part in the great Asian Renaissance. The edifice of nation-hood which we desire to build must be influenced by Indian thought, Indian life and Indian ideals. These alone must occupy the foremost place in our national evolution. Ceylon in the past was not cut off with the larger life of India, she was in fact India's flower offering to humanity whose honey and 'spicy breezes' were relished by the nations, both East and West. It may be said what Europe has been to England, India has been to Ceylon though not in the same relations as between the former but in a more religious and higher moral aspect. True Ceylonese expansion could arise only through the spiritual nursing of India. Lanka can rise only through the strength of her innate Indian genius and she can be great in the eyes of the world only when she towers high through her spiritual culture. India's vision of the beautiful - the Eternal must permeate in every phase of Ceylon's national existence for the secret of our national vitality has been the spiritual message from India in art history, poetry and other aspects of national life. A common Indian consciousness has been the result of the seeds sown through a creative and everlasting cultural fellowship with India by Ceylon and as the Poet puts it, political division is merely a division of property through

which we can change our residence but not our brotherhood, and as Dr. Cousins emphasizes it is a "non Asian idea which regards differences in political organisation as the expression of fundamental differences".

## II

When one looks at the map of India the geographical unity is quite evident and unquestionable. The small sheet of water does not in any way make one forget India as the motherland of the Ceylonese. Geologists are of opinion that Ceylon was a part of India joined to the mainland. Even today a part of this land known as Adam's Bridge—a ridge of rocks and accumulated sand banks in parallel form—remains as witness. It is believed that Ceylon was torn away from the motherland by a convulsion. Recent archaeological researches show that in the earliest stages of the life of civilized man Ceylon, South India and some islands of the Malayan Archipelago were one vast continent called Lemuria the home of a very highly advanced race of people. The water here is very shallow and quite fordable. The distance between Dhanaskhodi and Talaimannar is about twenty two miles and today India and Ceylon is linked more closely through the railway between Rameshwaram and Talaimannar. Thus in no way can the child be separated from the mother which separation might stem the tide of the great impulse from the Himalayas to Dondra Head in

the minds of Ceylonese considering themselves as part and parcel of India. Undisputable them is the geographical unity of India and Ceylon. As Sarojini Devi said though there is an expanse of sea between, there is Rama's bridge that does unite them.

### III

Vast indissoluble facts in religion and literature knit both the countries, into one fundamental and historical unity that had been arrived through a common spiritual evolution. Ceylon was

“Rich in blossoms, many tinted, grateful  
to the ravished eye

Gay and green and glorious Lanka  
was like the garden of the sky

Rich in fruit and laden creeps and in beautiful  
bush and tree

Flower bespangled golden Lanka was  
like a gem bespangled sea”

In the great Indian epic the Ramayana is the great symbol of our unity with India. No Indian can come to Ceylon without having thought of Rama and Sita both of whom are enshrined in the hearts of Ceylonese as well. The Ramayana in reality is the poetry of Indo - Ceylon unity. Through the purity of Queen Sita and the spot-

less character of Rama Rajwe are not at a loss to understand and appreciate our oneness with the ideals that constitute Indian character. Rama's bridge reminds every one of the arrival of Rama in Ceylon to avenge the abduction of Sita by Ravana. According to the prophecy, "As long as the sea shall remain so long shall the pier Rama Sethu endure and the fame of Rama be proclaimed," Rama's bridge the "Adam's bridge of English maps" was constructed by Hanuman and his fellow monkeys who crossed the ocean's boundless waters in duty brave and lighted on the emerald isle girdled by the sapphire wave" for Rama's army to cross over. Certain place names in Ceylon remind us of the Ramayana connection. One cannot forget Sita when he visits Sita - talawa (Sita's plain) Sita-kunt (Sita's pond) Sitaela (Sita's stream) and Sita-waka -- her abode during her captivity. Ravana enamoured by Sita's beauty carries her off to Ceylon in the absence of Rama and Lakshmana and keeps her as a captive in Asokavana. Rama of Ayodhya now an exile collects a huge army from South India defeats Ravana and burns the city of Lankapura. Sita then proves her purity through the great fire ordeal and both of them return in triumph back to India. Thus the story of the Ramayana serves to bind culturally India and Ceylon.

