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Vol XII

No. 8

MARCH

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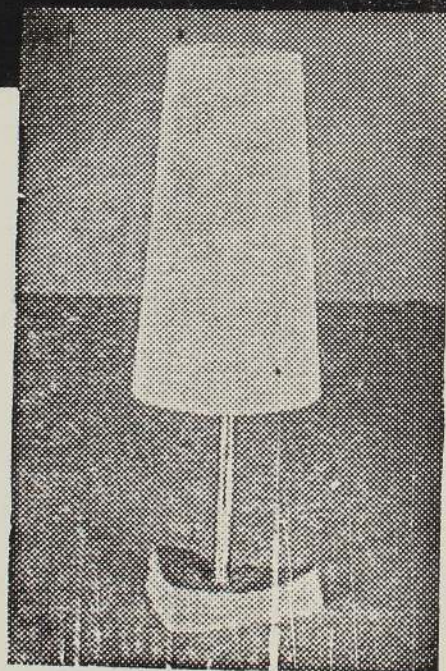
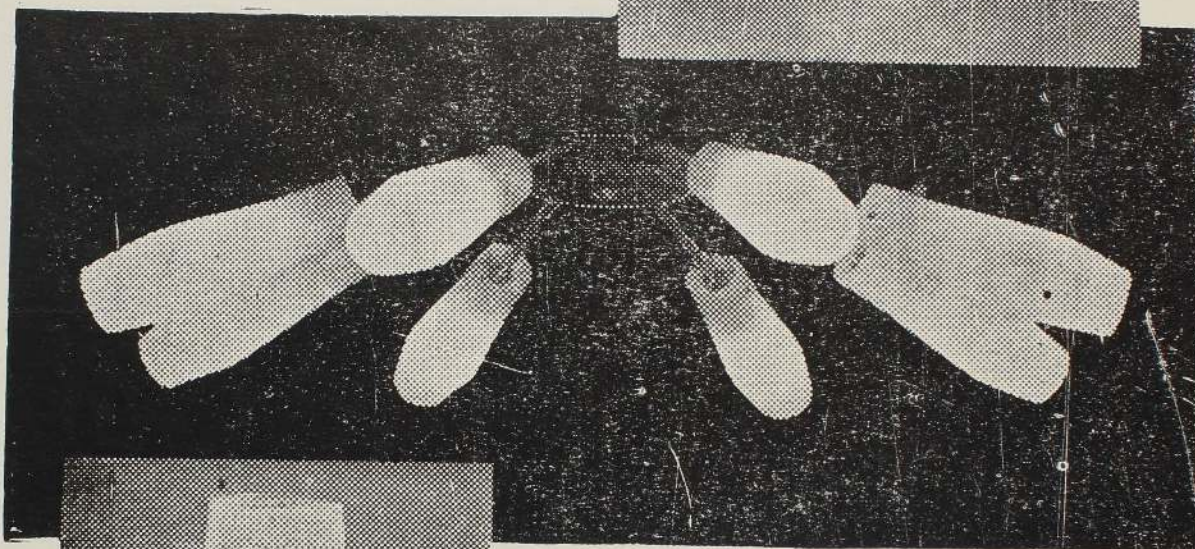
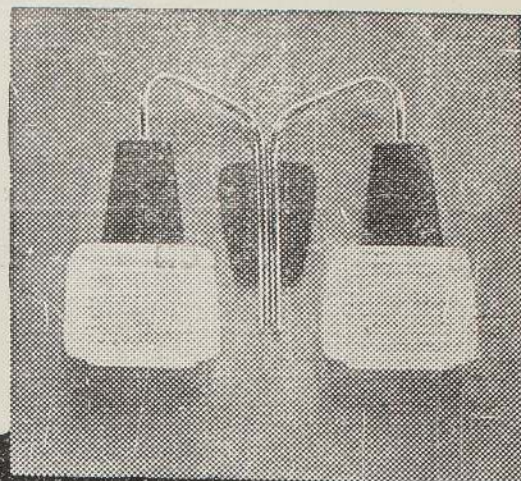
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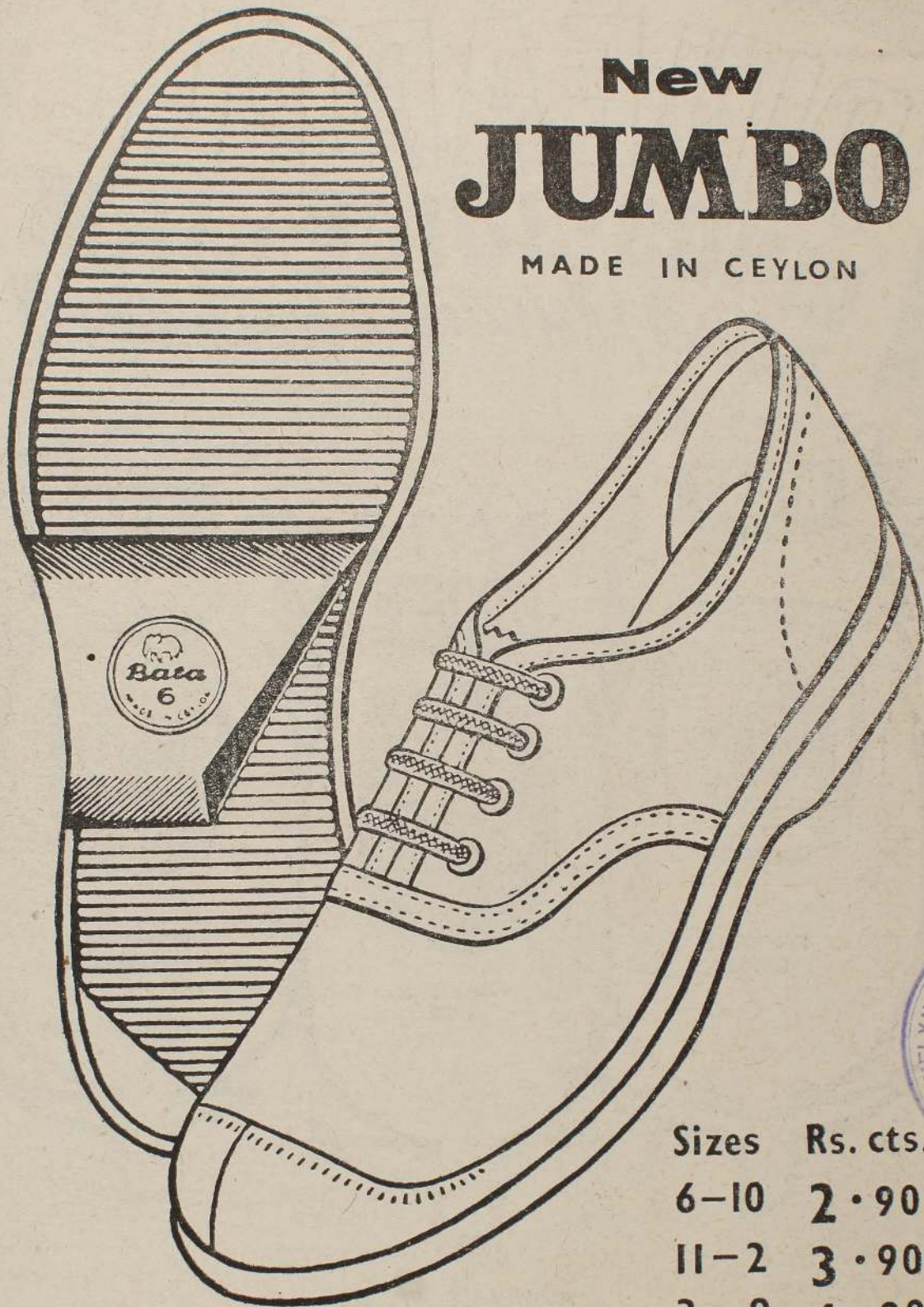
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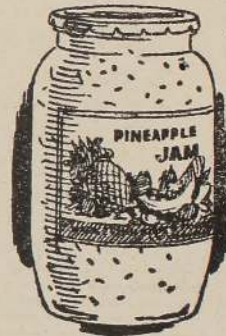
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# World Buddhism

International Monthly: Established 2495—1951

Vol. XII No. 8 MARCH 1964 B.E. 2507

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## SIGNIFICANCE OF BUDDHISM IN THE MODERN WORLD

By Rev. Kodo Matsunami  
(Hawaii)

IN our modern age, we seem to acquire almost everything we want if we work and earn money. Money has certainly brought us modern conveniences which shorten our working hours and we find more leisure in our daily life.

However, we realize at the same time that those modern conveniences do not necessarily solve our life problems. An increasing number of people are suffering from their material or mental burdens which shake their very foundation of being. Even for us, our life is always threatened by the endless flow of insecurity and fear. The man whom we met yesterday might have an accident and die today. Tomorrow there might be another war which would kill our lives.

The possession of an automobile or a house is no compensation for inner insecurity and fear. When we come to realize that materials are necessary but not a prior means to enrich our lives, we find only in religion that which enables us to find the inner security and the meaning of life.

There are many forms of religion around us which seem to appeal to our mind. However, they only approach us indirectly. Some emphasize social service almost to the point of forgetting other aspects of religious life, and some others emphasize routine participation in ceremonies and acceptance of dogma of the authority of the church. Their theological doctrines regarding supernatural powers found in healing or miracles are not easily related to our daily life. Therefore, they become increasingly difficult to understand and practice.

Those unsatisfied and yet earnest

people, seeking some real solution to the many problems of their troubled lives, some solution that will satisfy both their intellect and sentiment, and not finding it in either of the traditional religions, leave religion entirely, hoping to find the answer in the worlds of pleasure. However, they fail to

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find the meaning of life in them and become nihilistic or mentally distorted so that they can no longer face their life problems objectively.

### Masters, Not Slaves

We must be aware that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. We must become masters, not slaves, of conventional ways of life which are always depriving us. In this sense, Buddhism stands out in growing relief.

Buddhism is a world religion and our way of life which was founded in Northern India by Gautama the Buddha, about 2500 years ago. What he revealed was the unique teaching which had not been manifested by any sage in this world. He himself having had a bitter experience on life problems and through his own struggles found the way how to overcome them. This way is called the Oneness of life which has no exact parallel in Western religions.

Gautama Buddha deeply perceived that all sentient beings have in common the desire to live and realize themselves in their own way. All cling to existence and are able to survive only at the expense of other life. Therefore, he firmly believed that the only way we can survive without hurting each other is in only experiencing the basic identity of all life though being distinct from it.

Our world is nothing but the manifestation of the Oneness of Life where all beings, animate or inanimate, exist interdependently. On this basic ground of life, man sets out distinctions and separates what is "mine" from what is not "mine". This discrimination arises from a deep source of attachment in man called blind craving.

According to Buddhism, blind craving differentiates Oneness into a plural world of Manyess, and there arises conflicts, misunderstandings, and frictions within man himself. From this blind craving comes the conscious self, affirming its essential selfishness. Because of man going against Oneness by affirming the blind craving within, he creates an illusory world of Manyess which is not a real world but a world created in the imagination of man.

If we understand the importance of the Oneness of life, we can partake other's joy, being happy

with and for other's happiness, since we are one and the mistreatment of another is none other than the mistreatment of self.

Oneness is, therefore, the highest truth, and one who realizes this highest truth is called the Buddha, the Enlightened One, the one who has attained clear understanding of life. When his disciples asked him, "Are you a god?" He said, "No." "An angel?" "No." "A saint?" "No." "Then, what are you?" He quietly answered, "I am awake." His answer became his title, for this is what Buddha means.

The Buddha is accordingly not the God who creates the universe nor a Supreme Deity with a transcended authority and power. He is also not the judge who punishes us nor the jealous God who discriminates man good or bad. He is rather the *guiding light immanent* in the Universe. His immeasurable Wisdom and boundless Compassion give us the insight to see the fragility of our human life and the urge to actively embrace all into the Oneness of Life.

Thus, we are the potential Buddha, and the Buddha and us are interdependent and interrelated. In this Oneness of Life is achieved its significance to realize the Buddha in man and I in the Buddha. This is not the mystical nor speculative experiences which only the qualified men could acquire, but is the spontaneous experience which is manifested in our daily life.

One time when the Buddha was asked by a heretic, named Malumkyaputta, the following questions: "Whether the world is eternal or not eternal, whether the world is finite or not, whether the soul is one and the body another, whether a Buddha exists after death or does not exist after death," the Buddha flatly refused to discuss such metaphysics, and instead gave him a parable.

"It is as if a man had been wounded by an arrow thickly smeared with poison, and yet he were to say, 'I will not have this arrow pulled out until I know by what man I was wounded,' or 'I will not have this arrow pulled out until I know whether the bow with which I was wounded was made by what.'"

As a practical man he should, of course, get himself treated by the physician at once, without demanding those futile details which will not help him in the least. This was the attitude of the Buddha toward the metaphysical speculations which do not in any way help one toward a genuine religious progress.

### Direct Experience

The Buddha's teaching is sought not by reasoning, nor by inferring, nor by argument, but only by the direct experience based on the Truth, the laws of causation. The Buddha said, "One thing I teach is nothing but the existence of suffering and the ceasing of suffering." His teaching is therefore scientific and practical, and is always related to us, our problems, our nature, and the dynamics of our development.

His appeal is to each individual that each should make his way toward the Oneness of Life according to his own capacity. When the Buddha was about to pass away, he left his final message to Ananda, one of his disciples; "Therefore, O Ananda, be ye lamps unto yourself. Be ye a refuge to yourself. Betake yourself to no external refuge. Hold fast to the Truth as a lamp. Hold fast as a refuge to the Truth... Work out your own salvation with diligence."

For over 2500 years Buddhism has developed systems of thought and institutions, and yet they have one end called the Oneness of Life in the Buddha's Wisdom and Compassion. The realization of the Oneness of Life is the final goal which Buddhism aims at for every one of us throughout the ages.

## THE GOLDEN LOTUS

This periodical, now in its sixteenth year is published in the United States of America. It is dedicated "to those who seek The Way to Buddhism and to Eastern Philosophy."

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*Esther Bruton Gilman before the Buddha image in the Chapel of the Bamboo Grove*



*Helen Bruton before the Buddha image in the general assembly area*



*Margaret Bruton before the Buddha image at the main altar*

## Ceylon Inspired Buddha Rupas

*(From a correspondent in United States)*

THE Buddha's Universal Church, the San Francisco house of worship built by people of all faiths and races, recently unveiled a new Buddha image made of wood, mosaic and carved inlaid abalone pearl.

The image completes a series of three Buddha images, each done by a different Bruton sister: Margaret, Esther and Helen.

Esther Bruton Gilman, the artist whose new image completes the trilogy said that her visit to temples and museums in Ceylon, Thailand and other South East Asian countries a couple of years ago with her sister Margaret provided inspiration for doing the Buddha images.

The acting San Francisco Mayor, Harold S. Dobbs and Dr. Paul Fung, vice president of the World Fellowship of Buddhists and spirited leader of the Buddha's Universal Church presided at the unveiling ceremony.

The latest Buddha image is located in the Church's Chapel of the Bamboo Grove and it shows the Buddha at about the age of 20, giving his first discourse.

Mrs. Gilman fashioned a wood-carving of a polychrome figure,

enriched with patterns of carved, inlaid abalone shell, with a circle of inset mosaic pieces backed by gold leaf around the Buddha's head. The seated figure is mounted on a background of dark, polished walnut.

The Buddha image in the Church's general assembly and instructional area was made of thousands of pieces of colored ceramics and gold, by Helen Bruton, youngest of the three artist-sisters.

### The Largest

The largest Buddha image of the church is part of the main altar, the altar of the Dharma Ship. A combination of mosaic, ceramic and crushed quartz aggregate, it was done by Margaret Bruton, oldest of the sisters.

The Buddha figure here is in his late forties, and the gold leaf aura is the largest of the three images. In the right hand is a lotus flower, with the second, third and fourth fingers extended. The left hand has the thumb and second finger in a circle. Photographs of this magnificent image have been requested from Singapore, Thailand and

throughout the Far East.

The Bruton sisters lived most of their lives in Alameda, a community in the San Francisco Bay area.

Margaret Bruton was born in Brooklyn, New York, and moved to Alameda as a child. She studied at the California School of Fine Arts and the Art Students League of New York, and spent a year studying in Europe. Her work has won prizes in exhibits and her murals are on many public buildings in western United States.

