

**ANAGARIKA  
DHARMAPALA**

by

**IDA GURUGE**

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Anagarika Dharmapala at the age of fifty-five.





# ANAGARIKA DHARMAPALA

*by*

ANANDA GURUGE



Published by  
The Department of Cultural Affairs

1967

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Printed at the Government Press

First Publication as Introduction to  
Return to Righteousness 1965.

Second Publication as a Separate Book  
1967.

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“ I have to be active and activity means agitation  
according to Constitutional Methods. ”

— *Anagarika Dharmapala*





## INTRODUCTION

A part of Dr. Ananda Guruge's 'Introduction to "Return to Righteousness—a Collection of Speeches, Essays and Letters of the Anagarika Dharmapala"' is published as a separate book to meet a popular demand for a handy publication on the life and work of the Anagarika Dharmapala. The seven chapters of this book deal with some salient aspects of the nation's history and the role which the Anagarika played in ushering a national and religious revival in Ceylon. The reader, who wishes to acquaint himself more thoroughly with the ideals and thoughts of the Anagarika are referred to the collections of the Anagarika Dharmapala's Sinhala and English writings—*Dharmapala Lipi* and *Return to Righteousness*—both of which were edited by Dr. Ananda Guruge and published by the Anagarika Dharmapala Birth Centenary Committee of the Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs.



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18th August, 1967.





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## The Decline and Fall of a Nation

THE Aryans from India, who settled down in the fertile river basins of Ceylon and founded the Sinhala race around the fifth century B. C. were converted to Buddhism in circa 307 B. C. by the missionaries sent there by Asoka, the great Buddhist Emperor. From that time onwards, Buddhism had, despite temporary set-backs, remained the main religion of the Sinhalas ; and their life, literature and culture were influenced most strongly by the spiritual values of the Buddha's teachings. Though Hinduism came within a few centuries of the introduction of Buddhism, it was no rival. The Buddhists absorbed as much of Hinduism as of the indigenous Pre-Buddhistic practice and beliefs. As a result, a rare degree of co-existence developed between the Buddhists and Hindus in Ceylon which ultimately permitted them to participate in one another's religious ceremonies, rites and practices. One worships in the other's temple with no qualms of conscience, and one is often amazed to discover a God-negating Buddhist in the act of praying to Hindu Gods for worldly welfare or for help in adversity. Though there is definite evidence of the existence of Muslims in Ceylon in the first quarter of the eighth century A. C.<sup>1</sup>, there is no information regarding the manner in which Islam affected the religious life of the people of this country. Being traders, concerned mainly with good commercial relations with the Sinhalas, they had apparently made no inroads into the spiritual arena.

1. A. M. A. Azeez : *The West Re-appraised*, Maharagama, 1964, p. 111.



Roman Catholicism was introduced to the Island by the Portuguese who came there in 1505. Within a few decades of their arrival in Ceylon, priests from Portugal set about converting the people to Roman Catholic Christianity. From a study of documents relating to the period, Paul E. Pieris and M. A. H. Filzler could arrive at a series of conclusions on the purpose and the techniques of conversion adopted by them :

“Conversion ceased to be a matter of faith. The conversion of kings was desirable as that of their people would follow as a matter of course. . . . Conversion became a matter of barter. . . . The helpful effects of force on conversion were well recognised. . . . To denationalize the race was not the policy of the Missionary, but such was the tendency of the course he pursued. With baptism came a rebirth under a foreign name. . . . The Missionary unconsciously felt that the manners and customs of his co-religionists were superior to those of the heathen, though he did not express his opinion with the offensiveness of later times. He had his slogans and shibboleths, and a singularly profound knowledge of certain narrow aspects of human psychology. He was honestly delighted at any imitation however superficial, of what he considered Christian Ways.”<sup>1</sup>

In the words of one of these missionaries, Frey Symao, the task of conversion was of far-reaching consequences, for he said, “Let not your Highness think, that should this be by force, it will not be good. Because from these first Christians who are the fathers and already old, we do not desire anything, but only from the children and those who will come afterwards. For these children, *being presently instructed in our holy faith*, will teach the fathers whom they now have and their children when they shall obtain them.”<sup>2</sup>

1. Pieris and Filzler : Ceylon and Portugal, Part I, Leipzig, 1927, pp. 31-35.  
2. *Ibid.*, p. 33.

The Missionary activities of the Portuguese in Ceylon coincided with the hostilities of Rajasingha I against Buddhism. Between them, they weakened the Buddhist Institutions and adherents in the low-country. Buddhism was confined to the Kandyan hills where the Sinhallas had an independent kingdom.

In 1650 the Portuguese were expelled from Ceylon by the Dutch who occupied the maritime provinces. Although they showed no signs of the enthusiasm which impelled the Portuguese to effect mass conversions in the Island, the Dutch adopted subtle means of establishing the Dutch Reformed Church in Ceylon. Enjoining the Dutch who married native women to educate their children well, the Governor-General and Council of India stated :

“Whereby not only will the welfare of the company be promoted, but also and especially the Reformed Christian Religion will be propagated to the honour of God ; and this must be regarded as of greater importance than everything else.”<sup>1</sup>

Joan Maetsuyker, President and Commander-in-Chief, elaborated the Dutch policy on religion further in relation to education :

“With the object of propagating the Christian doctrine among the inhabitants, promoting God’s glory and the salvation of the souls of the poor fold (Whereby the Company’s position is at the same time assured), rooting out heathenism, and checking the consuming canker of the Mohammedan heresy.”<sup>2</sup>

The Dutch policy of disqualifying persons, who had not been baptized, from inheriting property created a class of “Christians” who, though baptized, were neither properly instructed in Christian doctrines nor

1. Instructions from the Governor-General and Council of India to the Governor of Ceylon, 1656-1665, Colombo, 1908, p. 6.