## IV

Among the 'panchakanyas' on whom Indians meditate for their purity and spotless character one is from Ceylon and this was Queen Mandodhari, the wife of Ravana and the beautiful daughter of King Maya of Burma. She together with the other great women Gargi, Draupadai, Sakuntala and Rukvani further cement the common ideals of Indian character and further the cause of the awakening of Indian womanhood both in India and Ceylon. In the sameway as Sanghamitta — the beloved daughter of the Emperor Dharmasoka is enshrined in the hearts of millions of Ceylonese Queen Mandodhan commands the same veneration from Indian men and women of all shades of opinion and religious cults. She has a place as one that serves as a lustre for Indian womanhood.

## V

### Yalpanam Poet

The north of Ceylon (Ilam) the country of the poor blind harp player of Madura—Yalpanam now known as Jaffna — is a living reality showing the racial cultural and spiritual unity of Ceylon with India. The profound literary treasure of the Thamil language and the glory of Tamilian Art and Music is the common



legacy of the Tamils of South India and Jaffna. The great philosophy of Saiva Siddhantha is a common heritage of the Tamils of both the countries. The social institutions of South India and of Ceylon of today are in most respects similar to those of the old Tamil land — and the origin of some of them dates as far back as the second millenium before the birth of Christ. To look to recent history the last king of Kandy was from South India and the Thamil rulers from South India like Elara and Magha, the invasion of South India by Prakrama Bahu, the visit of Gaja Bahu as recorded in the Sillapathikaram and his official patronage of the worship of the goddess Kannaki in Ceylon, and as the legend goes the visit of Saint Mannickavasagar to Ceylon the marriage of Sinhalese kings to Pandyan princess all these blend and knit a common historical evolution and as such the Indian cultural element in Ceylon history can no longer be dismissed from our minds. As Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy who no doubt serves today in the intellectual world as a personal link between India and Ceylon puts it—“Ceylon from the standpoint of ethnology and culture is an intergral part of India”.

Ceylon sought the spiritual message of India in past and today she needs the inspiration from India to satisfy her national aspirations or else she would become a mere Rakshasa land. She needs

her for national perfection and to maintain her own individuality. On the other hand Ceylon has contributed her noblest share to the spiritual cultivation of India and of the world. She has a place in Indian civilisation and in the wider life of Humanity for she has enriched the religious treasure of the world by her having contributed all that was best and highest in her. "India (Mrs Rhys Davids-Creeds and Man-Hindu Annual Supplement 1924.) beyond any other country has reminded the earth by way of Ceylon that all things are 'anitya, transient, that in no bodily vehicle whether of this world or of another world is the living man impermanent of his works. Creeds are his work."

"India beyond any other country has reminded the earth by way of Ceylon that man's nature is becoming a werden, a 'bhava. India beyond any other country has reminded the earth not only by way of Ceylon of the power of man's will."

The supreme gift of Buddhism by India to Ceylon is her richest treasure today and for ever to all seekers of truth. Ceylon received its baptism of Buddhism from the great Indian Teachers Mahinda and Sanghamitta when the Emperor Dharma Asoka sent these two his beloved children to king Devanampiya Tissa saying, "I have taken refuge in the Buddha's teaching and his priesthood, Ruler of men, imbue thy mind with the conviction of the truth of these supreme blessing and

do thou also take refuge in this salvation." When Tissa ascended the throne in the beginning of the third century he sent priceless treasures to the Emperor. After some time Ceylon had the supreme honour to have Mahinda appointed for the conversion of Ceylon into a Buddhist country and latter still the Emperor's daughter Sanghamitta preached the dhamma to the women of Ceylon. At Mihantale (the plain of prince Mahendra) this great teacher met Tissa who came for a hunt and preached the gospel. The Maha Vihara—the great seat of learning and home for great men" was then built at Anuradhapura by Tissa for the Buddhist monks and after some time the Thuparama Dagoba was set up to which the Emperor sent the right collar bone of the Buddha and a bowl of other relics. This was the beginning of Buddhism which finally spread throughout the whole of the island. The Princess Anula, wife of Tissa's brother, was a convert and she together with five hundred ladies wanted to enter the priest-hood but Mahinda said, "We are not allowed to ordain females. In the city of Pataliputta (Patna) there is a priestess. She is my younger sister, renowned under the name of Sanghamitta, and profoundly learned. Write to my royal father that he may send her with the right branch of the Bo-tree of the lord of saints-itself the monarch of all forests. She will ordain these females." The Emperor as it was natural with any father hesitated to send her but she feeling it

duty bound came to Ceylon with the branch of the Bo-tree under which Buddha attained salvation — The tree stands today two thousand years old at the Maha Vihara— “the tree which has attracted, and is, and will be attracting the greatest number of human worshippers—the tree whose very dead leaves are preserved with the deepest veneration.” H. G. Wells in his Out lines of the History of the World speaks thus of this ancient tree — In Ceylon there grows to this day a tree, the oldest historical tree in the world which we know certainly to have been planted as a cutting from the Bo - Tree in the year 245 B. C. From that time to this it has been carefully tendered and watered, its great branches are supported by pillars and the earth has been terraced up about it so that it has been able to put out fresh roots continually. It helps us to realize the shortness of all human history to see many generations spanned by the endurance of one single tree.”