Esther Bruton Gilman was born in Alameda, studied at the New York School of Fine and Applied Art, and at the Art Students league in New York; she also spent a year in Europe. She is a member of the California Society of Etchers and has exhibited water colors and drawings.

Helen Bruton was born in Alameda and studied sculpture at the Art Students League in New York. Most of her work is in mosaic, although she has in the past used a variety of media.

Helen and Margaret live in Monterey, California, and Esther in Ojai. The three sisters collaborated on a mural for the Court of Pacifica at the San Francisco International Exposition in 1939-1940, and on the War Memorial in Manila, in addition to their triple assignment for the Buddha's Universal Church.



# THE STORY OF CH'AN MASTER HSU YUN—IX

From Master Hsu Yun's Autobiography

Specially translated for "World Buddhism" By Upasaka Lu K'uan Yu

(Charles Luk)

(Hong Kong)

## My fifty-ninth year (1898-99) :

That year in the early spring as a large bell was being cast for Ch'i T'a monastery at Ningpo, the old abbot Pen Lai invited Dharma-master Mo An to expound the Lotus Sutra there and came to Asoka monastery to ask me to help in expounding the sutra. I then went to Ch'i T'a monastery and after the expounding, I proceeded to T'ung Kuan Shan mountain where I built a thatched hut in which to pass the new year.

## My sixtieth year (1899-1900) :

Masters Chieh Shen and Pao Lin invited me to come to Tanyang to repair Hsien T'ai Kuan temple where I passed the summer. In the seventh month, I went to Chu Yung in Kiangsu province where

master Fa Jen of Ch'ih Shan mountain let me have his hut for the winter.

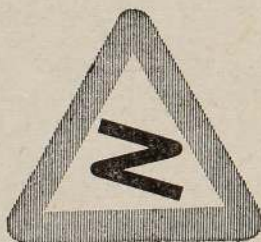
## My sixty-first year (1900-01) :

I had stayed for some ten years in Kiangsu and Chekiang provinces and now wanted to make a distant journey again to Wu T'ai mountain, after which I would retire in seclusion on Chung Nan mountain. I then left Ch'ih Shan mountain and went on to Chinkiang and Yangchow and then on a pilgrimage to Yun T'ai Shan mountain. Thence I entered Shantung province to visit Tung Yo T'ai Shan mountain and went on to Lao Shan mountain where I visited the Narayana Cave (where Master Han Shan built the monastery Hai Yin). I then proceeded to Kufow to pay reverence

to the tomb and temple of Confucius.

I continued my journey to the west. One night I stayed at a ruined temple wherein there was only a rotten coffin with its cover turned upside down. I knew it was empty and slept on it. About midnight I felt something moving inside the coffin and suddenly heard a voice saying: "I want to get out." I asked: "Are you man or ghost?" The voice replied: "A man" I asked: "Who are you?" The voice replied: "A beggar." I smiled, got up and let him out. He was as ugly as a ghost and asked me: "Who are you?" I replied: "A monk." The man was angry, saying that I had crushed his head. As he wanted to strike me, I said: "I sat on the cover of the coffin but you could not even move; how can you think of hitting me now?" He was thus cowed, went out to pass water and returned to sleep again in the coffin. I left the place a little before sunrise.

At the time, there were already signs of the boxers rising in rebellion in many districts of Shantung province. One day I met on the way a foreign soldier who pointed his



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gun at me, asking: "Are you afraid of dying?" I replied: "If my fate is to die by your hand, go ahead!" The soldier saw that I was not perturbed in the least and said: "Right, you may go." I then hurried to the Five-peaked-mountain, and, after offering incense, I intended to proceed to Chung Nan mountain.

However, since the rebellion had broken out, I returned to Peking where I visited Hsi Yu monastery and paid reverence to the Cave of Stone Sutras. I called on I Hsing, the monk of remarkable conduct, on T'an Che Shan mountain, arrived at Chia T'ai monastery where I paid reverence to the stupa of ch'an master Fei Po, climbed Hung Lo mountain to participate in the meeting held for repeating the Buddha's name and visited the monastery of the Big Bell where a copper bell cast by Yao Kuang Hsiao weighed eighty-seven thousand catties and measured fifteen Chinese feet with its seven foot hanger-top and fourteen feet in diameter.

The whole Avatamsaka Sutra was cast on the outside of the bell and the Lotus Sutra inside it with the Diamond Sutra on the edge of its base and the Surangama mantra on its hanger-top. The bell was offered by emperor Ch'eng Tsu of Yung Lo reign (1403-24) for the liberation of his (deceased) mother. I then went on to Lung Chuan monastery to the south of the capital where I stayed.

In the fifth month, the boxers' rebellion came to a climax. Its motto was: "Support for the Manchu dynasty and extermination of foreigners." The secretary of the Japanese Legation and the German minister were assassinated at the secret instigation of the empress dowager. On the seventeenth of the month, an imperial mandate was issued declaring war on foreign powers. The capital was thrown into disorder. In the sixth month, Tientsin was captured by the allied armies which occupied Peking, the capital, in the following month.

The princes and ministers who had stayed at Lung Chuan monastery and who knew me, urged me to leave with them and follow the imperial retinue which was fleeing westwards. In the utter confusion, there was at the departure a complete absence of the usual pomp showing the pride of the spoiled

son of heaven.

By day and by night, everybody made forced marches and endured great hardships. On arrival at Fu Ping, the emperor and empress dowager were delighted to see viceroy Ch'en Ch'un Hsuan of Kansu province with his soldiers coming to welcome and protect their majesties and accompany them to beyond the Great Wall. When the emperor arrived at Yun Men pass, he met in Yun Men monastery an old monk who was 124 years old, gave him some thin yellow cloth for his robe and ordered the erection of an arch at the site.

Then we continued our westward march and arrived at Pingyangfu where a severe famine prevailed. The inhabitants offered their food of taro and sweet potato tops to their majesties who were very hungry and found it delicious. When we arrived at Sianfu, their majesties stayed at the viceroy's headquarters. At the time as the hungry masses were eating corpses in the streets, the authorities took steps to stop this by putting up eight booths from which to give free meals to the starving people. In the country free meals were also distributed.

Viceroy Ch'en Ch'un Hsuan invited me to come to Wo Lung monastery to pray for snow and rain to end the long drought. After the prayers, the old abbot Tung Hsia invited me to stay at the monastery, but seeing that the imperial court was held at Sianfu with its clamour and bustle, I left the place in secret.

In the tenth month, I climbed the Chung Nan Shan mountain range to build a thatched hut. Behind Chia Wu T'ai mountain, I found the Lion Cave which was a retired place for seclusion. I then changed my name to 'Hsu Yun' (Empty Cloud) to avoid visitors. As there was no water on the mountain, I had to drink snow and eat the wild herbs which I cultivated.

At the time, there lived on the mountain range master Pen Ch'ang on P'o Shih Shan mountain, master Miao Lien at the temple of Kuan Ti, master Tao Ming in Wu Hua grotto, master Miao Yuan in an old thatched hut and masters Hsiu Yuan and Ch'ing Shan on Hou Shan mountain. Master Ch'ing Shan was a native of Hunan and was very much respected by the monks on the mountain. He lived comparatively

close to me and we frequently exchanged visits.

In the eighth month of the following year, masters Fu Ch'eng, Yueh Hsia and Liao Ch'en came to my hut and when they saw me, they were surprised and said: "We had no news of you for several years; who would have expected that you were sleeping here?" I said: "Let's put *here* aside; how is it *there*?" We then greeted each other, and after serving them with taro, I accompanied them to P'o Shih Shan mountain. Yueh Hsia said: "The old abbot Fa Jen of Ch'ih Shan mountain is now expounding the Lotus Sutra in Kuei Yuan monastery at Hanyang. He does not like its noisy surrounding and wants to come to the north; he has asked me to come here to find a place for him." He asked me to help him look for an appropriate site for the old abbot but since I was practising meditation, I politely declined.

After I had ended my week of Ch'an meditation, Hua Ch'eng, Yin Yueh and Fu Chia came from Ts'ui Wei Shan mountain where they had found a site for the old abbot. Master Yueh Hsia said that the place was suitable but I thought otherwise since it faced the White Tiger to the north without a supporting hill for the evening star. (Geomantic terms for subterranean currents and influences). They did not listen to my advice and so were responsible for what happened (in the following year).

That winter on the solstice day, the old master Ch'ing Shan asked me to go to Sianfu to do some shopping for him. On my return, I was caught in a heavy snowfall. After climbing the mountain, when I arrived at the new thatched hut, I slipped and fell into a heap of snow at the foot of a precipice. I shouted for help and master I Ch'uan who was in a nearby hut came to my rescue. All my garments were thoroughly soaked with water; it was already dark and thinking that the snow would block all the tracks the following day, I negotiated the snowy path and went to see master Ch'ing Shan. Seeing my disordered appearance, he laughed at me, jokingly saying that I was of no real use. I smiled and nodded assent and then returned to my hut where I passed the new year.



## BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION OF CHINA: REPLY TO CRITICISM

RECENTLY we had a chance of reading in the December 1962 issue of *World Buddhism* a letter signed by Bhikshus Sangharakshita and Khantipala, in which an overall attack was launched against the report made by the Buddhist Association of China at its National Conference held in that year.

Although the political intent of the letter to slander the Chinese Government and malign Chinese Buddhists is so obvious, we can see at a glance that the attack was aimed at the report of the Buddhist Association of China and the Chinese. As Chinese Buddhists, we cannot but express our opinion, which, we hope, you would be kind enough to make public in your magazine.

The two bhikshus have declared at the very start of their letter that they "are in direct contact with refugee Tibetan Buddhists who have fled before the invading Chinese" and that they "have information regarding the state of Buddhism in China proper." We do not know who these two bhikshus are, but, from Mr. Christmas Humphreys' *Tibet in India* published in the August issue, 1962, of the *Middle Way*, a London Buddhist periodical, we have read of a certain Sthavira Sangharakshita whom Mr. Humphreys introduced as an English editor of the *Maha Bodhi* in India and also as his "guide, interpreter and indispensable friend" on his visit to Kalimpong and Darjeeling.

After a comparative study of the letter and the article we cannot help thinking that one of the writers of the letter, Bhikshu Sangharakshita, may be none other than the "friend" of Mr. Humphreys.

In 1961 Mr. Humphreys, as the President of the London Buddhist Society, wrote an article of criticism on the Sixth Conference of the World Fellowship of Buddhists saying that the Conference had resulted in a tragedy because of its involvement in politics. But, in 1962, he himself carried out a very inglorious political activity—a three-week visit to the so-called "Tibetan refugees" in India.

His report on this visit reminds one of the tricks played by the British imperialists during the early years of this century when they cherished very ambitious designs upon the Tibetan region of our country. What should we call such activity but a subversive intrigue against a sovereign state? As an "indispensable friend" of Mr. Humphreys, Bhikshu Sangharakshita has attempted in his letter to play a collaborating role in this intrigue.

Regarding the "refugees" whom Bhikshu Sangharakshita declares to have had contact with, we can get a general picture from Mr. Humphreys' report. Their names are not strange to us:—persistent traitors in close collusion with imperialists; corrupted Buddhists who, indulging in worldly desires, have violated

Buddhist precepts and defiled the Sangha; big aristocrats who had held the darkest and most barbarous feudalistic power for generations; big landlords who had cruelly exploited great numbers of serfs and refused to make the slightest reform; and the like. Mr. Humphreys himself has mentioned how a high official had taken abroad Tibetan gold and silver years ago and secretly sold them in India for making "investments" and how a certain Lama of high order had "escaped from Tibet with all his temple furnishing". These fragmentary materials of information will suffice to explain who it is that stole the wealth of the Tibetan people and who it is that robbed the Buddhist monasteries in Tibet. At present, people, of this sort are not few in number.

The letter of the two bhikshus seems to have laid much emphasis on Tibet; so let us speak something about that region. In Tibet, just as in other nationality regions of our country, the problem of social reformation should not by any means be confounded with that of religion. Clearly, the fact that Tibetan monasteries used to possess big land estates and serfs and that they had established strict rank divisions, even to the extent of putting people into prisons, subjecting them to severe torture, and exercising full power over life and death, cannot but be diametrically opposed to the Buddha's ideal of a pure and harmonious Sangha; they were the result of the infiltration of worldly influences into Buddhist society.

Indeed, no explanation is required for the reformation of serfdom in Tibet. Many Westerners and the so-called international Buddhists had said plenty of it many years ago. (It was only within the last decade that Tibetan serfdom had suddenly become a holy and lovable thing.) The Chinese Government and people had hoped that the reform might be carried out through negotiation. Especially towards the leading personages of the upper social strata we had shown very considerable respect and had waited long for the elevation of their social consciousness. But there was a handful of reactionary serf-owners in the upper social strata, both clerical and lay, who were fundamentally opposed to any reform whatever. They had put up obstacles, fomented troubles, broken up things, and at length launched a rebellion in collusion with imperialists and foreign reactionary powers. The result was that they brought about their own ruin, besides coercing and compelling a part of their countrymen to flee abroad with them.

Bhikshu Sangharakshita could not but acknowledge that "the Chinese had first tried to win them (meaning the leaders of both religious and secular circles) to collaboration," but he immediately made the remark that the consequence would mean "the abandonment of their Buddhist principles." Yes, any social reform cannot avoid asking the original occupants

of ruling positions to give up something; that is, personal privileges and special rights built up on the pains of the masses. These things were certainly not "what the Buddha had in mind when he initiated the Sangha"; they are precisely what he would never allow. To interpret, therefore, the abandonment of these things as the abandonment of Buddhist principles is nothing but a blasphemy against the Buddha.

Regarding our Tibetan brothers who have been forced to emigrate to India (i.e. the so-called refugees), we believe the majority of them are poor, just as when they were living under serfdom in Tibet. But those who oppressed them, cheated them and compelled them to leave their homeland, that is to say, those who should be held responsible for their present miseries, are surely not "penniless" as described in Bhikshu Sangharakshita's letter.

Now let us turn again to Mr. Humphreys' report. In India, he says, there is the presence of a dozen Tibetans worth between them at least five million pounds. One-tenth of that, if given to their countrymen and wisely spent in the next five years, would solve nine-tenths of their present problem. But, so he continues, a part of this money is being openly flung away on race-course or in mah-jong. Here we cannot refrain ourselves from offering a word to Mr. Humphreys: "Dear Sir, had these people ever been willing to do something good for their countrymen, they would not have raised the rebellion." To them, their "countrymen" are nothing but oxen and horses to till their land when they are in power, and the capital to regain power when they are in exile. To expect that they could be persuaded to share the joys and sorrows of the masses is utterly hopeless. This rule applies without exception to all the ruling classes in history bordering on destruction. For them all planning and scheming are useless, and all sorrowing and lamenting unnecessary.

Mr. Humphreys himself—let us refer to him once more—has definitely acknowledged that there is discontent and a demand-for-reform movement among the Tibetan "refugees". It is not without reason for him to be in secret fear lest this movement should be "forced into the position of a genuine opposition." Our opinion is that the problem of the so-called "Tibetan refugees" is not difficult to find a solution; and it is a problem that will be solved, provided that those professed "defenders of Buddhism", "humanitarians" and "philanthropists" agree to stop interfering.

The letter has also mentioned the Chinese "invasion" of India. It does not at all surprise us that this lie, which has long been discredited before the whole world, should have come out from these two bhikshus.

There is not a single piece of work as related in our report that has not been subject to the instinctive hatred of these two bhikshus, who sometimes seem to have gone to such an extent as not to care about what they are saying. When we say that we have built several temples and pagodas, they hint with sarcasm why we should not start a building program all over the country. When we say that we have brought out several translations of Chinese Buddhist classics, they say



why we do not translate the whole Chinese Tripitaka into English.

We plan to carry out research works on the history and theory of Buddhism, but they say this means that Buddhism is being treated as a dead letter. Our Buddhist Academy has established the definite policy of bringing up Buddhist intellectuals possessing a certain degree of Buddhist knowledge (of course with reference to the stage of school training only), but they say that this implies that our people are not allowed to possess too much knowledge of Buddhism. We continue to hold examinations for the bestowal of Geshis in the Tibetan region, but they say that they do not know whether the original examination system can be restored under the condition that no new entrants are permitted to come into the Sangha—a remark that we do not know on what ground it is made.