2. Memoir of Joan Maetsuyker, Colombo, 1927, p. 19.



inclined to alienate themselves from their traditional religious practices and beliefs. A fair assessment of the religious policy of the Dutch and its results in Ceylon is found in an official report of Anthony Pavilioen, a Dutch Officer in charge of the Jaffna District, on his transfer to Batavia :

"I will now proceed to comment on the advantages which are derived from them (i.e. territories in Ceylon). The most important point in my opinion is that God's Holy Word is now preached in its true spirit, whereas fifty years ago the inhabitants were still heathen and after that, during the time of the Portuguese, though instructed in the Christian religion, they were only taught to honour the Popes. How far the Reformed Religion has advanced during the seven years that we have been here only God, who trieth the heart and reins, can know, because, owing to their cowardice and obsequious nature it is hard to say whether the people submit in religious matters only to please their worldly rulers, or whether the Holy Ghost is really working in their hearts, or whether they are induced by both influences."<sup>1</sup>

The Dutch were hard on the Roman Catholics. The reasons were apparently more political than religious. According to Father S. G. Perera, "The Catholics of this Island, when left to their fate by the Portuguese Missionaries, could not think of any methods of securing sacerdotal ministrations except by a return to the Portuguese regime. The Portuguese missionaries likewise did not know of any way of helping the Catholics of Ceylon except by the king of Portugal and their triumphant return. . . . The Dutch persecuted the Catholics of Ceylon to assure themselves of their continued hold on the Island."<sup>2</sup>

1. Instructions from the Governor-General and Council in India, &c., p. 107.

2. Father S. G. Perera, S. J. : Life of the Venerable Father Joseph Vaz, Apostle of Ceylon, Galle, 1953, p. 249.

The Muslims and the Catholics fled to the Kandyan hills to escape from Dutch persecution and were received by the Sinhala Buddhist kings with friendship and cordiality. Evidence for this unusual spirit of tolerance, which had always characterized the relations of Buddhists with other religions, are found even today in the flourishing pockets of Catholics and Muslims in remote Kandyan villages. In settlements of their own, undisturbed by political, commercial and religious rivalry and protected by tolerant Buddhists, the Muslims and Catholics worshipped their Gods in their own way and preserved the beliefs, practices and the ways of life they cherished. The king of Kandy, according to Robert Knox, "honoured and esteemed" Christianity and in his realms the Christians—both "Protestants and Baptists" buried their differences and were satisfied to call themselves "We Christians."<sup>1</sup>

The steps taken by the Dutch to promote Christianity were critically examined by later evangelists in Ceylon and their conclusions varied from forthright blame to unreserved praise; for instance, Rev. Robert Mayor in 1818 blamed them for "much injury done to the cause of Christianity,"<sup>2</sup> while Rev. R. S. Copleston mourned the abolition of the Dutch religious policy and wished that the British continued to apply pressure as was done by the Dutch.<sup>3</sup>

When the Dutch capitulated to the British on 16th February, 1796, the number of Dutch Christians began to fall and in the words of Emerson Tennent, "at the close of their ministrations, the clergy of the Church of Holland left behind a superstructure of Christianity prodigious in its outward dimensions, but so internally unsound as to be distrusted even

1. Robert Knox : An Historical Relation of the Island of Ceylon, London, 1681, pp. 67 and 304.

2. Quoted in J. W. Balding : One Hundred Years in Ceylon or the Centenary Volume of the Church Missionary Society in Ceylon 1818-1918, Madras, 1922, p. 109.

3. Ibid., p. 35.



by those who had been instrumental in its erection and so unsubstantial that it has long since disappeared almost from the memory of the natives of Ceylon.”<sup>1</sup> The indecision which characterised the early religious policy of the British administration in Ceylon gave an opportunity for Christian converts without adequate instruction or faith to revert to their former religions. According to the records of the Church Missionary Society in Ceylon, the number of Buddhist temples in the Sinhala Districts had increased from between two and three hundred to twelve hundred within the first decade of the British rule.<sup>2</sup> Governor North (1796–1805) was satisfied that the Toleration he had given to Buddhism had relieved its “professors from a galling and odious hypocrisy”<sup>3</sup> by which he meant the practices of “baptized persons who worshipped the Buddha and the devil.”<sup>4</sup> North’s plans for a system of missionary education and a campaign of proselytization through a local clergy<sup>5</sup> were not fully realised due to financial difficulties.

What worried the early British administrators was the influence which Kandy wielded on the people of maritime provinces in matters connected with Buddhism. In 1750, as a result of a long and persistent campaign by Venerable Weliwita Pindapatika Asaranasarana Saranankara, Higher Ordination had been re-established in Kandy with the assistance of a Chapter of monks from Thailand. The resultant Buddhist revival, attended also by a renaissance in learning and literary activity, spread throughout the Island. The Nayakkar kings of Kandy became the champions of the Buddhist cause. Temples were being established

1. Tennent : Christianity in Ceylon, p. 71.

2. Balding : One Hundred Years in Ceylon, p. 33.

3. Tennakoon Vimalananda : Buddhism in Ceylon under the Christian Powers, Colombo, 1963, p. lvii.

4. Balding : Loc. cit., p. 112 quoting Rev. Benjamin Ward.

5. “The Clergy born in their country and educated in England will form a body united to the natives by former ties and affection to us by habits of education and profession” : North in his dispatch of 26. 2. 1799.

and renovated ; monks were recruited and trained ; educational activities were undertaken in every village ; and literature received a new impetus. In the low-country, Matara became the centre of his movement.

Maitland (1805-12) was particularly interested in reducing the influence of Kandy on the Buddhists of his territory and in setting up a committee of Buddhist monks in Matara he gave as one of the reasons, the need "to break through the powerful combination which has, hitherto from want of taking a proper view of the subject, been allowed to subsist between Modeliars and the Principal Priests, to the great detriment of the British Interests, and obvious advantage of the King of Kandy"<sup>1</sup>. But Maitland, influenced obviously by the growth of rationalism and liberal thinking in his home-land, ensured that all religious groups had the freedom to exercise their religions. A group which benefited from the removal of disabilities imposed by the Dutch were the Roman Catholics who, he claimed, "instead of being hostile are now become the strongest supporters of, Government"<sup>2</sup>.

Maitland was accused on having "adopted measures tending to suppress the native schoolmasters in the Island and to lessen the means of instructing the inhabitants in the Christian Religion."<sup>3</sup> The religious policy of his successor, Robert Brownrigg, (1812-20) was apparently influenced by these accusations for he not only interested himself on Christian educational movement but also assisted zealously the missionary societies which established their missions in Ceylon at this time to promote the Evangelical Movement.<sup>4</sup> It was not purely out of devotion to his religion, as admitted by him in the Farewell Letter to the Wesleyan Missionaries dated January 30, 1820 :

1. Tennakoon Vimalananda : loc. cit., p. *lxii*.
2. *Ibid.*, p. *lxiii*.
3. *Ibid.*, p. *lxiii* quoting his dispatch of 4.3.1809.
4. Baptist Mission in 1812 ; Wesleyan Missionary Society in 1814 ; Church Missionary Society in 1818 ; American Mission in 1816.