These two noble workers Mahinda and Sanghamitta preached the doctrine and died in Ceylon itself—whose noble efforts in the cause of Buddhism are enshrined in the hearts of all the pious and good. The Emperor Dharma Asoka's Rock Edict XIII gives further proof of the spread of Buddhism in various other countries. Years later another great Brahmin youth of North India

Buddhaghosa—the voice of the Buddha—came to Ceylon in 400 A. D. and was the second founder of Buddhism. At Anuradhapura he translated various Buddhist scriptures, wrote commentaries, and thus has earned the everlasting gratitude of Buddhists. He stands as a great authority in the exposition of the various religious texts. There is documentary proof of the fact that among the great Buddhist Teachers who preached the Dhamma in China three of them visited the island. Ceylon being the home of a large number of Buddhist works besides the innumerable shrines which bear testimony till to-day to the greatness of Buddhist Art was a frequent source of visit by pious pilgrims who either came to offer homage to these shrines or in the work of collecting or translating the Buddhist scriptures. Amoghavajra came with the purpose of collecting scriptures. He was a Brahmin from North India who in 746 A. D. went to China. Nadi after travelling over the whole of India came to Ceylon made a collection of 1500 texts of the Tripataka and went to China in 655 A. D. Gunnavarman was a prince of Kashmir who left his kingdom and preached Buddhism in Ceylon (Simhala) from whence he proceeded to Java which had been a little earlier visited by Fa—Hein. Gunnavarman was a great Buddhist missionary to China and was one of the early pioneers in the cause of Buddhism in Java. These are some of the great Indian Teachers in Ceylon.

## VIII.

Thus the tie of Buddhism between India and Ceylon is a link of Ananda, that cements both the countries. Tradition has it that the island had been sanctified by the holy presence of Gautama Buddha three times (623—543 B.C.), which is elaborately given both in the Dipavansa and Mahavamsa of Mahanama. The first visit he paid was in the ninth month after his attainment, thinking that his doctrine would be firmly established and would "hereafter shine in glory". He drove away the Yakshas and preached the gospel to the Devas. It was during this visit that he at the request of Mahasumana, the prince of devas, gave a handful of his hairs that he plucked from his head and gave it to the prince who placed them in a golden urn and worshipped it. The second visit was in the fifth year of his Buddhahood and he came with the object of preventing an impending war between the two Naga chiefs. After having settled the quarrel he preached his doctrines and returned to India. The final visit of his was in the eighth year of his Buddhahood when he came with his disciples and gave himself to meditation and teaching. Thus in the words of the Mahavamsa, the Master of boundless wisdom visited this fair island three times" and the "isle radiant with the light of truth came to high honour among faithful believers".

The Mahavamsa gives an uninterrupted historical record of the highest authenticity containing events of about twenty four centuries and contains a chronological connected history of Buddhism, which records are absent in Hindu Annals, owing to Brahmin opposition towards Buddhism. Well may the Sinhalese be proud of their descent from North India through Vijaya,—the first ruler of Ceylon—the son of Sinhabahu and of his wife the Thamil princess of South India after Wijaya discarded Kuvemi, the Yakkha princess. Thus we find that the Ceylonese—both the Tamils and Singhalese—as a race come from India. The Singhalese language is derived from Sanskrit—the “language of the gods”, and Ceylon is the home of Pali. For Pali Literature—the expression of Buddhism—India should turn to Ceylon, and Sanskrit, Ceylon should in turn look to India. For India though it has more than 500 spoken dialects, has only one sacred language and only one sacred literature, accepted and revered by all adherents of Hinduism alike however diverse in race, dialect, rank, and creed. That language is Sanskrit and literature is Sanskrit literature. Linguistic bonds between the two are thus obvious.

## X.

It is stated in the Mahabharatha that the Pandavas before the great war went on an expedition to foreign countries and in the course of their

first visit they went to Burma, Siam, Tibet, China, Mongolia and Persia and their second mission was towards the west where they started from Ceylon (Simhala-dwipa) and went to Arabia, Egypt, and other parts of Africa. That Sahadeva made a march to the southern kingdom and secured the allegiance of Ceylon is another opinion.