Even our publication of an English version of *Fa-hsien's Travels* or of some Buddhist pictures are taken by them as to serve for this or that political purpose, or for promoting "Sino-Indian friendship" (what is bad about it?), or for stressing "that we all Buddhists of Asia" (why not be so?) Instances of this kind are too many to be enumerated. With one who purposely seeks to create logical confusions, how could we say anything? In point of fact, the matter is quite simple. What they want to say is only this: All Buddhists should rise up to oppose the Buddhists in the country which has a different social system, or in the words of the *Maha Bodhi* editorial, to oppose the Buddhists who have, or have had, any connection with Communism, "however outwardly praise-worthy their work may be." Does this sound like the voice of a Buddha's follower?

The said letter seems to have concentrated its fire on our participation in socialist studies and productive labour. Therefore we feel it necessary to say something on these two points.

First of all, we must seriously tell these two bhikshus that Socialism is the path chosen by the entire Chinese people including Buddhists. The representatives of Buddhists and the other representatives of the whole country together have drawn up the constitution of our new State. We are indeed very happy that, after more than one hundred years of disgrace and suffering, our country has at last discovered the right path. In our new country we find not only that our religion has gained such respect that it never had before and that we ourselves have been enjoying our equal rights of citizenship that we never had before, but also that the spirit of "forgetting oneself for the benefit of others" as taught by the Buddha is being materialized and that a society of purity and harmony is in the making.

Why should we not participate cheerfully in the constructive works of our new country as a positive factor? Have the editors of the *Maha Bodhi* themselves (including Bhikshu Sangharakshita) not said: "There is incumbent upon us a double duty towards our religion and towards our country?" If to extol the use of force to encroach upon the territory of another country on behalf of the reactionaries is spoken of as a duty of Buddhists towards their country, then why should Chinese Buddhists be blamed merely because they regard the partici-

pation in the constructive works of their Motherland as a part of their duty? Since we are a part of the masters of our country, working together with the whole Chinese people for the construction of our Motherland, why should we not engage ourselves in studying the principles, conditions and requirements of this great cause?

To oppose these unrepachable good worldly works, the writers of the letter, it seems, have failed to find any positive reason. And they had to slip into that peculiar sophistry of theirs, saying that all works, unless accompanied by a realization of voidness (*sunyata*), will certainly not constitute Perfection (*paramita*), and, at the same time, advising people to remember that "Communist dogma is Materialist..... and therefore cannot see the possibilities either of spiritual progress or of Full Enlightenment." As we know, the cultivation for emancipation in the supermundane sense is the affair of us Buddhists; whether or not Communism recognizes the existence of supermundane *paramita* is quite another matter. So far as worldly dharmas are concerned, we do not see any absolute incomparability between Communist establishments and the Buddha's teaching of performing goodness and extirpating evils.

Mahayana Buddhism has never advocated complete renunciation of worldly dharmas, because conformity to good worldly dharmas and the consequent extinction of one's *klesas* caused by the three poisonous things will lead one to the personal realization of *sunyata* and the attainment of Nirvana. There is a saying in the *Saddharmapundarika-sutra* (Chapter on the Merits of Law-masters): "The knowledge of worldly books, the study of worldly languages and the undertakings that concern people's livelihood are all in accordance with the Right Law." On the contrary indulgence in the joys of *dhyana* and erroneous grasping at stiffened *sunyata* are precisely what Mahayana Bodhisattvas have blamed over and again. This idea is demonstrated with still greater clarity in the *Bodhisattva Pratimoksa*, which contains the following rules: A Bodhisattva, who sees sentient beings engaged in various tasks (the items enumerated in the text include economical enterprises, farm works, etc.) but out of the sentiment of hate, refuses to co-operate with them, commits the offence of non-cooperation (Rule 31). A Bodhisattva, who knows that someone has done a certain meritorious deed but, out of the sentiment of hate, does not tell it to other people nor shows any appreciation, commits the offence of not rejoicing in other's merits (Rule 39.) It is true that there still exists a considerable distance between the collection of worldly merits and the attainment of ultimate emancipation; but to negate the merits of good worldly works out of hate and to regard the present joys and pains of sentient beings as none of one's own business, would only make oneself fall into the evil paths, much farther removed from *paramita*.

Every Buddhist knows that, because of the perfuming influence of karmas from time beginningless, the mind of sentient beings cannot be wholly pure. The Buddha taught us with special emphasis to "purify one's own mind" and to

progress with unslacked energy. We do not understand why one who professes to be a follower of the Buddha should be so terrified by the term "remoulding" and joins in the clamour against it as "brain-washing". In fact, if dirt is found in one's thought (just as it is on one's body), what harm will it do to advise him to have a wash? Is it not quite plain that the two bhikshus have made repeated attempts in their letter to give "a brain-washing" to those Buddhists whom they consider to have been "misled"?

After all, the question is with regard to what things are to be washed off. As our report shows, the things that we advise people to wash off are: concern for individual interests at the expense of collective interests, concern for immediate interests at the expense of long-term interests—in other words, lack of patriotism, disdainfulness toward the masses and the like thoughts, that are concrete manifestations of greed, hatred, and stupidity. What is wrong on our part in advising the people to wash off these things according to the teaching of the Buddha? But these two bhikshus, and their kind are greatly "disturbed" and even "terrified" by this. What a striking resemblance to Mara's fright when the World Honoured One determined to turn the Dharma-wheel!

Of course, there is inevitably a part of the people who, owing to hindrances and karmic influences of special weight, cannot free themselves from these ties all at once. Our encouragement to all Chinese Buddhists to continue remoulding is plainly in conformity with the Buddha's teaching of energetic progress. But here, these two bhikshus immediately make a remark, describing those reluctant to make energetic efforts as "those who have a clear idea of what Buddhism really means." What a gross blasphemy against the Buddha and what a striking resemblance to the acts of Devadatta!

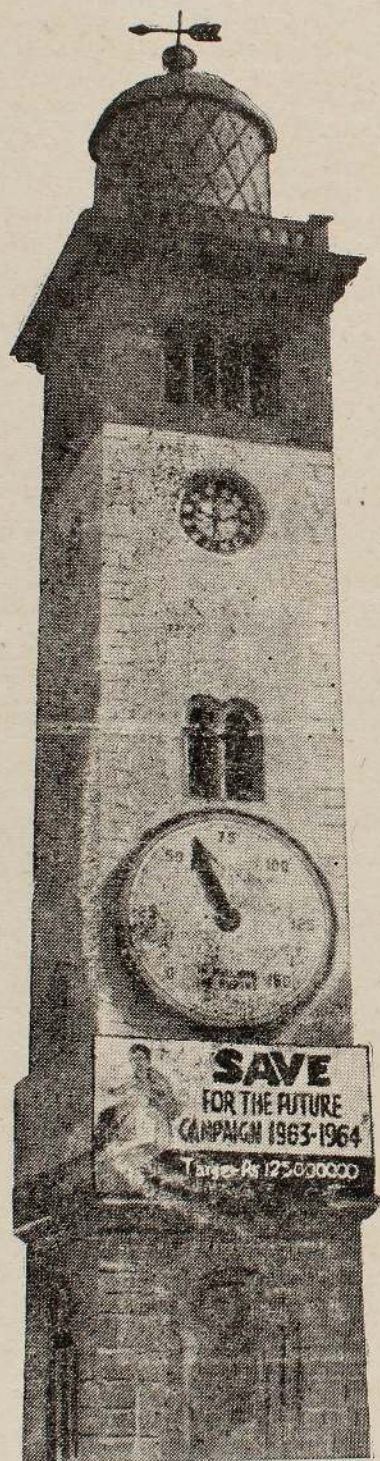
The participation of Chinese Buddhists in productive labour is also one of the targets of attack in the letter. Just as in other similar cases, the writers have not put forward any positive argument but resorted to their old trick of side-tracking the problem, saying that to plough up a field or to plant trees means the end of Buddhism, because the work of Buddhists is not such but something else, which is much more difficult, namely, to gain enlightenment. We do not understand why enlightenment should be so incompatible with productive labour. Just on the contrary, the traditional motto of the Ch'an School (a Buddhist sect of the greatest influence and strongest vitality in China, a sect that gives the greatest importance to experiential enlightenment) has always been: "A day without labour, a day without food."

Everybody knows that ancient patriarchs of the Ch'an School were used to all kinds of labour, such as carrying water, gathering fuel, tilling land, plucking tea-leaves, etc. (not working rarely but regularly, not working individually but collectively). Through these practices, through words and actions in the relationship between masters and disciples, a good many Ch'an masters had obtained or sealed the transmission of the Dharma.

Ven. Hui-chi (Yang-shan) once awakened his pupils to enlightenment by driving his spade into the earth, and Ven. Chih-



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yen (Hsiang-yen) gained his awakening when throwing a clod of earth at a bamboo tree. Many lively and beautiful stories of enlightenment like these are found in the Ch'anist "Kung-ans" (cases of enlightenment). It is just following this tradition that Chinese Buddhists of to-day are trying to accomplish the worldly merit of co-operation in a new society. How can this be described as a hindrance to the cultivation of supermundane dharma's?

The practice of Buddhism in China consists of two main methods: the practice of *dhyana* and remembrance of Amida Buddha. In this respect, each member of the four classes of disciples has his regular routine duties. It is nothing strange that these matters have not been related in the report which was prepared for a national representative conference.

Buddhism is a religion that has been widely spread for over two thousand years and has ramified into many sects. In form as well as in content, differences do exist. Discussions concerning theoretical problems are allowable, provided that we bear the Tathagata's Right Dharma in mind and have the good will to exchange opinions. But, with Bhikshu Sangharakshita and his kind whose motive does not lie at all in Buddhism, we are not disposed, nor do we deem it necessary, to carry on the talk any more.

With regard to the groundless slanders in the letter against Socialist countries, they are not within the sphere of our discussion. Of course, the writers can always choose a sufficient number of abusive words in a dictionary to serve their purpose. Since they have already degenerated into henchmen of the imperialists and reactionary nationalists, to them the question of carrying on subversive activities against another country and of violating the Buddhist precept against false speech is but a trifling matter, not worth to be considered.

May the light of the Right Dharma break through all darkness and evils!

**Bhikshus: Fa-chun; Hui-li  
and Tao-hsiu  
(Peking, China)**

## Young German Wants Buddhist Friends

I am a young German (24 years). I am the secretary of the German and Scandinavian Buddhist group, Bund Junger Buddhist.

I am anxious to get in contact with other Buddhists and Buddhist institutions, and would be pleased to hear from anybody interested.

**Peter Fleishhacker**  
Kraehenstrasse 34,  
Lubeck, Germany.

## Wanted: Pen Friends From Abroad

I am a student of world Buddhism and as such I am interested in corresponding with Buddhists, par-



ticularly from abroad.

I should therefore thank you to publish this letter, and I hope that those interested will correspond with me.

(Miss) Sushanti Wickremaratne,  
Anoma, Dikwella, Ceylon.

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# SHOULD SUTRAS BE TAKEN LITERALLY?

By Arthur Derbigny  
(United States)

**M**OST of us have probably had the experience of hearing someone say, when attempting to defend a particular point of view or a specific statement, "It is written in this or that book", the implication being that, since such a point of view is in print, it must be true. This approach may be perfectly valid if one is dealing with matters of fact, for example, in physics or mathematics, and if the book in question is written by a competent person.

However, when we get into the fields of religion, philosophy, mysticism, etc., such an appeal to authority is clearly not admissible, since we are here dealing, in one form or another, with opinions, and opinions must always be taken conditionally.

It is strange, sometimes to see the awe and reverence with which scores of people approach the printed word. They seem to hold it as something sacred, inviolate, almost divine. They will often accept the most bizarre utterances as fact, simply because it happens to be set down between the covers of a book.

### More Aware

This does not mean, of course, that we should disbelieve or disregard whatever we read, but simply that we should try to be more aware of what is being said, and realize that, in many cases, it is nothing more than the opinion of that author, and may be either true or false.

It is a regrettable fact that this inordinate worship of the printed page is also to be found among Buddhists. Often, when I have voiced my own doubts as to the probability of the Buddha's having made a particular statement or put forth a particular point of view, I have been advised to "read this or that Sutra".

Now, I am certain that if I were to read the Sutra in question, I would find that that statement or point of view was indeed attributed to the Buddha, but this still does

not constitute any good reason either for believing that the Buddha said it, or that it is true. If a statement is doubtful when heard from the mouth of a speaker, then it is likely to be equally doubtful when read from a book.

The thing that many of us seem to forget is that not one of the Buddhist Sutras (scriptures) is a divine revelation, nor were any of them meant to appear as such. They were not written by the finger of "God", but by the hands of men. Some human being had to sit down with pen and paper, or their equivalent, and write them, in many cases from memory. Not only did he have to write them down, but he also had to translate and interpret them.

Further, and more importantly, the Sutras had to be written in such a way as to be acceptable to the people for whom they were intended. Very often, to be acceptable meant that they had to satisfy minds steeped in magic, superstition, and ignorance, and that they also had to be in conformity with certain points of already existing religious practices.

To achieve this conformity, it seems likely that many concepts were added to a number of Sutras that were not part of them before, and from then onward, these additions were simply carried as part and parcel of the original.

It seems likely, moreover, that many writings which started out as Shastras (commentaries on the Sutras) have ended up as Sutras, and in fact, we seem to make little or no distinction between Sutra and Shastra, but take them both as the words of the Buddha.

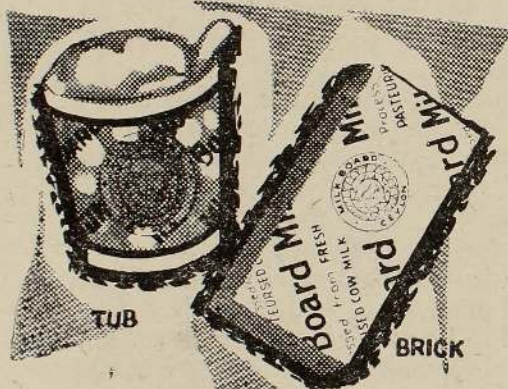
If we add to all this the fact that the earliest Sutras were not written until about 200 or more years after the Buddha's death, we can readily see that there must surely have been a great deal of misquoting, misrepresentation and distorting of the Buddha's words, so that today, if one were to accept as fact everything that stands writ-



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ten in the Sutras, the Buddha emerges as an extremely confused, inconsistent, irrational and self contradictory figure, who could not distinguish truth from fiction, and we may be fairly certain that the Buddha was not such a person.

One of the greatest and most attractive features of Buddhism is its utter lack of and disaffection for dogmatism. Each of us has the undeniable right to doubt, to question and to employ our own intellect in assessing any, or even all of the doctrine.

Unfortunately, all too few of us actually exercise this right, which is unique among religions. We are far more content if we are not required to think; it is far easier just to take someone else's opinion, rather than go through the mental effort of forming our own.

As Buddhists, we have the right, and indeed, the duty, to investigate before accepting, to verify the doctrine for ourselves, to subject it to the test of reality, and accept it only if it seems to work in our own experience. We must, in a sense, always be more or less skeptical about doctrinal concepts, accepting or rejecting them tentatively, but reserving judgement until we have subjected them to reality testing.

There are in the scriptures, of course, many concepts whose very natures do not seem to admit of testing or verification. These, if accepted at all, must be taken on faith, but not on faith alone. They too should be subjected to the tests of reasonability and probability, i.e., we should ask ourselves two questions concerning them: first, is the concept reasonable; does it fall within the range of credibility; second, does it seem probable; can we imagine its application without over-taxing our credulity.

### May Be Rejected

Then too, the Sutras contain a number of ideas which, I feel, may be rejected out of hand, since in order to be true, they would have to wreak violent havoc on certain universal physical principles, and speak as we may about the "Uncreate", the "Absolute", or "Transcendent Reality", the universe is still subject to physical principles.

Clearly then, an "ipse dixit" argument should have no place in Buddhism, because such arguments are not only dogmatic and ineffective, but they also may tend

to engender a state of mental lethargy, since they do not require one to think for himself.

Many people, of course, find it extremely easy and indeed, rather satisfying not to think. In fact, not thinking has become such a part of their lives that they find it almost impossible to give it up.