“It is not necessary to dwell upon my sincere zeal for a wide extension of the Christian faith, as it were independent of other motives ; because it is in fact *inseparably connected with my political office.*”

And in a letter to William Wilberforce on June 13, 1816, he stated :

“ The Chief Objects of my Government have been the Religious and Moral improvement of the people and the propagation of the Gospel.”<sup>1</sup>

With the cession of Kandyan Provinces in 1815, the British Crown assumed under the Kandyan Convention the prerogatives with the consequential obligations of the Kandyan monarch. One such obligation was couched in the fifth clause of the Convention as :

“ The religion of Boodho professed by the Chiefs and the inhabitants of these provinces is declared inviolable and its rites, ministers and places of worship are to be maintained and protected.”

It is interesting to note that the Sinhala version of the Convention does not confine this guarantee to Buddhism alone ; it includes the worship of gods (Devagama—that is, the worship of Hindu deities) also.

This obligation was only partially fulfilled and continuous attempts were made by the British Government to sever its connections with Buddhist affairs, in response to the persistent agitation which the Christian missionaries carried on in both Ceylon and England. These attempts were successful in 1853 when the Government provided the Buddhists with an organization to control their affairs. But this proved to be very unsatisfactory. Meanwhile, between 1819 and 1853, vast extents of temple lands were confiscated by the Government and Buddhist institutions were left in an impoverished condition.

1. Tennakoon Vimalananda : Loc. cit., p. lxvi.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, the British efforts at denationalizing the Sinhalese and weaning them away from their religion, culture and traditions had reached the zenith and the disappearance of Buddhism from Ceylon was imminent. It was the prevailing thought of the day which James d'Alwis echoed when he said in 1852 :

“ We hope the day may yet come when the Trio of the one Great God, will become a substitute for the Triad of Buddhism ; and when men shall ‘ in truth and in spirit ’ worship Jehovah and . . . . sing praises of His name ! ”<sup>1</sup>

## II

### Signs of Renaissance

The last section of this Introduction gives an insight into the conditions prevalent in Ceylon during the last half millenium, so that the reaction to them by the Buddhists can be viewed from a correct perspective. What is known popularly as the “ Buddhist Resurgence ” is the culmination of a movement which the Buddhists had consciously launched during these centuries as the means of restoring Buddhism to its pristine glory and of protecting the Buddhist way of life, cherished by the people for over two thousand years, from the onslaughts of alien influences, which, from both religious and political

1. James d' Alwis : *The Sidat Sangarawa*—a Grammar of the Sinhalese Language, Colombo, 1852, pp. 133-134.

considerations, were undermining it for the avowed purpose of creating a denationalized race with neither desire nor capacity for freedom from foreign domination. The threat of religious, national and cultural effacement was a challenge that had to be met. The tenacity with which the movement was launched reflects the gravity with which the Buddhists viewed their plight under foreign domination.

What were the immediate causes of the Buddhist revival? Dr. G. C. Mendis<sup>1</sup> felt that the celebration of the jubilees by Christian missions in the eighteenth-sixties gave an impetus to it, while Father S. G. Perera<sup>2</sup> saw in the rise of the Sinhala middle class the main cause for the Buddhist revival. The Buddhist revival was not of such late origin. If the "*Jubilee Memorials of the Wesleyan Mission South Ceylon 1814-1864*" published in Colombo in 1864 is to be relied upon, the Buddhist opposition to Christian activities commenced long before the Buddhist monks "were convinced that it was the intention of the missionaries to destroy Buddhism and place Christianity in its stead." (p. 286).\* One of the earliest acts of overt opposition was the publication of parodies on Christian tracts as early as 1826 (p. 286).\* The Buddhist revival was already felt by the Christian missionaries when they were celebrating their golden jubilees in the 'sixties.

The century following the restoration of Higher Ordination in 1750 had seen a widespread spiritual re-awakening among the Buddhists. During this period, the study of Buddhism, classical oriental languages and literature and the history and culture of the Island received an impetus and it was an era of unprecedented literary activity. Poets were prolific in the production of narrative and lyrical poems extolling the ancient glory of the nation and the greatness of the Buddhist culture. A deep sense of

1. G. C. Mendis : Ceylon under the British, p. 107.

2. Father S. G. Perera : A History of Ceylon II, p. 195.

\* These page numbers refer to "Return to Righteousness" edited by Ananda Guruge, Colombo, 1965.



patriotism and nationalism grew in the country. The challenge of the foreign political power as well as that of the growing influence of the missionary societies prompted the Buddhists to action.

In 1839, Venerable Valane Sri Siddhartha Thera founded the Paramadhammacetiya Pirivena wherein were educated a number of scholars who in time became the leaders of the Buddhist revival movement. With the revival of learning, literary controversies in which a large number of scholars participated from all parts of the Island became the order of the day. They gave an impetus to the study of ancient literature and provided opportunities for the Sinhala language to develop into a pliable means of communicating modern thought. The subjects of controversy soon extended to the religious field. The period around 1861 had been an uneasy one for the Christian missionaries ; their records state :

“ During the eighteen months that followed mission work throughout the entire low country underwent a severe sifting process which brought to light an amount of heathenism and hypocrisy among those who called themselves, and were regarded as Christians, which was hardly credible. A Buddhist revival took place during which public lectures were given for the avowed purpose of overthrowing Christianity and leading the converts back to their original faith. The result was that hundreds of those, whose names had stood on the congregational lists of the various missionary societies forsook all connections with the Christian Church.”<sup>1</sup>

Rev. D. J. Higgins evolved a test to be signed by the converts to the effect that they accepted Christianity to be the only true religion and that Buddhism was

1. Balding : One Hundred Years in Ceylon, p. 135.

false. Out of a 1,000 converts, only 342 were prepared to sign it and of them, too, many were paid employees of the Mission.<sup>1</sup>

The Buddhist-Christian controversies which started in 1863 marked an advanced stage of the Buddhist revival. Bhikkhus and laymen led by Ven. Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala Nayake Thera and Ven. Migettuwatte (or Mohottiwatte) Gunananda Thera were now ready to take the battle to the enemy's camp. What they meant to the Christians and their impact on Christianity as a whole can be gauged from the frank account of the Baddegama controversy given by Rev. Parsons who actually participated in it ; he said :