## XI.

Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy has in the following beautiful passage summed up the whole connection between India and Ceylon. "Take for example Ceylon (whose people are now the most denationalized of any in India), can we think of India as being complete without Ceylon. Ceylon is unique as the home of Pali Literature and Southern Buddhism and in its possession of a continuous chronicle invaluable as a check upon the more uncertain data of Indian chronology. Singhalese Art, the Singhalese religion and structure of Singhalese society bring most vividly before us certain aspects of early Hindu Culture which it would be hard to find so perfectly reflected in any other part of Modern India. The noblest of Indian epics, the love story of Rama and Sita unites Ceylon and India in the mind of every Indian nor is this more so in the south than in the north. In latter times the histories of Northern India and Ceylon were linked on Wijaya's emigration, then by Asoka's missions (contemporaneous with the earliest ripples of the wake of Hindu



influence which passed beyond the Himalayas to impress its ideals on the Mongolian east). and latter still a Singhalese princess became a \*Rajput bride to earn the perpetual love of her adopted people by her fiery death, the death of which every Rajput woman would have preferred dishonour”.

### XIII.

Mr. Har Bilas Sarda in his “Hindu Superiority” summarizes the connection between India and Ceylon—“That a considerable portion of Ancient India was closely connected with that of Ceylon is clear, not only from the remains of Hindu civilisation still everywhere visible in the island but also from the express testimony of the writers on the subject. The island of Ceylon has been celebrated in the historical and fabulous writings of India as being very prosperous and wealthy. “Golden Lanka is a trite phrase in India. The island was politically, socially, and till very recently, even physically—after Ramachandra’s celebrated stone bridge—a part of India. It was inhabited by Hindus, who, so far as nationality, language, religion, and civilisation are concerned belonged to the same stock as their brethren of India. It enjoyed therefore an equally considerable refinement and civilization.”

Thus then multifarious has been the ways in which Indian literature, science, art, philosophy

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\* For a full account see “Sketches of Ceylon History” by Sir P. Arunachalam.

and religion influenced and inspired the idealism of Ceylon in her golden days. Ceylon has been a votary of the same message of Sakyamuni Buddha whose message has penetrated into countries like China, Japan, Korea and Tibet and to-day she is the stronghold of Buddhism. Asia the cradle of world civilisations and the birthplace of religions spoke through the voices of Krishna, Buddha and Christ the same message which to-day Gandhi and Tagore are giving—a message which is in tune with the divine call that Ceylon of Yore had hearkened unto, a Vision of a personality that is Indian simultaneous with the profound reverence for the eternal message of world humanity with all the cosmic flow and cultural expression of Asian thought and genius. To-day then Ceylon has to preserve and worship the personality of Mother India and not be pressed by the steam roller of alien ideals and ideas that are nonsensical to our Dharmashastras and absurd to our own Swadharma and Jati or Race.

#### XIV

Ceylon has played no small part in the commercial development of India. It was Ceylon's prosperity and her "fatal gift of beauty" that served as a bait for the successive domination by Western nations.

Dr. Cousins in his "Cultural Unity of Asia" writes thus:—"Ceylon occupied a specially favourable position in the Asian maritime as the central,

point between East and West. The result to Ceylon of the commerce thus set was a state of prosperity not rivalled, it is said by any continental country. And out of the wealth of the island allied to the spirit of religious devotion and craft enthusiasm arose peerless temples, monasteries, dagobas, and carvings of which the very ruins are tremendous in their intensity of devotion, skill, industry and beauty."

The commercial importance of Ceylon is due to the fact that the island has been the centre of Hindu Commerce, nay of Asian commerce. The variety of names by writers and travellers both of the East and the West bring in most vividly her reputation as a seat of commerce and civilisation. She was the common market of Australia, Java, Arabia, Korea, China and other countries both of the East and the West. With India in particular she had been exporting silks, aloes, cloves obtained from China to Malabar, steel and cloth had been imported from Calliene near Bombay, and also she sent consignments to Sindh. Important voyages such as that of the ships in which King Sinhabahu of Bengal sent Prince Vijaya with seven hundred passengers, and the ship in which Vijaya's Pandyan bride was brought over to Ceylon with eight hundred passengers are of utmost importance when considering the maritime relations of India and Ceylon in the