This attitude, if allowed to go unchecked, may in time spread into other areas of their activities, and result in a totally inefficient method of coping with the world as it is. In fact, it may very well be, that this sort of dogmatic response in religion is a manifestation of personality disorders in other areas of one's life.

In conclusion, I must repeat that nothing that I have said here is intended to mean that we should completely discount the scriptures or consider them as nothing more than the fairy tales of imaginative monks. On the contrary, I believe they contain a wealth of truth about the nature of existence and the problems of sentient life; truths that are universal and eternal.

No, the only point I am making here is that we must not make the mistake of blindly accepting everything we read in the scriptures as absolute fact or taking it unquestionably as the actual words of the Buddha. We must not let ourselves join the ranks of the non-thinking fanatic, but expend every effort to achieve a state of clear, orderly reasoning, coherent thinking and the free exercise of the intellect.

Only in this way can we become true heirs to the words of the Buddha; only in this way can we enjoy the intellectual freedom which is found only in the Buddha's Dharma.

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# Universities Report Criticised

**WHAT** could be said about some of the recommendations of the Universities Commission is that these elderly Buddhist gentlemen of the Commission had somehow or other largely forgotten the gravity of their own report.

They have unduly ridiculed the elderly, well-respected and learned bhikkhus before the entire public including non-Buddhists with their views as well as with their language, states the Vidyā-lankara University in the course of its reply to the Universities Commission Report.

This reply was handed over to the University's Chancellor, Governor-General William Gopallawa. It has been prepared by the acting Vice-Chancellor of Vidyā-lankara. Ven. Yakkadduwe Sri Pragnarama Thero.

The criticism that the two Universities provide gains to some cannot be proved, says the reply. The learned bhikkhus are in a position to gain profits even if they write books and their services cannot be measured. These bhikkhus are a dedicated lot and they accepted University status to serve the country. They had in fact suffered some hardships due to the grant of University status.

It is the view of the Vidyā-lankara University that it is quite proper for the bhikkhus to indulge in any activity — even political — if it is not harmful to a bhikkhu's way of life. The bhikkhus have always participated in whatever activity was beneficial to the country.

If the Commissioners wanted to wipe out corruption that could be done by removing whoever is guilty of such deeds and not by closing down the two Pirivena Universities. It is a fact that some of the so-called corrupt acts were the creations of interested parties and newspapers. The fact of receiving payment will not make a bhikkhu a "contaminated person".

The commissioners were also suffering from the complex that they should remedy the deficiencies that were left unsolved by the Buddha Sasana Commission.

Whatever be the accusation against the two Pirivena Universities the Commissioners were guilty of not consulting the majority Buddhist opinion of the country. They should have obtained an enlightened view on such a subject as the imparting of education to both the laity and the religious under one institution. There is no harm in the close association of the laity and the religious.

To say that there should be a separate institute for the bhikkhus is to betray ignorance of the new social and economic set-up that is present in the country. That was relevant many years ago. To pass judgment audaciously on matters like Vinaya and on bhikkhus without any deep study of the subjects is a grave crime that can mislead the entire country.

Certain references made in regard to the expenditure and disposal of finance in the Auditor-General's report have been magnified at length by the Commissioners with a view to advancing more and more

material for their recommendation that the two universities be closed down.

The signatory to this report has cited certain instances where the Commissioners were carried away by "false news reports" which appeared in the English and Sinhalese daily newspapers, all of which were written with the express purpose of agitating for the closure of the two pirivena universities.

The Vice-Chancellor further states that the Commissioners have expressed their disappointment over the University closing its doors to women. The two universities were elevated from pirivenas to pirivena universities in order that bhikkhus would be given a place in this country and not with the intention of bringing women inevitably into a close association with the male students.

Young bhikkhus must also be given a place in the education of this country but is there no other place where they could be imparted this knowledge except at the Vidyā-lankara University on a co-educational basis?, asks the Vice-Chancellor. The most important aspects of womanhood, he states, are to preserve one's dignity and to safeguard one's character which are the virtues of womanhood.

He states that in his opinion there should be a special university for women in this predominantly Buddhist land. The Sasana could be safeguarded and bhikkhus and women could obtain a good education with the opening up of an affiliated institution if there is a lack of funds to open a separate university.

## THREAT TO BUDDHISM

The threat to Buddhism today lay not in the Catholic Action Movement but in the elevation of the two pirivenas to university status. It was, therefore the duty of the government to implement the report of the Universities Commission with the least possible delay if it wished to save the Buddha Sasana.

This was said by Muhandiram W. A. D. T. Wickremasinghe, a member of the Kelaniya Village Committee at a meeting held to discuss the Universities Commission report.

He said his view was that women should not be taken into those two universities as long as monks studied there.

People spoke much about Catholic Action, saying it was a threat to the Buddha Sasana. But as a good Buddhist he could say that the actual Catholic Action now was being carried out at the two pirivena universities of Vidyodaya and Vidyā-lankara which were out to destroy the Buddha Sasana in the Dhammadipa, said Mr. D. R. Jayamanne, a former member of the Mahara Village Committee.

He was addressing a special general meeting of the Kelaniya YMBA.

He said the University Commissioners were the three bravest men of the present century because they had done their duty according to their conscience, heedless of personal privilege and popularity.

They had spoken the plain truth in their report and it was the duty of the

government to provide copies of the report to all school libraries and public libraries to enable Ceylonese Buddhists including children to peruse the report frequently and come to know the corruption that prevailed in those new universities.

Most of the bhikkhus at those pirivena universities were distorting the Buddha's teachings and misleading Buddhists. It was therefore the duty of all good Buddhists to persuade the Government to close down the two pirivena universities as soon as possible.

The only way in which the Sasana which had deteriorated badly could be restored to its original position was by implementing the Universities Commission Report.

Resolutions were passed unanimously by the association requesting that the recommendations of the commissioners be implemented with immediate effect, that bhikkhus should not be allowed to enter universities and that it was undemocratic to debar women from the pirivena universities.

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(Continued from Page 11)

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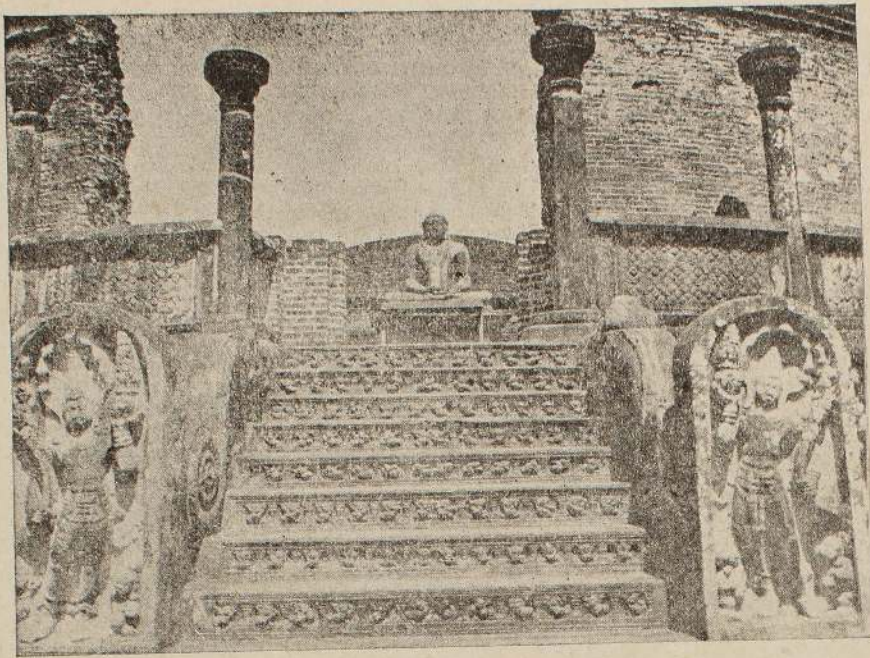
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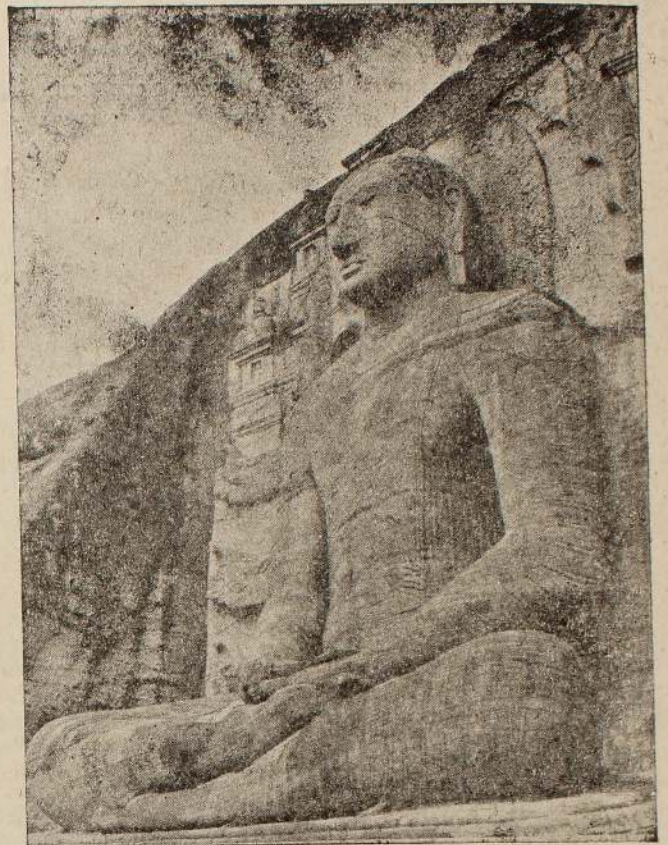
If you do not find a companion who is fit to keep company with you, who behaves well, and is wise, then like a king who gives up a conquered kingdom or like an elephant in the forest, go alone.



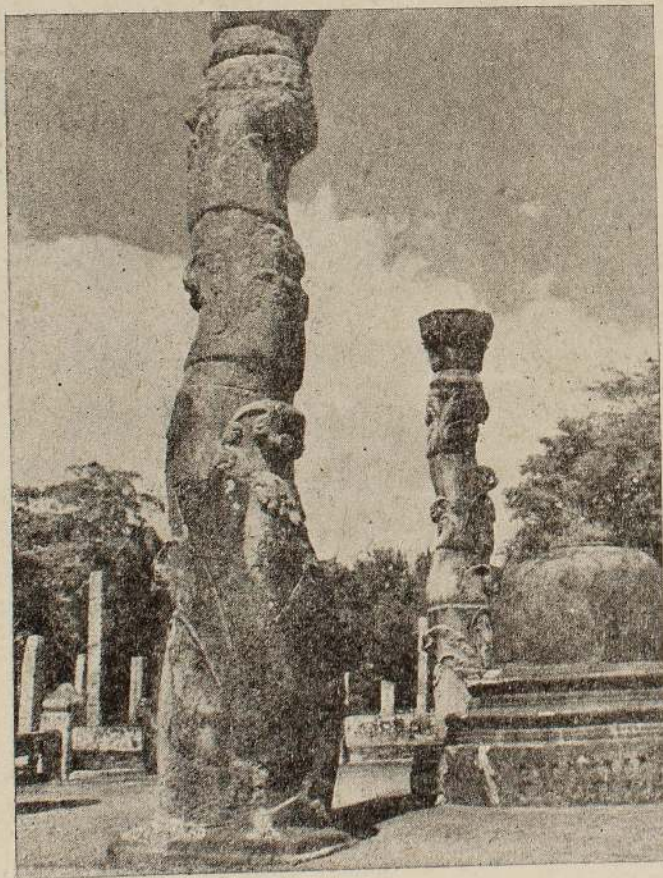


*Vatadage*

POLONNARUWA, the 11th century capital of Ceylon is a "poem in stone".



*Gal Vihare*



*Latamandapaya*



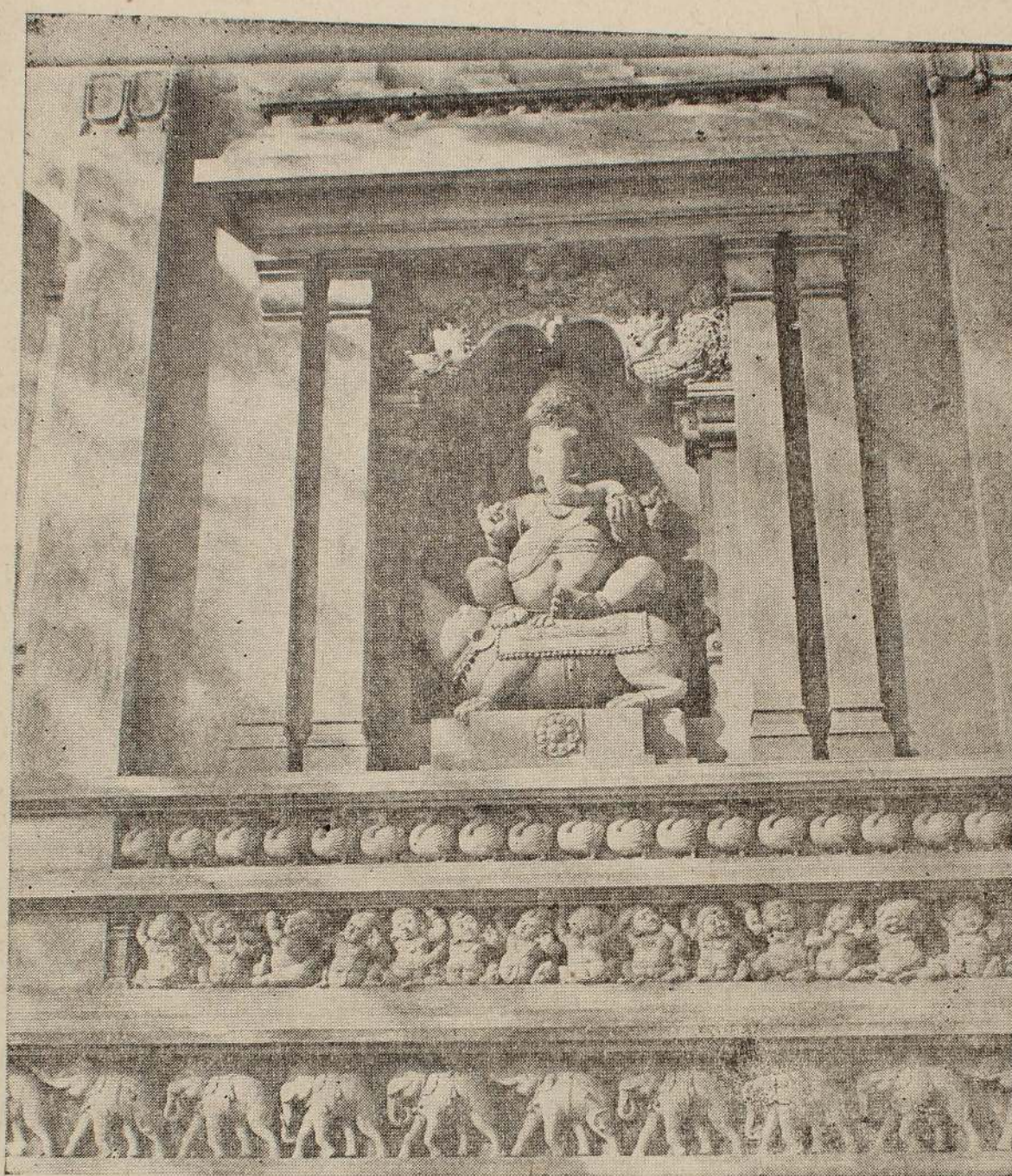
*Guard-Stone*



The Gal Vihare group of the statues of the Buddha, the Latamandapaya or the Floral Altar, the dec-

orative entrance to the Vatadage show the excellence of the work of the Sinhalese craftsmen.





*Kelaniya Temple*

Kelaniya Temple, seven miles off Colombo, lying near the picturesque bank of the Kelani Ganga is among the best known modern Buddhist temples in Ceylon.

The temple, which has been built on a spot hallowed by the visit of the Buddha, enjoys simplicity of lines architecturally.

Murals depicting incidents from the life of the Buddha and events from the history of Ceylon, portrayed in vivid colours adorn its inner walls. A most delightful frieze of swans, dwarfs and elephants has been used as decorative motif. The relief of dwarfs is most interesting, presented in various postures, and no two of them are alike.