“ I was slow to believe it would become such a serious matter until urged by our people to prepare for a fierce contest. The result fully justified their anxieties, for never before in Ceylon was there such a marshalling of the enemy against Christianity. The one aim of the fifty priests and their two thousand followers, who assembled here on February 8, was not to defend Buddhism but to overthrow Christianity. Encouraged by translations from Bishop Colenso's writings, they considered the utter defeat of Christianity easy and certain. Knowing the people we had to encounter we felt that our victory would be more triumphant and complete by attacking Buddhism while we defended Christianity. *It was, not, however, till we were somewhat advanced in the controversy that we could fairly estimate the difficulties of our position and day by day we had to commend ourselves in prayer to God and confide in Him for wisdom and direction at every step.*”<sup>2</sup>

The controversy at Panadura in 1873 had a most unexpected result in that it drew the attention of Colonel H. S. Olcott and the Theosophists to the Buddhist conditions in Ceylon. With the arrival of

1. Ibid., pp. 135-136.

2. Quoted in Ibid., p. 120.

Colonel Olcott in 1880, the Buddhists found an efficient leader who was capable of translating their religious and national aspirations to action through a well-conceived plan and programme. Supported strongly by Ven. Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala Nayake Thera, he organized an Island-wide movement for a system of Buddhist Schools. Half a century of Christian-dominated English education had convinced the Buddhists that, if any headway could be made in winning for the Buddhists their rightful place in society, it was achievable only through a well-knit system of Buddhist Schools. It was abundantly clear to them that their children had to be given an education which was comparable in content and standard to that given in missionary schools and which in emphasis was attuned to the religious and national needs of the people. According to Christian sources :

“Vernacular schools as well as English and Boarding schools have multiplied rapidly, some of them taught by European teachers and itinerant preachers penetrate to the remote village copying Christian phraseology and Christian missionary methods. Sunday schools, Young Men’s Buddhist Associations, Tract distribution, carol singers during the Sinhalese New Year (sic !), parodies of Christian hymns, Buddhist cards for Buddha’s Birthday, newspapers, a Buddhist ‘Daily Light’ and ‘Imitation of Buddha’, a ‘Funeral Discourse’, pictures of events in the life of the Buddha, a Buddhist flag have all been brought into being.”<sup>1</sup>

The response to this movement had been most encouraging right from the beginning. Volunteers came in from all directions and among them were men like Anagarika Dharmapala and Valisinghe Harischandra who combined the religious revival with agitation for national freedom.

1. Ibid., pp. 21-122.



The reactions of the contemporary Christians give us an idea of the movements as a whole. It was Rev. J. A. Ewing who said in his "Resplendent Isle" :

"We rejoice in all this opposition, for it rouses the people from apathy and indifference. It has led also to the spread of primary school teaching among children—a duty utterly neglected by the Buddhist monks in respect of the boys, and, of course, nearly always of the girls. Christianity has everything to gain ultimately by the change."

And K. J. Saunders in his "Modern Buddhism in Ceylon" said :

"Already we have to thank God for signs that Buddhists are awakening from the long sleep of centuries, a new enthusiasm for national life, and revival of the old yearning for the coming one, both due, we believe, to the quickening touch of Christianity."

The Roman Catholic attitude was more realistic. *The Ceylon Catholic Messenger* of May 20, 1881 commented on the work of Colonel Olcott as follows :

"The Theosophists cannot in any case be worse than the Sectarian Missionaries, and if Colonel Olcott can induce the Buddhists to establish schools of their own, as he is trying to do, he will be doing us a service ; because if the Buddhists would have their own denominational schools, as we have ours, they would put a stop to the *dishonesty now practised by the Sectarian Missionaries of obtaining Government money for proselytising purposes* under the pretext of grants-in-aid for education. Though it is in the education of our own people that we are chiefly interested, yet it is neither our wish nor our interest as Catholics that education should not be universal."<sup>1</sup>

1. Quoted in H. S. Olcott : *Old Diary Leaves, Second Series, Madras, 1954, p. 196.*

The Right Rev. Bishop R. S. Copleston felt that it was an "external and artificial" revival brought about by the diffusion of education among monks and by the restoration of ancient shrines.<sup>1</sup>

The net result of the revival movement may be judged from three statements by Christian Missionaries :

"1903—This year the Buddhists became very active in opposing Christian work and establishing opposition schools. " Christianity cannot be said to be in a thriving condition here : converts are few and the best of them seem to be glad to gate away to other parts "

"1905—The Buddhists are now building schools of a far more substantial nature which, were thronged with children and in charge of efficient teachers."

"1909—The Buddhist opposition to Christian work is severe and intense and our means to combat it are limited."<sup>2</sup>

### III

#### The Emergence of a Leader

*" Times of general calamity and confusion have ever been productive of the greatest minds. The purest ore is produced from the hottest furnace, and the brightest thunderbolt is elicited from the darkest storm. "*—Caleb Colton.

In 1864, an year after the famous Baddegama Controversy, when the Buddhists with renewed interest and energy were organizing themselves to preserve their religious heritage, a child was born on the 17th of September to a wealthy and influential Buddhist

1. R. S. Copleston : Buddhism—Primitive and Present in Magadha and in Ceylon, London, 1892, pp. 466-467.

2. Balding : Loc. cit. pp. 125 and 138.

family in Colombo. The parents, though Buddhists renowned for their piety and generosity, named their son *Don David* in conformity with the fashion in vogue. Don David was sent to the best schools available in Ceylon at the time. Intelligent and conscientious, he pursued his studies with diligence, in spite of several incidents where his reluctance to forsake Buddhist principles brought him in conflict with school authorities. Apart from the influence his mother, Mrs. Mallika Hewavitharne, exerted on him in the fashioning of his attitude to the Buddhist way of life, he, as a child, came under the benign influence of two of the greatest Buddhist savants of the day—Venerable Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala Nayake Thera and Migettuwatte Sri Gunananda Thera whose role in Buddhist-Christian controversies he later described in the following words :

“ Mohottiwatte Gunananda supplied the oratory ; and the Venerable Sumangala furnished him with the scholarly material and references.” (p. 685.)

He developed an attachment to Buddhist monks : in one of his auto-biographical articles he said :

“ In contrast to my wine-drinking, meat-eating and pleasure-loving missionary teachers, the Bhikkhus were meek and abstemious. *I loved their company and would sit quietly in a corner and listen to their wise discourse, even when it was far above my head.*” (p. 684.)

As a boy of sixteen, he met Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky in 1880 and began to take an interest in Theosophy as expounded by them. He was drawn so forcibly to a life of religious dedication that within a year he resolved to be an Anagarika (homeless)—a celibate seeker after truth. He left school in 1883 and in 1884 he was taken to Adyar by Madame Blavatsky in spite of the protests of his father,



grand-father, Ven. Sumangala and Colonel Olcott. On his return from India, he, with permission from his parents, took up residence in the Headquarters of the Theosophical Society in Colombo.