past. In fact as Professor Herren writes. "The Commercial History of India is dependant on that of Ceylon." In the past Ceylon was of utmost importance to India and in the future India needs Ceylon for national safety. This is made clear in the following passage. "‡ But the reasons for a Federation is as irresistible as overwhelming. A Ceylon leagued to India will be of mutual benefit to both. India, self-governing will man her own army and navy for self-defence, at least with power to make separate commercial treaties in her foreign relations. Ceylon cannot be left to be an indifferent neighbour if not a danger at her gate. Could India ignore the strategic importance of Trincomalie the best natural harbour in the world as a naval base; Ceylon on the other hand being small will not be able to possess a big army or navy, self-sufficient, and independent of outside assistance. Should England any day grant her independence leaving to her the charge of her own defence or should the British be obliged in an unprecedented war to concentrate the entire strength of their army and navy for the protection of their hearth and home, Ceylon standing by herself would be an open prey to ambitious powers. Such a contingency for England is not unlikely. The last war even demonstrated that England had to rely on the loyalty of the Indians and withdrew

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\* Prof: Herren Historical Researches Vol. II. Page 440.

‡ Peria Sunderm. "Federation of Ceylon with India.

the major portion of the army from India to the theatres of war in Europe and Egypt. To Ceylon alliance with a big power for defensive purposes would be a vital necessity. Expediency would dictate at least a policy of defence in concert with India. The possibility of connecting India and Ceylon across the bank of sand from Rameshwaram to Mannar as a commercial enterprise will furnish a strategic line of military communication from Kashmir to Trincomalie." This is the real situation and neither Ceylon nor India can ignore this. Ceylon proved a source of coveted prize for the ambitious schemes of every European nation that aimed at Asiatic conquest. She now no longer sits like a queen on her throne with the sea as her kingdom. Her extensive commerce speaks for itself her advanced civilisation. In Ptolemy's account of Ceylon we find its coasts well furnished with commercial ports. Pliny writes of Taprobane being considered for a long time to be a second world and of its high reputation as a seat of commerce and civilisation. Cosmos writer thus, "From all India, Persia, Ethopia, between which countries it is situated in the middle, an infinite number of vessels arrive at as well as go from Ceylon. From the interior of the continent as for instance from China and other commercial countries it receives silks, aloes, cloves and other productions, which it exports to Malabar where the pepper grows and to Calliene (near Bombay) whence is brought steel and cloth." Thus accord-

ing to Cosmos she was the centre of Hindu commerce for "which purpose indeed its natural situation and commodious havens afforded singular opportunities." She was known to nations both East and West by a variety of names. In the time of the Ptolemies and the time of Alexander she received merchandise from as well as sent it to all parts of the world. Eastern and Western nations made Ceylon the halting place, the Chinese brought wares, Arabian and Persian goods were brought in exchange, and Ceylon was also a source of trading place for the Hebrews. India was conscious of Ceylon's natural wealth participated largely in its development. The Tamils of South India engaged themselves in Pearl Fishery, besides there was also intercourse with Kashmir. The possession of a common religion led to an intercourse between Ceylon and Kashmir originating in the sympathies of Buddhism but perpetuated for the pursuit of commerce. Singhalese engineers were sent for to construct works in Kashmir.

In the main Commerce was linked up with religion. Dr. Cousin's puts it thus:—"In matters Asian, trade does not follow the flag nor does the flag follow trade, commerce and religion go side by side in Asian (especially in India) thought and activity. Religion is the commerce of the Jivatma (individual soul) with the Paratma (God). Commerce is a function of the Divine and therefore essentially religious. And with religion goes

culture not as an appendage but an intergal element."

## XV.

Coming to bare facts and realities in our actual life a large part of the population in the island depend on Indian imports mainly on food-stuffs as rice, the staple food. At least one can tolerate the idea of Ceylonese calling to the four hundred millions of kinsmen across the seas on a "rice-basis." Indian Labour is another connection for the rich planter in the Up country and great captains of industry depend mainly on labour from South India and on the other hand Ceylon affords ample scope for the large surplus of India emigrants. For Ceylon industrial and agricultural development India through labour helps her a great deal. This mutual dependance on each other is of utmost importance and benefit to both the countries. Thus from whatever aspect one surveys the situation to-day whether it be from the cultural or political standpoint Ceylon for the sake of national prosperity and individual stability and permanence must remain an intergal part of India and be a component of the future Free United States of India.

## XVI.

India has considerably had her influence in other phases of Ceylonese life. In some parts of Ceylon the conditions of dress, manners, cus-

tems and social ties are quite identical with that of India.

## XVII.

The medical science as practiced by a majority of the people is Ayurveda. Coming to music, it was the music of the Yalpadi that has earned for the Tamils the beautiful land of Yalpanam. In the system of the universe a prominent importance has been attached to Ceylon the first meridian or the meridian Lanka being supposed to pass over the island.