Kelaniya temple is the scene of colourful pagentry during the full moon in January when a Perahera takes place. Hundreds of pilgrims visit it daily.



## NEW BUDDHIST VIHARA IN LONDON

**T**HE New Buddhist Vihara in London at No. 5, Hathfield Gardens, Chiswick Park, London W4, is expected to be ready in a few weeks.

The original plans were for the premises housing the present Vihara to be vacated by February 9, but renovations and decorations to the new premises in Chiswick have taken longer than anticipated.

The opening of the new Vihara is expected to coincide with the Anagarika Dharmapala centenary celebrations in Britain this year.

The chief incumbent of the Vihara, the Ven Dr. H. Saddhatissa, is making plans to make the opening of the new Vihara the highlight of the centenary celebrations—a fitting tribute to the Anagarika Dharmapala who started the London Vihara in 1928.

The Ven Dr. Saddhatissa said that the builders are doing their utmost to complete the work of the building as early as possible. The new premises, though smaller than the present Vihara, will be the most up-to-date in the whole of Europe.

He added: "For many years I have been dreaming of the day when we could have a Vihara housed on freehold land. Thanks to the Maha Bodhi Society of Ceylon, my dreams have materialised".

Many European Buddhists who have followed the work of the Ven Dr. Saddhatissa, speak highly of his efforts and those of the Maha Bodhi Society in Ceylon in the service of the Dhamma.

One prominent European Buddhist said that the London Vihara was surely a pride to Ceylon because no other Buddhist country in Asia had so far established such a centre in Britain or in any other part of Europe.

The Ven Dr. Saddhatissa hopes to have the full support and co-operation of all Buddhists in London to make the opening celebrations of the new Vihara a historic occasion. Mr. B. L. Broughton, British Buddhist and writer, donated a sum of £500 as the first instalment towards the London Vihara Fund.

During the incumbency of the Ven Dr. Saddhatissa the London Vihara has become the main Buddhist Centre for all Europe.

### UNIVERSAL BUDDHIST BROTHERHOOD

The Universal Buddhist Brotherhood of Los Angeles, California, USA, says Rev Harold H. Priebe, president of the Brotherhood, is a fast growing organisation in the Western world. "Without fanfare, we are all endeavouring to keep it so."

"Our work is to spread the incomparable Dhamma, where it is so urgently needed. In this world of transition and crisis, all nations must realise as the original Price of Peace, the Buddha taught: 'Hatred does not cease through hatred' and 'All life is One and continuous'".

He adds: "Today, the Truth is breaking through, spontaneously all over the world, in this modern era. Reality can no longer be submerged by organised or unorganised ignorance, neither can it be thus promoted."

"Pure Buddhism is the one cosmic religion and it is spreading through the use of reason, rather than mind conditioning. As Albert Einstein predicted, it is 'the religion of the future'".

### TALK ON BUDDHISM IN VIETNAM

The Ven Nguyen Kuan Bao, Vietnamese Zen monk currently studying and teaching at the Columbia University, USA, gave a lecture on Buddhism in Vietnam at a meeting of the Washington Friends of Buddhism.

He traced the history of Buddhism in his country from the earliest times. Vietnamese monks, he said, wear brown robes for everyday garb, as a symbol of identi-

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fication with the poor, wearing the yellow robe only during sacred ceremonies.

The Ven Bao detailed the social service programme of the Buddhist monasteries in his country in education, care of the sick and relief to the poor. These have been intensified in the modern, self-supporting Buddhist institutes set up in Vietnam.

He described the efforts of the modern Buddhists to make Buddhism a living force under present conditions. Educated young people, under the influence of modern French writers, such as Albert Camus, Jean-Paul Satre and Françoise Sagan, were searching for an ideology which will give meaning in a world of absurdity, and the current Buddhist programme was to find that meaning in the modern understanding of the blessed Dhamma, the emancipating teachings of Buddhism.

#### **BUDDHIST CULTURE AND ART ASSOCIATION**

With a view to future development, the Buddhist Culture and Art Association of Hong Kong, has been registered as a limited company without commercial motives, and has engaged the services of Buddhist monks and Buddhist lay devotees as advisers and directors.

The Association was approved as a legal community in 1960. In the same year it applied to the Hong Kong Radio for broadcasting programmes of Buddhist music and more than twenty talks on Buddhism. On Vesak day last year three Radio talks on Buddhism were given.

More than 100 lectures have been given at its headquarters in Kowloon. A Summer Yuan (camp) is held every year. Two schools have been established.

#### **BUDDHIST HOME FOR DELINQUENTS**

Mr. Jiro Takase, the Japanese Ambassador in Ceylon, laid the foundation stone for a two-storeyed building to house juvenile delinquents at the Gotama Buddhist Home, Nalluruwa, Ceylon.

The new building will be constructed to commemorate the late Sir Susanta de Fonseka, former Ambassador for Ceylon in Japan. The foundation stone laying ceremony was preceded by a public meeting at which tributes were paid to the late Sir Susanta.

The Gotama Childrens Home is the first such Buddhist home established for children in Ceylon by the Panadura Bauddha Maha Sangamaya. The inmates are not only given a schooling but trained in industrial undertakings.

#### **ACTIVITIES AT LONDON VIHARA AFFECTED**

Activities at the London Vihara have had to be curtailed because the Chief Incumbent, the Ven Dr. H. Saddhatissa Maha Thera, has no one to assist him in the general day-to-day routine maintenance of the premises.

A notice issued to the Buddhist public from the Vihara said: "It is regretted that the regular opening of the Vihara to the public cannot be assured because of the absence of the Vihara's secretary due to illness".

The Ven Dr. Saddhatissa said that he would continue to do his utmost to serve the general Buddhist public despite the several handicaps he was subjected to without anybody to assist him in at least the general administration and main-

tenance work at the Vihara. He said that there were rumours in London that the Vihara was on the point of closing down. That was incorrect.

He explained that the new secretary of the Vihara, Mr. T. B. Dissanayake, who was sent over to London from Ceylon by the Maha Bodhi Society of Ceylon, to take over the general administration of the institution, was a sick man. Since his arrival in London his sickness worsened, and he was admitted to hospital.

The Ven Dr. Saddhatissa said that it had become impossible for him to carry out the regular daily programme of religious work at the Vihara and at the same time maintain the general administrative work of the institution.

#### **BAN ON GOODS WITH BUDDHA TRADE MARK**

The Colombo Port Cargo Corporation has decided to ban all goods that bear imprints of the Buddha as trade marks.

Earlier, after protests from the public, it advised importers not to import such goods.

It has now asked the Department of Commerce for a detailed list of such goods.

#### **POYA DAYS SHOULD BE HOLIDAYS**

There should be no cultural renaissance of the majority, nor could there be any unity and comaraderie between the majority and minority religious groups in Ceylon under the present system, in which one group looks upon the other with suspicion, declared Mr. P. C. M. Dias, in a talk at the All-Ceylon Women's Buddhist Association in Colombo.

Mr. Dias said that the people of Ceylon, long before the advent of European rule, enjoyed all four Poya days as holidays in place of the present system of Saturday half-days and Sundays. The reintroduction of the Poya day holidays was, therefore, a step towards the re-establishment of a long lost right.

Sundays, moreover, he said, was of no significance to the Buddhists, the Hindus and Muslims who jointly number more than 91 per cent of Ceylon's population. The continuation of the Sunday holiday was only beneficial to the minority Christians who number nine per cent of the population.

Analysing the present list of holidays, Mr. Dias said that the Christian nine per cent enjoy 83 per cent of the holidays, the Muslim seven per cent enjoy three per cent of the holidays, while the Hindus and Buddhists who number 84 per cent of the population were not adequately compensated in this respect.

It is in the light of that inequality that the Buddhists asked for the granting of Poya days as holidays, said Mr. Dias. He cited the case of the United Arab Republic where Sunday was not a holiday but Friday which was a day of religious significance to the Muslims. In Burma, he added, Poya days had been holidays for many centuries.

#### **NOT LIPTON'S TEA GARDEN BUT DHAMMADIPA**

Ceylon was no more known as Lipton's tea garden, but she would continue to be known universally as the Dhammadipa, the island of the Dhamma, said Ceylon's Governor-General, Mr. W. Gopallawa.

He was opening the new Sanghawasa built at a cost of Rs. 50,000 at the Illadora Vihara, Kadugannawa.

Buddhists, he emphasised, should follow the Buddha's doctrine in their daily life. Parents should advise their children to keep away from liquor and other vices.

#### **ANCIENT CUSTOM OBSERVED**

About 50 bhikkhus from the Malwatte Vihara, Kandy, including members of the Karaka Sangha Sabha of the Chapter, walked two miles from the Malwatte Vihara to Asgiriya Vihara through the town, preceded by laymen carrying betel offerings.

This procession was a ceremony performed in accordance with ancient tradition which required either of these two Chapters of the Siyam Nikaya (sect) to inform the other officially about the death or appointment of a Maha Nayaka Thera.

The delegation from Malwatte was received by the Karaka Sangha Sabha of the Asgiriya Chapter. Betel was offered by the bhikkhus from Malwatte. Then the secretary of the Malwatte Chapter, the Ven Sirimalwatte Ananda, formally announced the election of the Ven Amunugama Rajaguru Vipassi as the Maha Nayaka Thera of Malwatte.

#### **ENSHRINEMENT OF BUDDHA RELICS**

The enshrinement of Buddha relics at the newly restored historic Kiri Vehera at Kataragama in South Ceylon, which is one of the places in Ceylon visited by the Buddha, will take place next May.

This decision was taken at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Kiri Vehera Restoration Society, at which Mr. C. P. de Silva, Leader of the House of Representatives, was present.

It was announced that the conservation and restoration work at Kiri Vehera, now being done with the advice of the Archaeological Department, would cost Rs. 700,000, out of which Rs. 300,000, including a grant of Rs. 50,000 from the Government, has already been collected. The committee decided to request the Government for a further grant of Rs. 50,000.

#### **EARL MOUNTBATTEN AT MALWATTE VIHARA**

Earl Mountbatten, during his visit to Ceylon last month, visited Kandy which was his headquarters during the last war. He also visited the Malwatte Vihara, Kandy.

At the temple he sat in the lotus posture on the ground before the Malwatte Chapter of monks in the manner of a disciple and listened to the *seth pirit* chanted by the Chapter to bless the Earl and his daughter, Lady Brabourne, who sat beside him.

Paying respect to the Maha Sangha at their arrival and departure from the temple, the Earl and his daughter both saluted in the typical oriental manner. The new Maha Nayaka Thera, the Ven Amunugama Rajaguru Vipassi, welcomed Earl Mountbatten and his daughter.

Earl Mountbatten recalled his visits to Ceylon. He said he lived in Kandy from 1944-46. Kandy, in particular, had a warm place in his heart. Buddhism, he said, was not only held in great veneration by the people of Great Britain but also by people in many parts of the world. He and the English people held the Buddhist seat of Malwatte in particular veneration.



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Ceylon

## WHO OWNS THE FAMOUS OCTAGON ?

Who is the legal rightful owner of the famous Octagon at the Dalada Maligawa, or the Temple of the Tooth, Kandy ?

Upto about 1955 it was vested in Government and its control was in the hands of the Government Agent. Until about that year the Oriental Library was housed in it under the control of the Government Agent.

About the same time, when Sir John Kotelawala was Prime Minister of Ceylon it was handed back to the Dalada Maligawa. The subject of ownership cropped up again when the Government Agent, Kandy, suggested that the Oriental Library which was shifted to the Kachcheri, should be re-established in the Octagon.

Built by the last King of Kandy, Sri Wickrama Rajasinghe, the Octagon was used by him for audiences. It was also used as his Royal Box from where the King and Royal Family could see the Kandy Perehera and other national pageants.

According to Dr. Tennekoon Wimalananda of the University of Ceylon, the Octagon belonged to the Dalada Maligawa. Dr. Wimalananda, citing historical records, maintains that Sir John D'Oyly, British Resident at Kandy, has recorded in his famous Diary that the Octagon was gifted to the Dalada Maligawa.

This gift, Dr. Wimalananda claims, is irrevocable and the Government has no jurisdiction over it.

## BUDDHIST HOLIDAY CAMP AT MALACCA

Under the guidance of the Ven Ananda Mangala Thera, a Buddhist holiday camp was conducted at Lord Buddha's Temple in Gajah Berang Road, Malacca, by the Malacca Buddhist Youth Section.

It was declared open by the Chief Minister of Malacca. Lectures and lessons on the various aspects of Buddhism were given by the Ven Ananda Mangala Thera, the Ven M. Sumana Thera, the Ven K. Dhammananda Thera and the Ven H. Gunaratna Thera.

The president of the organisation, Mr. Teh Thean Chou, who attended the camp, gave a talk at the closing session.

## NO COUP IN SOUTH VIETNAM

General Nguyen Khanh head of South Vietnam's new ruling Junta, stated in Saigon that "there had been no coup and no revolution" in South Vietnam, "but merely a purge within the Revolutionary Military Council".

He said that as a result, the problem of recognition of the new Vietnamese authorities did not arise. A new recognition was not necessary because there had been no substantial changes in the Government organisation but only a change of personnel.

Earlier reports from Saigon said that Gen Nguyen Khanh seized power in South Vietnam in a bloodless coup. A decree signed by 17 Vietnamese Army Generals and a large number of Colonels stated that Gen Duong Van Min had been replaced as the Junta chairman and Head of State by Gen Khanh.

Gen Khanh said he had received a letter from the United States Ambassador to South Vietnam, Mr. Henry Cabot Lodge, that the American Government continued to recognise the Revolutionary Military Committee.

## ATTITUDE OF BHIKKHUS TO POLITICS

"We would not be subservient to any political party. The way of the bhikkhus is not one of politics but of Nirvana. Since 80 per cent of those in politics in Ceylon today are Buddhists, they would look after the needs of the Sasana and the bhikkhus. If by a failure of this duty the Sasana is affected adversely, then there would be no alternative but to enter politics."

These observations were made by the Maha Nayake Thera of Malwatte, Kandy, the Ven Amunugama Rajaguru Vipassi, in the course of a discussion with a delegation of the All-Ceylon Buddhist Congress, led by its president, Sir Lalita Rajapakse, and by Sir Bennett Soysa, president of the Senkadagala Eksath Bauddha Mandalaya.

The Maha Nayaka Thera made these remarks when Sir Lalita referred to the tendency of some bhikkhus to take to politics and the recent entry of a bhikkhu into a Village Committee.

Sir Lalita said that in places of Buddhist worship now in ruin, it was essential for a bhikkhu to be resident. Although the Archaeological Department preserved these places for their archaeological value, the religious aspect was just as important and the presence of a bhikkhu to maintain the religious observances was a "must".

## CEYLON INDEPENDENCE DAY IN LONDON

In celebrating Ceylon's Independence Day in London on February 4, a religious ceremony was held at the London Buddhist Vihara.

Proceedings commenced with the observance of *pansil*, followed by the lighting of the traditional oil lamp, the offering of flowers and incense and *puja*. The Ven Dr. H. Saddhatissa Maha Thera, incumbent of the Vihara, assisted by the Ven Ratanasara Thera, chanted *pirith*.

The Ven Dr. Saddhatissa preached a sermon based on the *Metta Sutta*. He recalled Emperor Asoka's famous edict in which Asoka had said that if any person disparaged another religion in order to glorify his own, then that person could not be called a true believer of his own faith.

## BUDDHISM AS A SUBJECT IN THE UNIVERSITY

The Ven Mirigama Uparatana Thera, president of the London University External Students Association, has written to the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ceylon inquiring why Buddhism is not recognised by the University as an optional subject in which a student could obtain a credit pass to qualify for higher studies.

He has stated that the London University recognises Christianity as an optional qualifying subject at the General Certificate of Education (ordinary level) Examination.

The Thera states in his letter to the Vice-Chancellor: "It is understandable why London University recognises Christianity as an optional subject for its examinations. But it is surprising that the premier university of a Buddhist country does not recognise Buddhism as an optional subject in which a student may qualify for entry to the university".