When Colonel Olcott and C. W. Leadbeater arrived in Ceylon in 1886 to collect funds for the Buddhist Educational Fund, he was working as a Junior Clerk in the Department of Education. An opportunity for service presented itself to the young leader who has already prepared himself for the great task which lay ahead of him by acquiring a sound knowledge of Sinhala and English along with their literature and an extraordinary mastery of the Pali language and the Buddhist scriptures, by abandoning the householder's life in favour of that of a Brahmacharin and by developing a unique sense of patriotism which found overt expression in his change of name to Dharmapala and the adoption of the simple dress of a Buddhist devotee. Colonel Olcott's mission was about to be abandoned for no Ceylonese was prepared to accompany him in the proposed tour of collection. Dharmapala obtained three months' leave and joined Colonel Olcott and Leadbeater in their campaign for Buddhist schools.

This was the beginning of the unique career of the Anagarika Dharmapala. While touring remote villages he received information of his success at the General Clerical Service Examination—an extraordinary distinction for a Sinhala boy in 1886. He referred to it later saying "I did not wait for a minute to reply saying that I was going to work for my religion and asking to accept my resignation from Government service . . . . With delight I left." (p. 703.)

His tour of Ceylon was an eye-opener. He saw for the first time the grim realities of the life, which the villagers, uncared and ill-provided, lived in remote areas without roads and houses, schools or hospitals. He was convinced that the greatness of a nation depended not on the prosperity and comfort of a few urban families

but on the happiness and contentment of the masses who formed the nation's backbone. He realised the need for freedom so that the people could guide their destinies without being down-trodden and subdued by Colonial masters who were neither equipped nor inclined to appreciate the national heritage and the latent potentiality for greater and mightier achievements. He dreamed of the day when Ceylon would be independent, the religion of the people restored to its pristine glory, the simple unaffected ways of Sinhala culture recognized and upheld and the people made enlightened participants in the scientific and technological achievements of modern times. With this end in view he began a life of incessant activity. In a letter to a high-ranking British official he said, "*I have to be active and activity means agitation according to constitutional methods.*" (p. 753.)

#### IV

### The Life and Work of Anagarika Dharmapala

Few national leaders of Ceylon had left behind such a wealth of autobiographical information as the Anagarika Dharmapala (vide Chapters 86-94.)\*—A well-prepared chronology of his life was published in the Mahabodhi Journal Vol. XXXV (January, 1927) and it is reproduced here with additions to bring it up to the time of his death :—

#### January 1886

Left Government Service to work in the interest and welfare of the Buddhist Theosophical Society wherein he was engaged as General Secretary of the Buddhist Section, Manager of the Sandaresa (paper) and the Buddhist Press, Manager of

\* These are chapters of "Return to Righteousness" edited by Ananda Guruge, Colombo, 1965.

Buddhist Schools and Assistant Secretary of the Buddhist Defence Committee from March 1886 to December, 1890.

### **2nd January, 1891**

Visited Isipatana now called Sarnath, Benares and Buddhagaya. Seeing the deserted condition of the Holy Temple at Buddhagaya, he made a vow before the Bodhi Tree that he would surrender his life to rescue the Holy Place from neglect.

### **March, 1891**

Left Buddhagaya for Rangoon via Calcutta. At the latter place he was welcomed by the late Babu Neel Comul Mookerjee, who showed hospitality.

### **March, 1891**

Arrived in Rangoon and had no place to stay and passed the night in the room occupied by a Sinhalese goldsmith. Suddenly met a Burmese who took him to the garden house of his sister where the Anagarika stayed for two weeks expecting to meet the late Moungh Hpo Mhyin. Met him and he welcomed him. The Anagarika stayed for a month, in his house and started for Colombo.

### **May, 1891**

Started the Maha Bodhi Society on the 31st of that month under the name of Buddhagaya Maha Bodhi Society, which for brevity's sake became known as the Maha Bodhi Society.

### **July, 1891**

Got four Ramanna Nikaya Bhikkhus to go to Buddhagaya. He escorted them to Calcutta by steamer Rosetta and thence to Gaya by train. Three of the four Bhikkhus were Chandajoti, Sudassana and Sumangala.



### **October, 1891**

Gave his first English lecture at the Calcutta Albert Hall on the kinship between Buddhism and Hinduism. Stayed in the house of the late Babu Neel Comul Mookerjee who became his Dayaka for the next twenty years. Secured the friendship of Mr. Norendronath Sen, Editor, Indian Mirror. Until his death he remained a friend of the Buddhists.

### **January, 1892**

Established the Maha Bodhi Journal. A demy quarto size journal of 8 pp. It was welcomed by many, and led to the invitation to attend the Chicago Parliament of Religions.

### **October, 1892**

Visited Akyab with Col. Olcott and the formation of the Akyab Maha Bodhi Society. Arakan Buddhists were the first to give help to the work of the Maha Bodhi Society. Their aid gave the Society a hired house in Calcutta, 2, Greek Row, where the work was carried on until May, 1904, and then closed for a time.

### **June, 1893**

Visited Rangoon.

### **• July, 1893**

Left India for London and America via Ceylon to attend the Congress of Religions.

### **August, 1893**

Arrived in London, was the guest of Sir Edwin Arnold and Mrs. Besant. Accompanied her to New York.

•

### **September, 1893**

Delivered Address at the Parliament of Religions on behalf of Southern Buddhism. Met with a cordial reception.

### **17th October, 1893**

Met Mrs. Mary Foster on board the s.s. Oceanic in the harbour at Honolulu.

### **November, 1893**

Arrived in Japan and was received by Secretary of the Ido Busseki Kofukai. Received beautiful Japanese Image from the congregation of the Tentokuji Temple, Shiba, Tokio headed by the late Revd. Asahi.

### **January, 1894**

Visited Shanghai. Delivered lecture at the Temple which was translated by Revd. Edkins and Dr. Franke.

### **February, 1894**

Visited Bangkok and was the guest of Prince Rajsaki and a branch of the Maha Bodhi Society was formed with the help of Prince Vivit and other Princes.

### **April, 1894**

Arrived at Colombo and received promises of help from Wealthy Buddhists for the purchase of the Maha Bodhi village.

### **September, 1894**

Started the Buddhagaya Fund and received generous help from Buddhists.

### **December, 1894**

The first organized pilgrimage by Ceylon Buddhists to Buddhagaya and other places. The ladies of the party wore the Sari for the first time. At Madras they went on shore and visited Col. Olcott at Adyar.