## XVIII.

The cry of Lanka to India is the daughter's recognition of \* Bharat havarsha as the mighty Motherland of the Ceylonese. It is a reminding to the world that she is not the ordinary circular figure below India which we find in present day atlase's but that she is the Lotus Offering at the feet of Bharatha Matha. A mere dip of the pen in red ink and drawing a circular Ceylon will not in any way help Ceylon and India as being considered as two different nationalities. This Lanka or the shining Land of Gems was to Fa-Hjan, the great Chinese Buddhist pilgrim the land of Jewels, to the Arabs that traded with her she

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\* Bharathavarsha after Bharatha the national hero of India, as Rome got its name from Romulus "India is a name given by foreigners" says Dr Radhakumud Mukerjee in his "Fundamental unity of India" she was known as Jambudwipa.



was 'Serendib' to the Portuguese who once ruled her she was 'Ceilao', to the Siamese the Teva Lanka or the divine Lanka, to the Roman's Taprobane, to the Greeks the land of hyacinth and ruby, to the Hebrews "the ophir and Tarshish." to the English traveller she is the Eden of the Eastern Waves, to some of them she is Liptons Tea Estate and to men like Bishop \* Heber a place "where only man is vile" but to us Ceylonese this island of the lion race abounding in spice and palm she is the PEARL upon the brow of Mother India. Miss Jewsbury sings thus of her,

"Ceylon! Ceylon! 'tis nought to me  
How thou wert known or named of old  
As ophir or Taprobane  
By Hebrew king or Grecian bold  
To me thy spicy wooded vales  
Thy dusky sons and jewels bright.  
But image forth the far famed tales  
But seem a new Arabian night  
And where engirdled figures crave  
Heed to thy bosoms glittering store  
I see Aladdin in his cave  
I follow Sinbad on the shore"

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\* It was left to Sir John Woodroffe in his "Is India civilized" to reply to Mr Archer when he harped on India as barbarous but Ceylonese have left Bishop Heber's lines in silent contempt.

## XVIII.

The influence of places of pilgrimage and prayers have resulted in a living unity with India.

The restoration of Buddha-Gaya—the place where Buddha-attained Samadhi—to the Buddhists would further cement the relations between India and Ceylon, and the consciousness of the teachings of the Buddhist Teachers of India would be aroused in the minds of Ceylonese. The great gurus at whose feet the monks sat to hear the gospel would be recalled to memory.

The restoration of Kataragama to the Hindus would be a natural expectation. In the same way as Buddhists make frequent pilgrimages to Buddagaya, numerous Hindus from both in India and Ceylon flock in large numbers to this shrine which is under the control of the Sinhalese priests or Kapuralas. As stated in the Skanda Purana, there was a great Titan domination in the land and the God of war Skanda or Kartikeya on conquering him married a chief's daughter—to whose honour there is a shrine adored both by the Buddhist and Hindu alike. It was a place of worship of Ceylon's ancient kings like Dutu geminu.

Adam's Peaks may be termed as a place where is realized the religious unity of humanity. Buddhists worship the foot print as that of Gautama Buddha's during his last visit. Hindus claim

it to be Shiva's foot print, Christians are of opinion that it was Adam and Eve's paradise when they were driven away from the garden of Eden. It was this that consoled Arabi Pasha:

Numerous are the other places of pilgrimage which are visited by Ceylonese and Indians as well. Trincomalee and Tiruikeswaram are places that were sung by the south Indian saivaites Saints in their hymns, Rameshuvaram in the island of the same name is one of greatest of shrines. Rama on his return from Ceylon established a shrine of Shiva and is a frequent place of pilgrimage both by Indians and Ceylonese like, Munisvaram, another shrine at Chilaw was a place of worship by Rama when he went to fight Ravana.

Thus the tie is further cemented by the numerous pilgrims to India from Ceylon and from India to Ceylon. The unity of India and Ceylon in the nations thought is expressed through the various places of pilgrimage. The seven sacred places Ayodhya, Mathura, Maya (Hardivar) Kasi (Benares) kanchi (Conyeevaram) Avanti or Ujjani, and Dvaravate or Divarka in Gujerat to which numerous pilgrims flock have served a great deal to promote this unity — it has given a vision of the whole of India and developed the consciousness of a natural oneness. When performing ceremonies this geographical unity is visible through

the various mantras. The Ceylon Buddhist and the Hindu bathing at the Ganges in Benare repeat the same slogam of the seven great rivers of India—the river hymn of the Rig Veda.