## HISTORIC MONUMENTS AND THE SANGHA

The historic Buddhist monuments in Ceylon should be given over to the Sangha, if their ultimate destruction is to be prevented, according to the Ven Amunugama Rajaguru Vipassi Maha Nayaka Thera of Malwatte, Kandy.

He said that the Archaeological Department was not doing any work to preserve or protect them. Extremely valuable historical monuments which are under the care of the Department are in a state of "criminal neglect".

Trees had grown over some of the most inestimable jungle-engulfed shrines in Buddhist Ceylon, he said. Adventurous thieves were treasure troving in these cetiyas.

The Maha Nayaka Thera said that if at the cetiyas like those at Anuradhapura, Mahiyangana, Seruvavila, Mutiyangana and the Kiri Vehera at Kataragama, the Sangha were allowed some control, the Buddhist public under the patronage of the Sangha, would restore those monuments and prevent their gradual destruction.

But where the Archaeological Department was in control there was little hope of such restoration because the Government had no money to spend on the restoration of ancient monuments.

### BUDDHIST GROUP PROJECT IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

An attempt is now being made to organise a Buddhist Group in Czechoslovakia, writes Dr. Karel Werner from Brno, Czechoslovakia.

"It may be of interest to you", he writes, "that there are Buddhists in this country too. There was a Buddhist Group here before the war, but it was dispersed by the Nazis during the war.

"After the war no organisation was formed, but at present we are trying to form a Buddhist Group in Brno. It will take several months, however, before we get to know the attitude of our Central State authorities, but as, in principle, all religions may exist here, we hope the necessary permission to form the Group will be granted to us".

### 1,200TH ANNIVERSARY OF CHINESE MONK

The 1,200th anniversary of the death of the Ven Chien-chen, the eminent Chinese monk and Vinaya master of the Tang dynasty, who took Buddhism to Japan, was commemorated in Peking. The celebrations were attended by over 1,500 people.

The late Ven Chien-chen decided to go across the sea to Japan to propagate Buddhism there and, during eleven years, encountered many hardships which caused the loss of this sight. He reached Japan in 753 and he worked there energetically for another ten years until his death.

He was celebrated as the founder of the Ritsu (Vinaya) School of Buddhism in Japan and a great disseminator of culture between China and Japan in the ancient times. He was highly respected by the Buddhists and the people of the two countries.

### SANGARAMA OPENED IN COLOMBO

The five-storeyed modern Sangarama of the Sri Lanka Vidyalyaya, Maradana, Colombo, was declared open by the Minister of Finance, Mr. T. B. Illangaratne.

Mr. Illangaratne said that the spotlight of public criticism was at present focussed both on the Government and the Buddhist clergy, and at a time like that it was incumbent on the Sangha to take a greater interest in the sphere of social service.

The Sangha, he said, took an active interest in almost all matters Government was associated with, but they should not break the Vinaya rules of the Sangha in pursuing those activities.

A sedant statue of the Buddha was declared open for public worship by the Minister for Labour, Mr. D. S. Goonesekera, and a meditation centre in the new building was declared open by Mr. Richard Heggie, Representative of the Asia Foundation in Ceylon.

### THIRD CENTURY DAGOBA DISCOVERED

The history of Kandy, Ceylon, has been pushed back to the third or fourth century AC by the unearthing of a dagoba of that time near the town.

After two weeks of digging, it has now been ascertained that the hillock at Gurudeniya, six miles from Kandy, is the site of the most ancient dagoba to be found in the Kandyan country so far.

The base of the dagoba has already been excavated. Several of the bricks found at the site carry Brahmi letters, which definitely establish the date of the dagoba.

The Archaeological Commissioner, Dr. C. E. Godakumbure, has already acquired the site where excavations are continuing.

### OLCOTT DAY MEETINGS IN CEYLON

As part of the islandwide celebrations marking the 57th death anniversary of Colonel Henry Steele Olcott, the American who brought about a revival of Buddhist education in Ceylon, the United States Information Service arranged two commemorative meetings, one in Colombo and the other in Kandy.

Col Olcott was also one of the pioneers of the Buddhist revival in Ceylon during the British period. He came to Ceylon in May, 1880, and founded Ananda College, the premier Buddhist school in the Island and hundreds of other schools.

At the Colombo meeting, Mr. P. de S. Kularatne, MP and former Principal of Ananda College, after paying a tribute to the work of the Colonel, said it was time that the Buddhists erected a statue of Col Olcott in memory of work he had done for the country and Buddhism in particular.

A large photograph of Col Olcott was unveiled by the President of the Senate, Mr. Thomas Amarasinghe, who presided at the meeting.

In Kandy, a public lecture on Col Olcott was delivered by the Ven Pandit Saranankara Thera at the United States Information Centre. The Buddhist Students Union of Dharmaraja College, issued a booklet on the life and services of Col Olcott.

### BAUDDHA MANDALAYA'S PROTEST

Stating that the proposal to move the Passenger Terminal in Colombo harbour from the present site to the old site is an act of sabotage subtly engineered by those who are opposed to the construction of the Rs. 800,000 Cetiya at the entrance to the Port, officials of the Varaya (harbour)

Bauddha Bala Mandalaya have protested against the proposal.

According to a spokesman of the Mandalaya, several unsuccessful attempts had been made in the past to prevent the construction of the Cetiya. Acts of sabotage included refusals by certain personnel of the Colombo Port Cargo Corporation to deduct voluntary contributions from dockers on the pay roll.

The Mandalaya made a start with the construction of the Cetiya on a unique design by the Chief Port Engineer, Mr. A. N. S. Kulasinghe. Now, said the spokesman, those who are opposed to the construction of the Cetiya have changed their tactics and put forward a rather lame excuse to persuade the authorities to shift the Terminal Building. This would, in effect, bring to nought the original intention of the Varaya Bauddha Bala Mandalaya to convey to the visitor to the Island that Ceylon is primarily a Buddhist country.

The Executive Committee of the Mandalaya is preparing a memorandum to the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, enumerating the various acts of sabotage perpetrated to prevent the construction of the Cetiya, and final move to nullify the project by shifting the Terminal Building.

### MAHA NAYAKA WANTS FILMS BANNED

The Maha Nayaka Thera of Malwatte, Kandy, the Ven Amunugama Rajaguru Vipassi, has strongly advocated the banning of films on the ground that they corrupt the young and cause infinite damage to national culture.

The Maha Nayaka made this observation when Mr. Philip Gunawardene, leader of Mahajana Eksath Peramuna, a political party, called on him to pay his respects.

The Maha Nayaka said that Mr. Gunawardene should consider the question of banning films. They were one cause of juvenile delinquency as well as grave crime. He had seen schoolboys with their school books waiting in queues at theatres instead of going to school.

He said he was also opposed to the practice of sending children for study abroad, particularly to Britain and the United States, because when they returned they tried to follow the culture of those countries.

If parents wanted to send their children for study abroad they should send them to countries like India and Japan. In such Asian countries students could acquire a training in their professions and a spirit of patriotism too.

### UNION URGES PROBE ON DISCRIMINATION

A probe by a commission of inquiry into alleged acts of discrimination against the Sinhalese Buddhist employees in the mercantile sector in Ceylon since 1956 is urged by the newly formed Samastha Lanka Velanda Sevaka Sangamaya.

The union alleges that doors are closed for applicants for employment from Buddhist schools like Ananda, Nalanda, Mahinda and Dharmaraja. The union will urge the Government to initiate an inquiry into alleged acts of discrimination against Buddhist employees in the matter of their promotions and salary increment.

They will also ask the Government to probe into new recruitments to the bigger





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mercantile establishments since 1956 with a view to ascertaining whether Buddhist applicants have been deliberately left out. These were decided at the first Executive Committee meeting of the new Sangamaya.

A Buddhist monk, the Ven Devamot-tawe Amarawansa Thera, is the Patron-President of the Sangamaya. He said the new union will be directed against Catholic Action.

#### **BUDDHISM LOSING GROUND SAYS "LIFE" MAGAZINE**

That Buddhism is losing ground in Ceylon is the opinion expressed by Mr. Holmes Welch, a student of Buddhism who was in Ceylon recently collecting material for a book he is writing on Monasteries in China.

He says this in an article in the American magazine, *Life*. In the course of his article he says: "One country where Buddhism could logically be expected to be most vital is Ceylon. This beautiful island became for a time the leading Buddhist country after Buddhism died out in India.

"It boasts two Buddhist universities and some of the most distinguished Buddhist scholars. Nevertheless, Buddhism is losing ground in Ceylon. The Sangha or congregation of monks, is rapidly dwindling; one authority estimates it has been cut in half in the last ten years.

"Many of the younger monks have been discarding their yellow robes. In some cases the reason is that they will not get the traditional deference or financial support they feel entitled to. In other cases the young men are not content with the contemplative life; they want to do something, to play a greater role in contemporary Ceylon.

"As a result, monks were recently made eligible to accept teaching jobs without giving up their vocation. In 1962 three-quarters of Ceylon's new teachers were Buddhist monks.

"For some this is still not enough. They would like to enter other professions, but monastic rules — among them a prohibition on touching money — made it impossible. So they are agitating to have the rules changed.

"The Sangha, however, is controlled by the heirarchs in the old capital at Kandy. They are not only conservative in their views; their monasteries are much richer than most in Ceylon. So the antagonism in Ceylon between the conservative monks and those monks who wish to modernise is an antagonism between rich and poor as well.

"There is also some questioning of the traditional Buddhist ways among the Buddhist laity. The Buddhist lay movement in Ceylon is strong and active. It sponsors a Young Men's Buddhist Association; it publishes books and periodicals, finances lay study of the doctrine, career or welfare work and organises community entertainments.

"With so much being done by Buddhists outside the Sangha, is the Sangha itself necessary as it once was" asks Mr. Welch.

Buddhism in Burma, Japan, China, South Vietnam and in a few other South East Asian countries is also discussed.

#### **DHAMMA CAN REFORM THUGS**

The Chief Justice of Ceylon, Mr. H. H. Basnayake, appealed to the Superintendent of the Police of the district to see that

the Dhamma is used as a weapon to combat the many evils prevalent today. He was speaking at the prize-distribution of a Dhamma School.

He said that all those who were a potential threat to society, particularly thugs, should be brought to the police station and a good sermon should be preached to them. That would transform their lives.

In prisons there were Dhamma schools used as a weapon to combat the many evils prevalent in the country, added the Chief Justice.

#### **SHRINE ROOM FOR CANCER INSTITUTE**

A shrine room at the Cancer Institute at Maharagama, near Colombo, was declared open by the Governor-General, Mr. W. Gopallawa.

The Governor-General said that grave repercussions could arise if people, in a small country like Ceylon, did not learn to eschew religious and other such differences.

Mr. Gopallawa said that it was heartening to note that the Buddhist Society of that hospital had received the co-operation of the workers, irrespective of their religious beliefs. He also thanked the donor of the new shrine, Mr. H. D. Simon, for his noble gesture.

In fact, he said, there was a belief that religion was of more value in curing diseases than medicine. The shrine room would be a big blessing to patients of the hospital.

#### **CONGRESS WANTS SACRED SITES**

The All-Ceylon Buddhist Congress has decided to ask the Minister of Education to hand over to the Buddhists popular places of worship which are at present under the control of the Archaeological Department.

These include a number of ancient Buddhist shrines in Polonnaruwa and Anuradhapura. According to Congress sources, the Archaeological Department is treating these sacred places of worship as antiquities with the result that no proper facilities are provided to perform religious ceremonies.

The Congress has listed a number of places which should be easily accessible to Buddhists.

#### **BIRTHDAY OF THAI PRINCE MONK**

To commemorate the 112th anniversary of the birth of the late Ven P. C. Jinavaravansa (His Royal Highness Prince Prisdang of Thailand) former incumbent of the Dipaduttamarama temple of Colombo, a devotional programme was conducted at the temple on February 22 and 23.

The Prince monk was responsible for the erection of the magnificent Ratana Cetiya at the temple and the founding of the Kotahena Buddhist Girls School, now Gunananda Vidyalaya.

The programme included a *pirith* ceremony, a *dana* and a sermon by the Ven Aggamaha Pandita Pallannaruwe Vimaladhamma Nayaka Thera, Vice-Chancellor of the Vidyodaya Buddhist University.

#### **DON'T MIX RELIGION WITH POLITICS**

"The greatest obstacle to Buddhism in this country is the association of religion with politics", said Mr. D. C. R. Gunawardene, chairman of the Universities



Commission in a public lecture delivered at the Colombo Young Men's Buddhist Association.

He was speaking on "The Future of Buddhism in Ceylon". He said: "We must keep away from these diversive factors. Unless we do so there is no future for Buddhism in this country or elsewhere".

It was necessary that the Dhamma should be revived to suit changing conditions and in keeping with the essence of the Buddha's teachings. The Buddha Dhamma was the greatest force for the betterment of human relationship and in this context, Buddhism had a special role to play.

#### DANA INSTEAD OF USUAL TAMASHA

A plea for inter-religious amity and cooperation "in this fair isle of Sri Lanka" was made by the Ven Kalukondayawe Pannasekera Maha Nayaka Thera addressing members of the Bauddha Sangamaya of the Registrar General's Department in Colombo at a *dana* given to 100 bhikkhus to commemorate the Department's centenary.

The Maha Nayaka Thera said that it was a sign of the times that the Buddhist association of the Department should have organised that ceremony in place of the usual tamashas associated with centenaries.

A *dana* to 100 monks at one place was uncommon, he said. Ceremonies of that nature in Government departments were proof that the country was coming back to its own in respect of freedom and culture

#### CZECHS INTERESTED IN BUDDHISM

Two Czechoslovakians, Dr. Ivor Fischer and his wife Dr. (Mrs.) Olga Fischer, arrived in Ceylon, having as their main interest the study of the impact of Buddhism on society, as far as education is concerned.

Dr. Fischer is Reader of the Department of Indology of the Charles University, Prague. His wife is a specialist in skin diseases.

Dr. Fischer has a thorough knowledge of Sanskrit and Pali. He has already made a theoretical study of the impact of Buddhism on the ancient Indian society and his present endeavour in Ceylon is to find out whether that trend continues in Ceylon society today.

Dr. Fischer delivered a lecture at the Vidyalandara Buddhist University on "Some Aspects of the study of Sanskrit" and he also addressed the Royal Asiatic Society on "Some problems of Pali and Buddhism."

Dr. Fischer has written a number of books on Buddhism and ancient Indian culture, dance, drama and music. "While there were not many Buddhists in Czechoslovakia", he said, "Buddhist philosophy is beginning to have a growing appeal both in Czechoslovakia and in Europe".

#### BUDDHIST STUDENTS FORM UNION IN LONDON

The inaugural meeting of the Ceylon Buddhist Students Union in London was held under the chairmanship of Mr. R. G. de S. Wettamuny of the Ceylon Bauddha Jatika Balavegaya, who was in the United Kingdom.

The object of the union is to look after the welfare of the Ceylon Buddhist students in the United Kingdom and keep in

touch with the Buddhist and national affairs in Ceylon.

Mr. Nihal Nissanka Ratnayake was elected president, Mr. Upali de Soysa vice-president, Mr. Gamini Wanigasekera secretary and Mr. L. C. Samararatne treasurer.

#### THERAVADA MISSION IN U.S. WANTED

The American Buddhist magazine *The Golden Lotus* published in Philadelphia, states editorially in its December, 1963, issue that it has periodically, for many years, "called to the attention of Theravada lands the necessity for a mission of the Theravada School in the United States".

It points out that some of the Mahayana sects are well established and "represent the Mahayana discipline here. The La-

maist Kalmucks who entered the United States ten years ago are becoming part of the nation, and are establishing the disciplines of Mongolia and Tibet.

"But Theravada is not officially represented by a permanent headquarters, and by properly trained monks who present the Theravada discipline. Theravada is not in danger of being forgotten by scholars and professors, who know the translations of the Pali Text Society, but it is in danger of being overlooked by people who do not read for themselves the Theravada translations....."

"A competent missionary should take up the work begun by the Venerable Dharmapala in 1893, and the Theravada Sangha should recognise the problem", says *The Golden Lotus*.

#### Letter from India

## Recent Discoveries at Sopara

V. G. Nair  
(India)

MR. NOEL PEIRIS of the International Society of Buddhist Culture, Colombo, has rendered a distinct service to the revival of Buddhism in his rediscovery of Sopara, the international Buddhist cultural centre in ancient India.