## **February, 1895**

The Japanese Buddha Image was placed in the shrine at Buddhagaya, but the Mahant's servants had it forcibly removed and thrown out into the open.

## **February, 1895**

Instituted case against the Mahant's men for disturbance of worship. The case was widely known as the great Buddhagaya Case. The Burmese resthouse was placed at the disposal of the Maha Bodhi Society and the Japanese Image was placed therein where it remained until 1910 when it was removed to Calcutta in accordance with the order of the High Court of Calcutta, and the Burmese resthouse became the property of the Mahant. The Government helped the Mahant to secure the resthouse, which ever since has remained in the hand of the Mahant, who has closed it for the Buddhists.

## **May, 1896**

First Vaisakha Celebration held in Calcutta.

## **July, 1896**

Second visit to America to preach Buddhism.

## **October, 1901**

Visit of the Lt. Governor Woodburn to Buddhagaya when representations were made by the Maha Bodhi Society to have a Dharmasala built. The Lt. Governor sanctioned the acquisition of land the money for which was provided by the Maha Bodhi Society of Mandalay and Colombo. But for the accommodation provided for the Buddhist pilgrims in this resthouse today there would be no place for the Buddhists to rest at Buddhagaya. The Temple remains under the dual control of the Government and Mahant. What is needed is the presence of Bhikkhus at Buddhagaya. There is

•  
freedom of worship in the Temple. The Bhikkhus can stay at the resthouse which is known as the Maha Bodhi Dharmasala.

**January, 1901**

Purchased land at Isipatana (Sarnath), Benares.

**April, 1902**

Third visit to Japan.

**October, 1902**

Third visit to America. Landed in San Francisco.

**1903**

Tour all over the United States visiting Industrial Schools.

**January, 1904**

Started Industrial School Fund at San Francisco, Mrs. Mary Foster contributing Rs. 10,000.

**January, 1904**

Arrived in London. Visited the Industrial Schools in London, Liverpool, Holland, Denmark and Italy.

**April, 1904**

Arrived in Colombo.

**July, 1904**

Started Industrial School at Sarnath, Benares.

**October, 1904**

Left Benares for Colombo. On the way went to Adyar to see Col. Olcott, with whom he had an altercation because Col. Olcott insulted the feelings of the Buddhists by showing disrespect to the Tooth Relic, a copy of which he had placed under a shelf. Col. Olcott showed bad temper and broke off



friendship with him after a period of twenty years. The Anagarika was initiated by him in January, 1884 into the Theosophical Society.

### **March, 1906**

Began campaign against the Theosophical Society as the local Theosophical Society's being under Buddhists it was suggested that there should be harmony with Theosophy and Buddhism, and wanted the name Theosophy to be eliminated. Certain members wished to retain the name, and the campaign was therefore started.

### **May, 1906**

Established the Sinhala Bauddhaya and Maha Bodhi Press.

### **October, 1906**

Started the Hiniduma school.

### **1906**

Erection of school building at Rajagiriya on the land purchased from the donation received from Mrs. Mary Foster of Honolulu.

### **May, 1907**

Burmese Resthouse Case instituted by the Hindu Mahant at Buddhagaya for the removal of the Japanese Image from the Burmese Resthouse. The case was dragged for a long time, but eventually decided in favour of the Mahant on the report of the Government Custodian. In February, 1910, the Buddhists had to remove the Image and also the resident Bhikkhu who was living there since 1896.

### **July, 1908**

House in Baniapooker Lane, Calcutta, purchased from donation received from Mrs. Mary Foster of Honolulu.

**1912**

Started National Revival and toured all over Ceylon.

**1913**

Left for Japan and Honolulu. Met Mrs. Foster at Honolulu in June 1913 and from her received a splendid donation to establish a Free Hospital.

**1914**

Dedicated the house and ground at Darley Lane which was given to him by his father for the use of the Buddhists under the name of Mallika Santhagara.

**1914**

Opening of the Foster Robinson Free Hospital.

**1915**

Removed the Maha Bodhi College to the Mallika Santhagara.

**May, 1915**

Ceylon Riots. Many Buddhists shot and he was interned in Calcutta from June 1915 to 1920.

**July, 1915**

Purchased property in 4, College Square, Calcutta to build a Vihara.

**July, 1916**

Received communication from the Government of India and they are prepared to present a Relic of the Lord Buddha to the Maha Bodhi Society if the latter would build a Vihara in Calcutta.

**July, 1918**

Work started at College Square, No. 4, to erect a Vihara.



### **November, 1920**

The Vihara completed and it was ceremoniously opened by the Governor of Bengal, Lord Ronaldshay. A grand procession started from the Government House bringing the Relic to the Vihara.

### **November, 1922**

Laying of the foundation stone to build a vihara at Sarnath, Benares, by the Governor of the United Provinces, Sir Harcourt Butler.

### **July, 1922**

Restarted the "Sinhala Bauddhaya" which was suspended by order of Ceylon Government in 1915 during the Riot period.

### **July, 1923**

Founding of the Mary Foster Permanent Fund with a capital of 1,50,000 dollars.

### **September, 1925**

Started for America on a visit to Mrs. Mary Foster who was then staying in San Francisco. Met her and was cordially received, and she promised to give a monthly donation of £61 for the London Buddhist Mission.

### **December, 1925**

Lecture at the Town Hall, New York, organized by Mr. Kira, a Sinhalese Buddhist.

### **January, 1926**

Arrived in London to establish the British Buddhist Mission.

### **July, 1926**

Permanent headquarters established at the Foster House, Ealing, London W. 5. The house was purchased from the money from the firm of

H. Don Carolis who are the Trustees of his father's estate and the personal gift from Mrs. Foster. The sum of £2,600 was paid to purchase the house and ground.

### **December, 1926**

Arrived in Ceylon to raise a Fund for the British Buddhist Mission.

### **1927**

Returned to India and proceeded with the building of Mulagandhakuti Vihara, Sarnath.\*

### **1930**

Completed Mulagandhakuti Vihara.

### **1931**

Visited Ceylon for the last time and created the Anagarika Dharmapala Trust.

### **13th July, 1931**

Ordained as a Bhikkhu with the name Sri Devamitta Dhammapala.

### **16th January, 1933**

Received Higher Ordination.

### **29th April, 1933**

Died at Sarnath, Benares. His last words were:

“ Let me be reborn . . . . I would like to be born again twenty-five times to spread Lord Buddha's Dhamma.”

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\*Up to this point, the Anagarika Dharmapala had himself outlined the main events of his life.