O Ye Ganga. Yaumana, Sarasvathi, Satadru (Sutlej) Parusni (Ravi) receive ye my prayers O ye Marthubidra joined by Askini (Cheenab) Vitasta (gheelum) and Aryikiy a joined by the Susoma (Indus) hear ye my prayers."

There is another river hymn, "O ye Ganga, Jaumna, Godavari, Sarasvati, Narmada, and Cauvery, come ye and enter into this water of my offering." Of the seven Ganges—the Sapta Ganga,—the Mahaweli Ganga of Ceylon is one of them. Beside these river hymns, there are hymns in India as the land of seven mountains. Thus a unifying influence and the worship of Nature is brought about. To Buddhists the worship of relics takes the place of pilgrimages. Forests of flowers are daily laid upon his stainless shrines and count less millions of lips daily repeat the formula "I take refuge in the Buddha" the Ajanta viharas. The Gandhara monasteries in India and the far famed Buddhist cities of Anuradhaphura, Kandy and Poolnoorawa in Ceylon bring in the greatness of Buddhist Art.

## XIX.

Art is the test of a Nation's culture. Buddhist Art the glory of which could be traced in many of

the ruined cities of Ceylon is a distinct contribution to Indian art. Ceylon was the home of large cities, monasteries, tanks, ponds whose remnants are visible even today Sinhalese, art, Sculpture and painting bring in most vividly the spiritual strength majesty of Ceylon's genius. The Dambulla Vihara, Abhyagiri Dagoba, Runaveli Maha Vihara, the Buddhas Tooth Palace at Kandy all these are great monuments of Buddhist Art. Buddhist Art in Ceylon was greatly influenced by India for as E. B. Havell writing on the influence of Indian Art says that India from the seaports of her eastern and western coasts sent streams of colonists, all over South Asia, Siam, Cambodia and Ceylon and Vincent Smith speaks of the Jetwanarama Dagoba in Ceylon as one of the highest of monuments. Thus the mutual influences of both the countries with respect to Art.

## XX.

But besides the bonds of race, language, tradition, history, art and religion there is another great link - the Ideal of Swaraj

To believers in Pax Britannicca, one thing that unites both the Indian and the Ceylonese is that they are under the same Emperor and are enjoying rights of citizenship. But to strivers after the ideal of SwaRaj in accordance to the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi, men who have got the same aspirations of Self Government and who are subject to the same advantages and disadvantages India means

SwaRaj, to learn to be free. Our sympathy lies in our mutual struggle for SwaRaj. Our common problem of stemming western materialism has made India and Ceylon one and linked us for ever. Our connection is more firm for nations which have the same ideals are inseparable. It is left for the future politicians of India and Ceylon to decide whether Ceylon is to be federated with India and be a member of the future United states of India. People may say. Oh, Ceylon cannot be filled by 400 millions of Indians across the seas, we cannot be subjected to numbers repressive laws and press legislations, we are financially better and we will exempt ourselves from the huge Indian military contribution for Imperial defence, but this much is certain Ceylon will not in any way lose her individuality but would enjoy provincial autonomy and Government. People there are who would prefer Downing street to Delhi, but if Ceylon is to assert her own national will, she must enter the Temple of Swaraj with its mother hand in hand, with one heart, with one soul and with one key to open the gates of Freedom. For thus will it be written, In the battle of India's freedom, her noble daughter Lanka stood side by side with its mother and won the battles of Swaraj. United in culture, religion and art we stand, divided we fall, Then only will India say with tears in her eyes, "Lanka, naughty child where have you been. Come to me, my darling, receive this sweet kiss from me By such a Federation Ceylon could be a "daughter

in her mother's house and be a mistress in her own." It is a matter of recent history during the rule of the East India Company, Ceylon was included in the Madras Presidency. Ceylon cannot remain with folded hands see India fighting alone for self-Government. Ceylon is young, her path is thorny and India her mother must lead her.