The illustrated book released by Mr. Peiris on the history and ancient antiquities of Sopara contains useful information indispensable to students of Buddhist culture.

The ancient mound in Sopara was excavated by the late Pandit Bhagawanlal Indraji of the Gujarat Research Society on April 9, 1882, when a stone coffer from its top was discovered. In this coffer was found a large copper casket containing eight seated copper images. Inside the copper casket was found a silver casket and 86 gold flowers and a gold coin of Gatamiputra Satkarni.

Another crystal casket was fitted tightly to the stone casket. In this crystal was found another gold casket. Round the gold casket were 19 gold flowers. In the cape of the gold casket was found 13 tiny pieces of earthenware, brown in colour and smooth on the outside. Covering the earthen pieces were ten bright gold flowers. All these relics are now preserved in the Royal Asiatic Society Library, Town Hall, Bombay.

Two major edicts, 8 and 9, were also discovered at Sopara which are kept at the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay. It is believed that these earthen pieces might be parts of the Begging Bowl of the Buddha. But the discovery of the eight images and the gold coin of Satkarni inside the casket would go to show that the images and the coins belonged to

the post-Asokan period. In the time of Asoka, there were no images of the Buddha and the Bodhisttas. Gotamiputra Satkarni lived in the early years of the Christian era and was a great builder of Buddhist shrines in Andhra. The stone casket is undoubtedly Asokan and the earthen pieces might be parts of the Buddha's Begging Bowl. But all these points require further research.

I went to Sopara and found the ruined mound tumbling down due to the ravages of nature. It is believed that some more Buddhist antiquities might be lying buried in the area.

Sopara has historical and religious importance to the Buddhist world. It was from here that Sthavira Dharmakrithi, the Asokan missionary lighted the lamp of the Dhamma throughout Western India. The restoration of Sopara as an international Buddhist centre of pilgrimage is a herculean task in view of the financial burden involved in it. But if any Buddhist leaders of Asia could come forward with some finances to restore the Stupa, I am sure, the Indian Buddhists and the Government of India and also the State Government would contribute liberally to rebuild this ancient site of Buddhism.

Due to the efforts of Mr. P. T. Borale, former Mayor of Bombay and Principal, Siddharth Law College, Bombay, the Ven Otani of Japan through the Rev. Riri Nakayama, has presented a gold plated copper image of the Buddha to the Siddharth College of Law founded by the late Babasaheb Dr. B. R. Ambedkar.

The image has arrived in Bombay. It will be ceremoniously installed in the College premises, and will prove a centre of worship to the new Buddhists of Maharashtra. Mr. Borale deserves thanks for securing this valuable gift from the people



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## AMBEDKAR MEMORIAL

Arrangements are being made to erect a memorial in the shape of a Buddhist Stupa for the late Dr. Ambedkar, at his cremation ground, Bombay. The cost of this Stupa will be borne by the new Buddhists.

Babasaheb Ambedkar, the son of the late Dr. Ambedkar, is the Chairman of the Committee. Among the Buddhist leaders who have taken a leading part in the construction of the Stupa are Babasaheb B. K. Gaikwad, M.P., Mr. P. T. Beralé, Mr. R. Bhandare and Mr. B. D. Khobragade, M.P. and others.

The Stupa will cost about Rs. 100,000 and some of the valuable personal remains of Dr. Ambedkar will be preserved in it.

## CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

The new Buddhists in Maharashtra are keenly interested to understand the

teachings of the Buddha. But in view of the total absence of preachers and literature in Marathi, they are unable to realise their desire.

The mass of the new Buddhists are so poor that they cannot afford to buy costly books. The only way is to publish small booklets and distribute them free among them. Due to the efforts of Mr. Haribhau Pagare, a noted Buddhist writer in Marathi, we visited several blocs and rural areas in Maharashtra on a Dhamma preaching mission.

We addressed several large gatherings and explained the basic teachings of the Buddha.

In this connection, the Nalanda Education Society of India is doing valuable work. It is desired that the Dhamma preaching should be undertaken on an extensive scale either by monks or learned laymen. Some foreign Buddhist Missions should be interested in this noble work.

## Appeal to Ceylon Buddhists

*This appeal to Ceylon Buddhist has been issued by the International Institute of Buddhist Culture in New Delhi, whose patron is Mr. Sukich Nimmanheminda, Ambassador of Thailand for India, Ceylon, Nepal and Afghanistan, and its Secretary, Miss Sujatha Nadarajah:*

The cry of the Institute is: "give the Dhamma to India" and it is coupled with the Anagarika Dharmapala's call, "save the Buddhist shrines of India." This the secretary says "will assuredly make India the Motherland of Buddhism again."

### Some misconceptions of the Ceylon Buddhists

1. Millions of Indians are Buddhists.
2. Buddhist shrines are entirely in the hands of the Buddhists.
3. There are enough Buddhist monks and lay missionaries in India.
4. The Ceylon Buddhists need no more interest in India except when on a pilgrimage.
5. The Indian intellectual is without a well defined philosophy of his own.
6. The type of missionary monk sent over is more than enough to deal with the Hindu intellectual.

### What we fail to Understand

1. That the so-called millions of Buddhists are only as yet a social order.
2. That Buddhist shrines in India unlike those of the Sikh, the Jain, and the Hindu, are not entirely in the hands of the Buddhists.
3. That there is hardly even a handful

of missionary monks and missionary layman.

4. That the Sinhala Buddhist is over and above indebted to India for this gift of the Dhamma and hence that India and the Indians should be of more value to him.
5. That the Indian intellectual is imbibed with a well defined and profound philosophy of his own.
6. That in almost all cases the missionary monks are not learned and versatile enough, or do not know enough of the Indian or English medium to impart the Dhamma; so that in both ways they allow what they preach to be drawn into and inside the main currents of the Upanishad teachings and thereby lose the very motive for their stay in India. Some have even 98 per cent gone to the extent of vehemently protesting against giving a sermon on *anatta*.

### Why India should become Buddhist

1. The most philosophical mentality lies super and sub-strata among the Hindu intellectuals.
2. As such only a thin veil lies between the Buddha's pathway and their error.
3. It follows then that the gift of the Dhamma to them would reap the most abundant harvest.
4. Some day they shall lead Asia in even its economic development and even at present it is the recognised balancing force between two extremes of thought.
5. As such think of the immense potential of that force being the vitality of the Buddha Dhamma.
6. Last but not least is that the followers—and mind you millions at that—of



Dr. Ambedkar would become Buddhists in the actual sense of the term.

### Some Glaring Errors

1. Our most educated and versatile teachers of the Dhamma have unhesitatingly skipped India in their missionary activity. One hardly even hears the names of the venerable ones whose names have set even Europe wondering, in this very close neighbour, India.
2. The non-versatile ones who have come over, usually led by "for sojournings in foreign countries and India the closest," lose even that ardour before long and settle down to sitting in committees, becoming pilgrim-rest keepers, tourist guides or even contractors of buildings.
3. These later in their eagerness to be absorbed into the lay fold around them let the most fundamental *anatta* doctrine be engulfed by the *atta* doctrine and the sincerest from among them, stop the negation of the comparison so often offered by the Hindu friends.
4. The Ceylon Government sends any "Mr. John Cosmos" to fill the seat of an Ambassador. For, whereas the millions of Ambedkar followers and other Indian Buddhists and also the Hindus look to the Ambassador from Ceylon as a Buddhist, their eagerness melts at the Bible-limited philosophers who arrive, and who, poor things, have to, almost all the time, keep referring and committing to memory the Buddhist concepts of "is" and "will be".
5. We very often think that India is 100 per cent Buddhists or we run to the other extreme and think that all Indians are of the illicit immigrant intellect.
6. We have even forgotten that we owe 95 per cent of our own Sinhala culture to the Dhamma brought by that illustrious Indian Thera Mahinda.

### Some real Dangers

1. The propagation of the Mahayana doctrine — the type that talks of Buddhas living in Sukhavati very much in their ego.
2. The millions of Ambedkar followers who have embraced Buddhism as a social refuge are prone to being unduly taken advantage of by the Christian missionaries, for real lack of Buddhist missionaries.
3. The good work done by some of our missionaries in the West may modify that concentration due to the Hindu embrace of Buddhism in India.
4. Another "Yana" may possibly evolve with the *anatta* theory reading as *atma*, due to the intellectual amalgamation of strength and weakness of the preachers of Hinduism and Buddhism respectively.

### Some simple Remedies

1. Maha Theras of the calibre of Ven. Narada, Ven. Piyadassi, the late



Shri H. V. Pataskar, Governor of Madhya Pradesh, India and Mr. Shirley Amerasinghe, High Commissioner for Ceylon in India, at the International Dharmaduta College, Sanchi, India, during a visit they paid to the College.

- Ven. Soma etc. be sent for Dhammaduta work.
2. Centres of active teaching and dissemination of the Dhamma be helped more by the Ceylon Buddhists.
3. That the booklets so ably written by the holy inmates of Vajiraramaya temple, Colombo, and the Wheel publications issued from Kandy be translated into Hindi and the other Indian languages through an institute of Buddhism and be distributed without delay.
4. Sinhalese being the most sympathetic of the Buddhist races towards India, from them must come the foundations of the soaring propagation of the Buddha Dhamma in India.
5. The representatives of the Ceylon Government in India should have the sparkling vitality of the Buddhist missionary as well.
6. A Theravada centre to train Indian Buddhists together with Buddhists of other races for monkhood is very essential on the soil of India.

### What an Institute Should do

1. It shall look after the missionary monks who come here to preach the word of the Buddha.
2. The translations into Hindi etc., could be carried out in the Institute.
3. Publication and distribution of the Buddhist writings of the Wheel Publication Society, Vajiraramaya etc.
4. The Institute can be made use of for the Pirivena courses for training of monks on Indian soil.
5. The regular "bana" of the Sinhalese village could be carried out here.
6. It can also be the venue for "Sil" campaigns and meditation circles as carried out in the Buddhist countries.

## THE BUDDHIST PUBLICATION SOCIETY

(Founded 1924)

58, Eccleston Square,  
London, S. W. I.

Thoughtful people everywhere have become disillusioned with purely material progress and have awakened to the truth that it is powerless to remove the real sources of sorrow, which are mental frustration, sickness, old age and death. They need a remedy more fundamental than science or technology can offer.

The Buddhist Publication Society of Kandy, Ceylon, is striving to meet their need for the Dhamma. It now distributes Buddhist literature to 65 countries, where its publications, *The Wheel* and *Bodhi Leaves*, are eagerly awaited, read with appreciation, often translated into the native language, and passed on to others.

The demand for the Society's literature, however, is increasing all the time, and the need is greatest in those countries where the converts to Buddhism are least able to give financial help. Only the Buddhists of Ceylon can provide the regular support necessary to continue the work.

They can do this by joining the Society as Associate Members (Rs. 25/- per annum) or as contributors. In either case, they receive the Society's publications in English and Sinhala (Damsak) for twelve months. The Society is strictly a non-profit organisation.

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# TIBETAN REFUGEES AND THEIR FUTURE

**THE PRESENCE OF TIBET:**  
by Louis Lang-Sims. The Cres-  
set Press, 11 Fitzroy Square,  
London W 1, England, 20 sh.

**R**ECAPITULATING the story of the flight of the Dalai Lama and his followers to India without falling into the hands of the Chinese, this book is an absorbing narrative of the visits to India Miss Lang-Sims made in her endeavour to see the Dalai Lama and help the Tibetan refugees.

Although she herself is a Christian, Miss Lang-Sims has great respect and reverence to Tibetan Buddhism and the Dalai Lama. "I had been seriously interested in Buddhism", she writes, "as a result of reading two books by men who were later to become my friends: Bhikshu Sangharakshita's *Survey of Buddhism* and *Peaks and Lamas* by Marco Pallis".

Tibet was a country invested by

her mother in her child-mind "with an aura of magic-cum-holiness". Tibet had always impressed and elured her, and when the newspapers headlined the Sino-Tibetan crisis and splashed the news of the escape of the Dalai Lama, her interest was revived and she made up her mind to visit the afflicted people with a view to rendering them whatever help she could.

She begins her story with the origin of the Tibetan people and relates how they were descended from the "Divine Chenrezig" the type of "perfect Bodisattva". He came down as a monkey to beget the Tibetan race. He came down again in the seventh century after Christ "in the form of the King named Strongsten-Gampo who was responsible for the introduction of Buddhism to Tibet". Of all schools of Buddhism, she points out the

school of Tantric Buddhism which Tibet harbours is "in its metaphysical system, its psychology and its ritual practice, the most subtle, complex and open to abuse".

Miss Lang-Sims had more than one audience with the Dalai Lama and met and talked with refugees of all types from Tibet on the Himalayan foothills where the Dalai Lama has made his abode at Dharmasala. She met several Tibetan and Indian leaders and her comments on these encounters are both descriptive and critical. "In this book I have tried to write the truth as I see it at the risk of losing the confidence of all those with whom I worked on behalf of the people of Tibet", she writes.

There was, for instance, Gyalo Thondup, the Dalai Lama's brother who was very helpful in the fulfilment of her mission. "The predominant impression which came into me in the first few moments of meeting Gyalo Thondup was that here was a person who had not altogether lost the kind of primitive, transparent innocence which in the West has been stamped out of existence.....Gyalo is the

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is cheaper  
*saves timber* *saves labour*  
lasts a life time  
use  
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symbol of his people".

About the Dalai Lama himself she has made penetrating observations. He is called by the Tibetans Kundun, the Presence; hence the title of this book. "His function in the eyes of his people is not primarily either to teach or even to rule but simply to be present". They believe that by his presence the protective power of the Lord of Mercy is made active in their minds. "Even their own wives and children meant less to the Tibetans than the life of His Holiness".

No one could mistake the Dalai Lama because there was some indefinite element in his personality which set him apart from everyone else.

"The most remarkable of his physical features were his hands, which were very large and long, curving fingers like the fingers of the Buddharupas..... The Fourteenth Dalai Lama (the present one) is as unconventional as he is generous. With him, whether it be a matter of blessings or autographs, protocol shrivels away and love streams forth..... His personal courage and self-effacement are as indisputable as the serene happiness which shines in his face and bears constant witness to his steadfast goodness. This is perhaps the final word that should be spoken of the Dalai Lama: he is good".

Miss Lang-Sims has a good deal to say about the undesirable activities of Christian missionaries who were also in the field with the avowed object of helping the refugees but actually were making an attempt to proselytise them. She met a group of female missionaries "who were blatantly sexless".

"I wondered, not for the first time, why it was that those who elected to spread the Gospel in far-off lands should be recognizable on sight simply by the fact they had deprived themselves of their own womanliness..... From Colonel Mercer, who was a Roman Catholic, I sought information concerning the Dalai Lama's youngest brother, who was being educated in Darjeeling at the well-known Catholic school and was the cause of considerable anxiety amongst those who feared that he might forget his vocation as a Lama Incarnate. Colonel Mercer spoke of the matter with a kindly twinkle of amusement; but I could not erase from my mind the indignation with which I greeted the first news of this arrangement..... My perplexities were by no means erased by a long discussion on the subject with Father Rector of St. Joseph's. The Father Rector assured me cheerfully that the boy was happy and doing well at the school and had already forgotten all that nonsense about being an Inaurante..... Besides the younger brother of His Holiness there were a number of other Tibetan boys at St. Joseph's School.....

Before I left the school the Father Rector took me to the boys' living quarters where the tabernacle of the Blessed Sacrament stood upon an altar painted in traditional Tibetan style by a local artist. There were the three panels depicting respectively the Nativity, Christ in the garden and the Resurrection..... Contemplating the activities of the missionaries in Kalimpong. I could only accuse them of dragging into disrepute the name of Christ. Their behaviour and attitude of mind was, and no doubt continues to be, arrogant, stupid, bad mannered and ultimately blasphemous..... they lose no opportunity to insult and belittle the Buddhist faith of which they are ludicrously ignorant..... The missionaries of Kalimpong dispense medicines and milk to the destitute always with the underlying motive of turning away these people from their own faith and thus destroying such spiritual strength as they may still possess to support them in a time of crisis".

The book gives a vivid description of the flight of the Dalai Lama, the atrocities committed by the Chinese, the fighting in Tibet, the attitude of the Chinese Communists to Tibet, Tibetan children, the camps in which the refugees live and their manner and mode of living. It also enumerates what the Tibet Society of the United Kingdom is doing for the refugees.