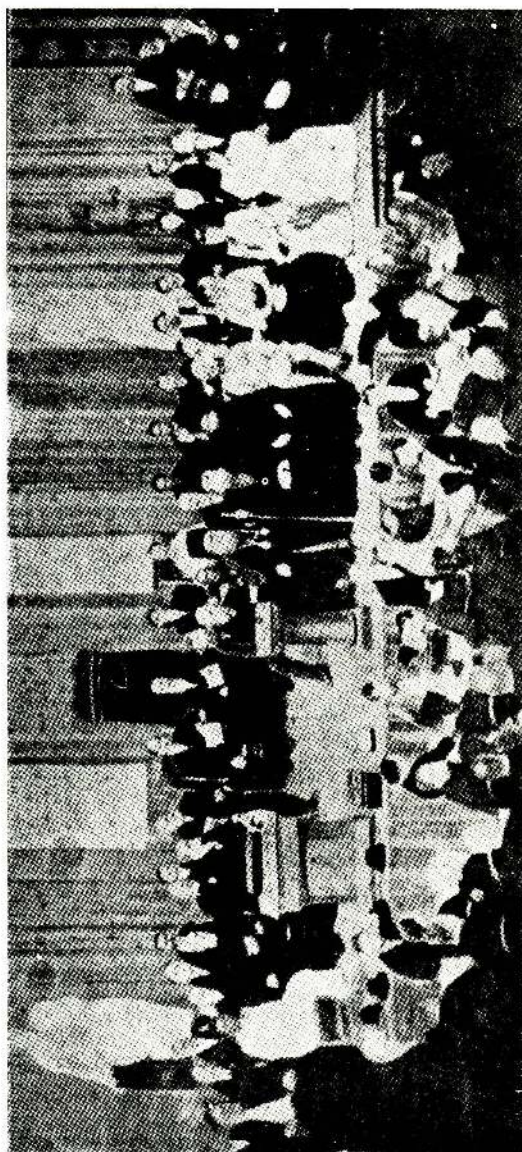
## Contemporary Assessments

The impact which the young leader, with his convincing and eloquent speeches on the greatness of Ceylon's national and religious heritage, made on the people can be gauged from the numerous columns which had been devoted to him and his activities in the daily press between 1890 and 1915. Wherever he went large crowds assembled and listened to him with rapt attention. His merciless attacks on the alien ways of life which the Sinhalese had adopted in slavish imitation of the foreign rulers often produced lightning reactions. Many people in Ceylon found in him a fearless and frank exponent of opinions and thoughts which they did not have the courage to express themselves. His movement, therefore, gathered strength and the Anagarika Dharmapala became the most powerful and influential champion of the national and the religious struggle for independence and liberty.

The impression which the Anagarika made on the people of the many foreign lands he worked in was equally fascinating. The Editor of the "Buddhist" (Dec. 1, 1893) once reported : " Our Buddhist representative at the Chicago Congress has exceeded the highest expectations of his best friends and created quite a furore in Chicago as well as the other towns where he appeared by his eloquence, enthusiasm and genuine Buddhism." The "Buddhist" published extracts of the press notices which the Anagarika received in U. S. A. These give us an idea of the hypnotic influence he had over the crowds he addressed and the frank criticism with which he astounded his listeners :—

" To Mr. Strauss our Buddhist brother of New York we owe two sets of cuttings from various American papers, full extracts from which it is impossible to give. We can merely mention the





World Parliament of Religions in Session. Anagarika Dharmapala is the white figure seated at the desk on the left. The turbaned figure on the right is Swami Vivekananda who, too, became a celebrated world figure at these sessions.





names of the papers which contain his delivered address ; and quote one or two of the leading remarks he made. The following papers deal with his public utterances :—

*Chicago Herald* (9.28.93) ; *San Francisco Call* (9.16.93) which gives Dharmapala's sermon on Buddha in the Christian Unity Church ; *New York Post* (9.8.93) gives his photograph ; *Inter Ocean of Chicago* (9.15.93) Mr. H. Toki's " Buddhism in Japan " says " we believe that finally the views of the Southern and Northern churches of Buddhism will come together without any contest. This is the reason why the Mahabodhi Society was organised in Calcutta " ; *San Francisco Call* (10.6.93) ; *Chronicles, San Francisco* (10.9.93) containing Dharmapala's sermon in the Unitarian Church, " The church was specially decorated for the occasion. Long before 3.30 every seat in the church was occupied and at last chairs were placed in the aisles extending from pulpit to the very doors, which were thronged with people, Mr. Dharmapala was introduced by the Rev. L. Sprague . . . At the close of his address Mr. Dharmapala answered a number of questions asked by the audience. His replies were pointed, and elicited much applause. " This paper contains a likeness of Dharmapala on the pulpit ; *Star Richmond* (9.20.93).

### A Buddhist's Rebuke

" Before one of the sections of the great Religious Parliament, just closed, Dharmapala is reported to have said when the question ' How can the Methods of Christian Missionaries be Improved ? ' came up for discussion :

" You must send men full of usefulness. They must not go as the missionaries of modern days go, but they must have a spirit of self-sacrifice, a spirit

of charity, a spirit of tolerance, as well as the spirit of holiness and meekness which characterized Jesus Christ. Your great slaughter houses here in Chicago are a shame and curse to civilization. We don't want in Ceylon, in Burmah, in China, or in Japan any of such a Christianity as they stand for. We want the teachings of the meek and lowly Jesus, not because we do not in our own faith have them now, but because we want more of them.

“And then we are told that the gentle Buddhist quietly and without the least passion arraigned the missionaries, as he had seen them, for what he termed their intolerance and selfishness. ‘I warn you that if you want to establish Christianity in the East,’ he said, ‘it can only be done on the principles of Christ’s love and meekness. Let the missionaries study all the religions ; let them be a type of meekness and lowliness, and they will find a welcome in all lands.’ And who is willing to deny the force of Dharmapala’s assertion ?” *Tribune Oakland* (10.9.93); *New York Morning Advertiser* (October 1, 93).

“Two weeks ago at the religious congress in Chicago, the question arose as to how many people in the vast assemblage, numbering thousands, had ever read the life of Buddha. Five hands were timidly raised, four of those were women. Then Dharmapala, the Buddhist from Calcutta asked how many had read the Koran. Four hands were raised. And you call yourself a nation—and a great nation, and only four or five have ever read of the faith which four hundred and seventy-five millions of people follow. How dare you judge us ?