In such a federation it is not likely that if Ceylon is to be handed to the Indian Government as an Indian "mandate" —as they say—she would be a source of Indian exploitation and more or less would adopt the imperialistic policy of bellicose nations. India would never be so traitorous to the ideals for which she fought and moreover she has never been an imperialistic power and hopes never to be such with all her spiritual idealism,

## XXI.

When discussing the relationship between Ceylon and India as they stand today one should note that the study of the Motherland — a study of her economic, social, religious and political problems that confront India and Ceylon today finds no place in the curriculum of studies in our Colleges in Ceylon. All 'logies', 'ographies' and sciences are taught to us except India — Indian History, Philosophy Literature. Every Indian who prides himself in having being born and bred in India and Ceylon — a land that was sanctified in ages past by sages as Gautama Buddha, Chaitaniya, and today by great souls

as Tagore, Aurobindo, and Mahatmaji, ought to put the question, "Am I an Indian." Do I express her in my conduct, manners and dress, aspirations and social life and if he finds himself true to his Motherland's Culture and Ideals, then alone is he worthy to be called an Indian, then only could he say "I belong to India" just as the Romans of old said, 'Romanus Cwis sum.' The root cause for this tendency is the system of education. We schoolboys know what is being taught in our colleges. Of the results of the Education Dr Ananda K. Coomaraswamy's famous lines which should be carefully borne in mind by all interested in Education. Here are his pathetic lines—  
"The most crushing indictment of this education is the fact that it destroys in the great majority upon those whom it is inflicted all capacity for the appreciation of Indian Culture. Speak to the ordinary graduate of an Indian University or a student from Ceylon of the ideals of the Mahabharatha—he will hasten to display his knowledge of Skakespeare. Talk to him of Indian philosophy—you find that he is an atheist of the crude type common in Europe a generation ago, and that not only has no religion but he is lacking in philosophy as the average English man, talk to him of Indian music he will produce a gramophone or harmonium and inflict upon you one or both, talk to him of Indian dress or jewellery—he will tell you that they are uncivilized and barbaric talk to him of Indian art. it is news to him that such a



thing exists, ask him to translate for you a letter in his own mother-tongue he does not know it. He is a stranger in his own land." Thus our national reconstruction lies in education. The whole problem in Ceylon is the supreme necessity of national education imparted through the vernacular as medium of instruction. This does not mean that we should in any way ignore the importance of the knowledge which the West has to give us. If we are ever to develop ourselves as a nation and be no longer "dumb driven cattle" then our emphasis must be on the study of our Motherland -India and Ceylon. Such a study alone would give us moral and spiritual idealism for the creation of an Indian Renaissance. A study of the Motherland results in National Self Expression. Our whole strength is due to Indian cultural inheritance. We must be Indians first, we do not want universal brotherhood that is in the lips of many of us at the sacrifice of our inmate national genius, for we would be charged of having sold our Motherland for a mess of pottage. To our utter shame we have betrayed our Mother's interests and have surrendered ourselves, our Indian ideals, nay our very souls to the tendencies that have contracted through a soulless system of education. It was this that made the Poet write," it struck my heart with dismay when I visited Ceylon to find that the people there have lost the consciousness of their unity with their Indian kinsmen. Not having in their mind a continental background for their culture and aspir-

ations they have permitted their intellectual and spiritual individuality to miss its shelter and drift in to the vagabondage of imitation”.

For us to be true to the trust imposed on us our educationists must give us an education which has at its basis the roots of the religion of service based on Indian Ideals. How could we worship the Mother in our schools in whose time-tables there is no impetus given to the study of our history, art, religion, and literature. Every day we experience the pulsations of a new life, the outcome of the in-born love of ones own, yet it is a worshipping of our own ideals that could help us to shake of the shackles of the worship of the brute in man, break the bonds of cultural slavery and uproot the slave mentality that holds sway over our very being. The first step then is to think India, study India, Express India. Our national self-expression lies in translating these ideals fruitful into deeds.

## XXII.

Above all these links there the cultural unity of India and Ceylon is based on spiritual basis. To quote the great French Indologist Professor Sylian Levi, “no one can dispute the existence of an Indian civilisation characterized by the predominance of one ideal, of one doctrine, of one language, of one social class. From the Himalayas to Ceylon cultured minds and simple souls alike believe in the same transcendent law

— the Dharma, bound with the eternal transmigration — Samsara, and the inevitable acts from existence to existence Karma”. Ceylon could only live for the good of Humanity if only her faith, aspirations and dharma of her genius are based on the religious aspect of Indian Nationalism. Our national Transformation must come in the silence and meditations of Indian Wisdom for India has manifested the great potentialities of her spiritual genius in her triumphant heroes and her immortal classics. The one keynote of Indian culture, the greatness of her antiquity, the secret of her national vitality is the spiritual strength - the Atma shakthi or the strength of the soul, it has been the Ananda of our civilisation.

The cultural consciousness of India and Ceylon is one and this is manifested and interpreted in all the cosmic and aesthetic aspects of our life intellectually, religiously and others phases of our life as philosophy, art and poesy. For our one prayer is: Born as Indians, let us die as Indians. Bande Mataram.

C. P. W. J.



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Mahan.

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