In its pages there are also references to the late Lobsang Jivaka, the British Buddhist monk who was a regular contributor to *World Buddhism*; Freda Beedi the indefatigable Englishwoman who has devoted her life to the welfare of Tibetan refugees and "who had successfully Indianised herself", Dardo Rimpoche, the well-known Lama who runs a school for the refugees; Bhikshu Sangharakshita the English monk who is "a somewhat enigmatical figure always seeming to be a centre of controversy"; and Premier Nehru with "the dark red rose, so different from the cigars and umbrellas which are its Western equivalent, pitting its fragile perfume against India's gigantic stench, symbolising the inadequacy of his defences against his inheritance".

Her comments on Communism which "at least in its pure form, aims at the destruction of the human personality and so of all tenderness, humour, courtesy and simple ordinary happiness"; India "in the shape of her preposterously unco-operative and ill-mannered desk clerks not one of whom seems to be capable of an obliging act save in expectation of baksheesh";

Tibetans whose "faces were so beautiful that I held my breath, not as possessing any singular claim to beauty in the obvious sense but as an expression of the very being of humanity itself", the Chinese etc. are extremely interesting.

But what of the future of Tibet and the Tibetans? "I believe", she writes, "that the greatest of all dangers for the exiled Tibetans is that of being persuaded with or without the concurrence of their friends abroad and their Indian hosts, to return to Chinese-dominated Tibet. If the Dalai Lama were ever to succumb to this temptation, in the belief that some new 'agreement' could ensure him sufficient authority to preserve the religious freedom of his subjects, he would be involving the Tibetan people in a total betrayal of everything which once constituted their faith. I do not believe that such a danger is remote".

A de S.

## BODHEDRUM

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# THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ABHIDHAMMA

THE PSYCHOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY OF BUDDHISM:  
An Introduction to the Abhidhamma.  
By Dr. W. F. Jayasuriya. Y.M.B.A.  
Press, Colombo, Ceylon. Rs. 10/-.

IN this book the author has presented us with a comprehensive and lucid exposition of basic tenets of the Abhidhamma teachings well set into the frame of the whole Buddha Dhamma, while a consistent effort is made throughout the book to keep up the scientific attitude in handling the matter.

In this respect we may even consider the author's stress upon the scientific outlook to be almost an overestimation of today's value of the Western science, as the Buddha Dhamma in general, and the Abhidhamma in particular, are both broader and, in a sense, narrower than the science of today. It deals not only with knowledge and cognizance, but with their true aim, too, which is deliverance; thus it transcends science.

And, further, it does not accumulate all accessible data of experience as science does, but carefully selects only those which are relevant to its final goal; in this respect it is, to its advantage, more limited than Western science. The author's stress upon the scientific outlook may be, however, the best way to make the higher teachings of the Abhidhamma more acceptable to the scientifically educated Western mind.

The book is in three parts and has an appendix and a useful glossary of Buddhist and Western terms pertaining to philosophy and psychology.

Part one gives us a general introduction to Buddhism intended for those who are not acquainted with it at all. The author suggests modestly that those who have had some knowledge of Buddhism might begin at part two. But part one is written in such an uncommon way that everybody, even when knowing much about Buddhism, would read it with pleasure.

Part two entitled "The Science of the Mind. A Psycho-Physical Analysis" forms the bulk of the book. It deals first with the general aspects of the Abhidhamma and

then it proceeds to the analysis of the reality down to the "reals" as the author calls the ultimates *paramatthas* or elements. We get acquainted both with cognitive and non-cognitive constituents of the mind, then with the material elements constituting the bodies, and, finally, the nibbana element is dealt with as the only supramundane real.

Then the difficult problem of "non-reals" or concepts and ideas are referred to and in the last two chapters of this part we find an attempt to describe the various complicated processes and activities of the mind, together with kamma, death, rebirth and controlling process, and then a brief treatise on causal relations based both on the method of Dependent Origination and on the method of the *Patthana*.

Part three contains the very reason for which all Buddhist teachings exist, viz. the exposition of the Four Noble Truths culminating in the Eightfold Noble Path as the means whereby the true aim of life may be realised.

In the Appendix an interesting attempt has been made to find use for the modern physiological knowledge of the sense and brain organisms and functionings in order to illustrate the ancient Buddhist teachings on the six seats of the sense cognitions. It also tries to show Buddhism to be a scientific philosophy. The book contains many most instructive illustrations and drawings.

Dr. Jayasuriya's book must be considered to be a most valuable contribution to the propagation of the knowledge of the Abhidhamma both among the Buddhists and among non-Buddhist students of philosophy and psychology. Abhidhamma has been still too neglected, not only by modern scholars, but by the wide circles of lay Buddhists as well. We cannot claim, however, to be really acquainted with the Theravada Buddhist tradition, unless we pay equal attention to the study of the Abhidhamma teachings which we have paid to the teachings contained in the Sutta-Pitaka.

In modern Western psychology

a start has been made towards the understanding of the deeper layers of human psyche by C. G. Jung and his school of depth psychology. Abhidhamma, carefully studied, could show them new practical and experimental ways of analysis, if they made themselves capable of a proper approach through the *jhana* stages.

But many lay Buddhists, too, could profit from it, if they gave up the opinion that the Abhidhamma is too difficult for them and if, on the other hand, enlightened guidance by some Abhidhamma master could be found. There is nowadays a widespread enlivening of the *vipassana* method of Satipatthana in a special Burmese modification which became known in many parts of the world chiefly through the book *The Heart of Buddhist Meditation* by the Ven. Nyanaponika Maha Thera of Ceylon. Can we, perhaps, hope that even a combined method of the *samatha-vipassana* way connected with introspective Abhidhamma investigation could come from Burma where Abhidhamma has always been much studied?

In the meantime, we cannot do better than encourage the Abhidhamma scholarship to bring our knowledge of it to one level with our knowledge of the Sutta Pitaka. Dr. Jayasuriya's meritorious work is a very good start towards this goal and should be soon followed.

There are, of course, a few critical notes we ought, perhaps, to add here, briefly. Some English equivalents of the Pali terms do not seem to be adequate enough. This difficult problem, however, cannot be discussed here. The Pali equivalents in the brackets should be used more consistently throughout the book, even where this means repetition.

It is not clear sometimes why some statements are given in footnotes and not in the text proper, whereas a few other marginal statements could be included in footnotes rather than in the text. This is often the case with the references to parallel statements of Western science and philosophy. It should be more clear from the beginning what importance has been ascribed to such references and then they should be worked into the book, accordingly.

(Continued on Page 27)



# UNQUESTIONED AUTHORITY ON THERAVADA

THE QUESTIONS OF KING  
MILINDA: Part I. Translated  
from the Pali by T. W. Rhys Da-  
vids. Dover Publications Inc.  
New York, USA \$ 2.25

THE QUESTIONS OF KING  
MILINDA: Part II. Translated  
from the Pali by T. W. Rhys Da-  
vids. Dover Publications Inc.  
New York, USA \$ 2.25.

THESE two invaluable volumes which contain the complete translation from the Pali by Professor Rhys Davids of the famous Buddhist dialogues may be said to comprise Buddhism in a nutshell.

Every possible question involving doubts and criticism about the teachings of the Buddha has been asked by the highly intellectual King Milinda and very aptly, satisfactorily and learnedly answered by the illustrious Nagasena, a master of the Doctrine.

Milinda confronts Nagasena with a number of queries and dilemmas quoting the words of the Buddha which are seemingly contradictory, but the celebrated logician and philosopher Nagasena expounds the doctrine and explains each dilemma to the entire satisfaction of the King and removes his doubts. "Very good, well answered", exclaims Milinda at the conclusion of each reply.

In these replies very apt similes are used to drive a point home. Questions like: If the Buddha has really passed away, what is the good of paying honour to his relics?; why did he admit Devadatta to the Order, if he knew of the schism he would create?; Why did the Buddha refuse to answer certain questions; did not the Omniscient One change his mind? etc, were thrust at Nagasena who was quite equal to the occasion.

The principal aspects of the Doctrine are also discussed and explained in the course of these questions and answers. These include reincarnation, renunciation, soul, faith, virtue, perseverance, mindfulness, karma and nirvana.

The book consists of discussions of a number of points of the Buddhist doctrine "treated in the form of conversations between King Milinda and Nagasena Thera..... The King himself plays a very subordinate part. The questions raised,

or dilemmas stated, are put into his mouth. But the solutions, to give opportunity for which the questions or dilemmas are invented, are the really important part of the work, and these are put into the mouth of Nagasena". Concerning Nagasena himself it is said:

"He was in possession of the highest (Buddhist) insight, a master of all that had been handed down in the schools, and of various discriminations by which the most abstruse points can be explained.

"He knew by heart the ninefold divisions of the doctrine of the Buddha to perfection, and was equally skilled in discerning both the spirit and letter of the Word. Endowed with instantaneous and varied power of repartee, and wealth of language, and beauty of eloquence, he was difficult to equal, and still more difficult to excel, difficult to answer, to repel, or to refute.

"He was imperturbable as the depths of the sea, immovable as the king of mountains; victorious in the struggle with evil, a dispeller of darkness and diffuser of light; mighty in eloquence, a confounder of the followers of other masters, and crusher-out of the adherents of rival doctrines".

On the other hand, King Milinda also was hard to equal as a disputant and harder still to overcome. He was the acknowledged superior of all the founders of all the various schools of thought. "And as in wisdom so in strength of body, swiftness and valour there was found none equal to Milinda of India".

This book was compiled in North India but it had been entirely lost to the land of its origin. It was, however, available in Ceylon and the countries which derived their Buddhism from Ceylon.

Ceylon plays the leading role in preserving the book, and if this was not done this remarkable exposition of Buddhist thought and ethics would have been lost forever. Professor Rhys Davids writes:

"There appeared in Colombo in the year of Buddha 2420 (1877 AD) a volume of 650 pages, large 8vo — the most considerable in point of size as yet issued from the Sinhalese press — entitled Milinda Prasna. It was published at the expense of five Buddhist gentlemen whose names deserve to be here recorded.

"They are Karolis Piris, Abraham Liwera Luis Mendis, Nandis Mendis, Amerasekara, and Charlis Arnolis Mendis Wijayaratna Amarasekera. It is stated in the preface that the account of the celebrated discussion held between Milinda and Nagasena, about

500 years after the death of the Buddha, was translated into the Magadhi language by 'teachers of old' (purwakarin wisin); — that the Pali version was translated into Sinhalese, at the instance and under the patronage of King Kirti Sri Rajasinha, who came to the throne of Ceylon in the year of Buddha 2290 (1747 AD), by a member of the Buddhist Order named Hinatikumbure Saranankara, a lineal successor, in the line of teacher and pupil (anusishya), of the celebrated Weliwita Saranankara, who had been appointed Sangharaja, or chief of the Order — that this priceless book, unsurpassable as a means either for learning the Buddhist doctrine, or for growth in knowledge of it, or for the suppression of erroneous opinion, had become corrupt by frequent copying — that, at the instigation of the well-known scholar Mohotti-watte Gunananda, these five had the texts corrected and restored by several learned Bhikkhus (kippa namak lawa), and had had indices and a glossary added, and now published in this revised and improved edition".

It is pointed out that *The Questions of King Milinda* is later than the canonical books of the Pali Pitakas but, on the other hand, it is not only older than the great commentaries, but the only book, outside the canon, regarded as an authority which may be implicitly followed.

The book is today esteemed as an unquestioned authority by Hinayana Buddhists and is considered to be a strong defence of the orthodox doctrine. It offers a clear insight into the study of Buddhist thought and philosophy.

As Professor Rhys Davids very rightly says, the book "is undoubtedly the master-piece of Indian prose; and indeed is the best book of its class, from a literary point of view, that had been produced in any country".

A de S.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF ABHIDHAMMA

(Continued from Page 26)

Further, we can sometimes hardly judge from the context whether a particular statement is a paraphrase of an Abhidhamma tenet or the author's opinion or the explanation thereof. The language is, in a few cases, not quite understandable and the interpretation seems often exaggerated to us. All these minor shortcomings, however, could be easily made good in a possible second edition of this excellent book.

Karel Werner Ph.D.  
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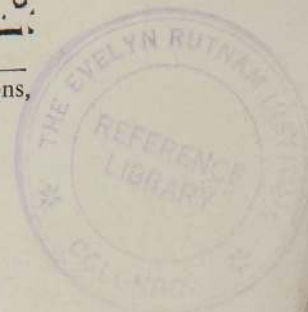
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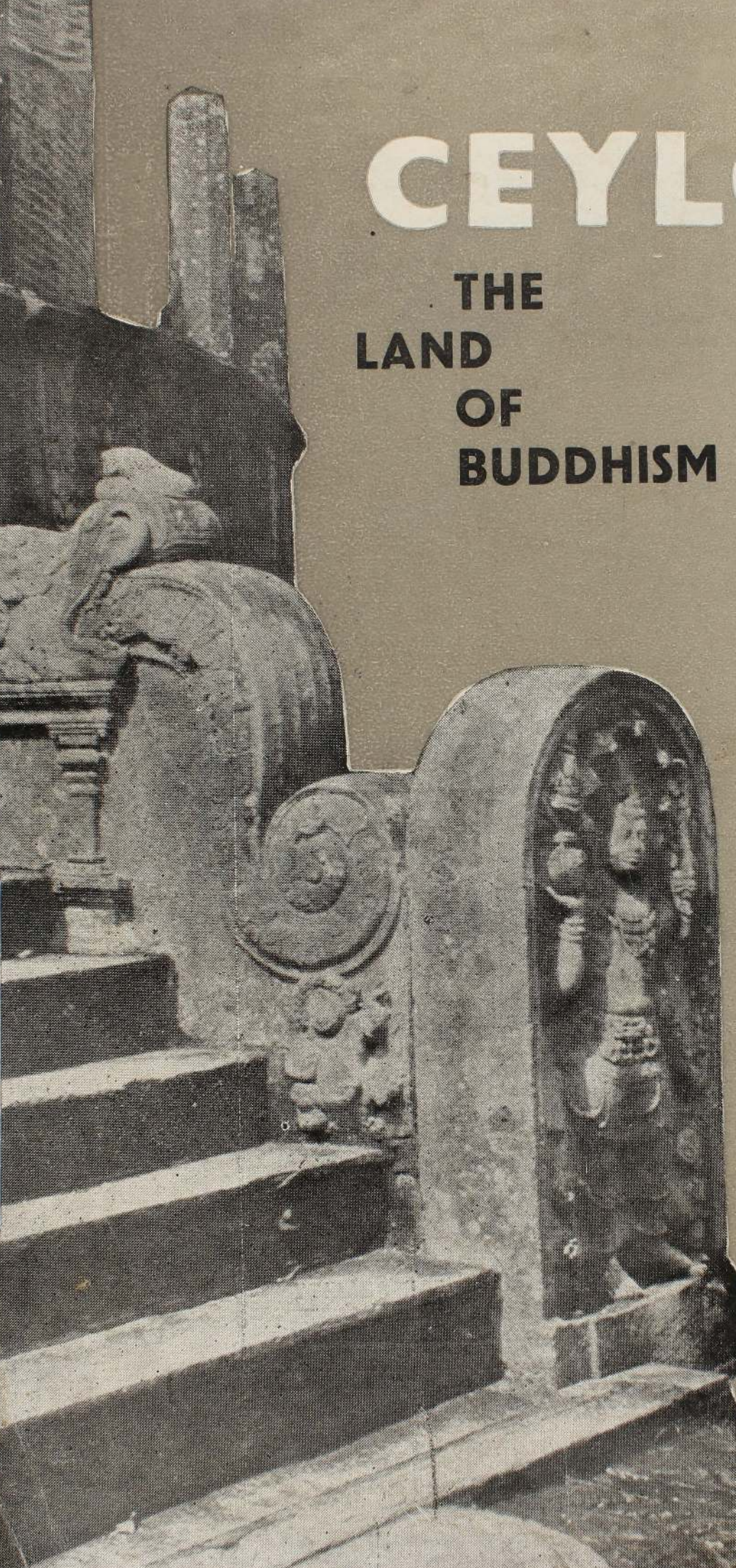
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