“The question brought forth cheers and sensational applause. It was a case of an easily impressed and excitable audience and a magnetic man. But Dharmapala ‘builded better than he

knew.' In the words were hidden more fire and argument and discussion than any one dreamed of at the time. The question became a kind of war cry and Dharmapala was quoted and abused, praised and discussed over the length and breadth of the country. The people who had never read Buddha discussed whether they dared or dared not judge his followers. And if so, why so ?" *Bloomington, Illinois, (9.24.93).*

"Arrayed in robes of spotless white, which seemed all the whiter by reason of his swarthy countenance and wealth of jet black hair, with arm and index finger extended, and every muscle of his body quivering with excitement, Dharmapala, the Buddhist scholar from Calcutta, stood upon the edge of the platform in the religious congress at Chicago. The Buddhist had been introduced, after an address of remarkable liberality by the Rev. Dr. E. L. Bexford of Boston.

'You complain that you do not make converts among us,' he continued, 'you preach a God of love, but in your actions you are selfish. You make of an ignorant or an unsophisticated man a perfect hypocrite. You have used the story of a life-crushing, bloody juggernaut to secure the means to save alleged heathens.

'Juggernaut has been popularized by Christian missionaries, and yet a commission composed of eminent Englishmen has declared that the Christian idea of juggernaut is a myth, and that death and blood are repulsive to our people. This Christian story has been exploded. It has gone into oblivion.'

"And so the Orientalist went on, scoring his hearers and defending his own creed." *New York Herald (15.9.93) same as Bloomington paper by telegraph.*



*Interocean* (9.12.93) and (9.19.93) devotes two columns to Dharmapala's lecture on the World's Debt to Buddha.

*Register, Springfield* (9.17.93), *Republican Leader, Lacrosse* (9.13.93), *Times, Leavenworth, Kansas* (9.16.93) commenting on 'How dare you judge us' of Dharmapala admits "There is a lamentable ignorance of other religions among Christians, a knowledge of them would increase their charity, would make them better Christians."

*Tribune, Chicago* (9.18.93): "In the pastor's chair of the Third Unitarian Church at Monroe Street sat Mr. Dharmapala of Ceylon. At his right hand sat the Rev. Mary A. Safford, and Rev. Elimore Gorden, the co-pastors of the Unitarian Church at Sioux City, Ia. The pastor of the church the Rev. J. Villa Blake sat among the congregation."

*New York Church Messenger* (Oct. 4, 93) attacks "one of the Buddhist participants in the Parliament of religions who took the Christians to task for receiving pay for the rendering of spiritual services."

*Pittsburg Gazette* (18.7.93); *Standard, Bridgeport* (9.22.93) praised Dharmapala's outspokenness.

*Republican, Williamsport*, (9.26.93) says "the rebuke administered by Dharmapala, the Buddhist, was deserved."

*New York World*, (9.19.93), *Woman's Tribune, Washington* (10.9.93): "Mr. Dharmapala was one of the most interesting personages of the parliament. Always dressed in spotless white, his hair parted in the middle, and coming together in a curl at the back, his face gentle and refined, he seemed just like a familiar portrait of Jesus."

*Journal, Chicago* (9.14.93): "Contempt and pity for the oriental religions have given way to respect and admiration."

*Journal Indianapolis* (9.19.93): "Watches and chains disappeared from the pockets of vests and dresses, and a pair of diamond earrings were actually extracted from the ears of the fair wearer as she sat spellbound under the influence of the perorations of a Buddhist."

*Sentinel, Milwaukee, Wisconsin* (9.12.93) "It is beginning to be understood that Buddhism is a pure and lofty faith inculcating a strict morality, and held by men of high intelligence."

*Tribune, Chicago* (9.20.93): "Before beginning his essay on Buddhism, Mr. Dharmapala sang a strange, weird song." Then follows the essay.

*The Record, Toledo* (10.14.93) says "It is safe to say a study of Buddhism will be the fashion this winter."

*The Inter Ocean, Chicago* (9.23.93) gives Dharmapala's opinion on Foreign Missions.

Mr. Dharmapala, who was received with applause, said :

"This question of foreign mission constitutes an important problem that requires solution before the twentieth century dawns, and I ask you to give your earnest and truthful consideration. The question is how to evangelize non-Christian countries. For nineteen centuries you have had Christianity in Europe, but only during the last three centuries have attempts been made to propagate it in the East. The Buddhists have a record to show that the Christian nations of three centuries ago did not do their duty as Christ

wanted it done, and therefore, Christianity failed in the East. The programme that has been constructed, the platform you have built up, must be entirely reconstructed if Christianity is to make progress in the East. You must send men full of unselfishness. They must not go, but they must have a spirit of self-sacrifice, a spirit of charity, a spirit of tolerance, as well as the spirit of lowliness and meekness which characterised Jesus Christ. (Applause.)

“Buddhism had its missionaries before Christianity was preached. It conquered all Asia and made the Mongolian mild. Its preachers do not go in this grand, fashionable costume of yours, but in simple garb you see upon this platform. They did not go with a Bible in one hand and a rum bottle in the other, but they went full of lowliness and compassion and sympathy. With these attributes they conquered and they made Asia mild. Slaughter houses were abolished, public houses were abolished, but they are now on the increase, because of the influence of Western civilization. It is left for you, this younger family of European nations, to change this. You are intelligent ; you are free from the bonds of theology and dogma, and I want you seriously to consider that the twentieth century evangelization is in your hands. I warn you that if you want to establish Christianity in the East it can be only done on the principles of Christ's love and meekness. Let the missionaries study all the religions ; let them be a type of meekness and lowliness and they will find a welcome in all lands. (Applause.)”

*Mercury, San Jose* (9.15.93) says “ an eloquent Japanese Buddhist who denounced the Christian missionaries in Japan for exciting a rebellion, was greeted with warm applause and audience cried out ‘ shame on the missionaries ’.”



*Inquirer, Philadelphia* (9.17.93) says "After the sermon at the Unity Church many gathered about Dharmapala to talk with him. It will be observed that in his remarks he made no allusion to a future state, no rewards or punishments except such as are encountered before death. The following incident grew from this. A lady asked him : "Do you believe there is nothing, beyond death ?" 'I believe in a pure life' he returned. 'But', she insisted, 'do all Hindoos lead pure lives?', 'O, no,' he replied, 'true Buddhists do.' 'But', she urged, 'can one lead a pure life on earth without a faith in some superior being and a belief in immortality?', He replied : 'Has not one of your own poets written—

For creeds of faith let graceless zealots fight,  
His can't be wrong whose life is in the right ?"  
Then with oriental courtesy he bowed himself  
away from the circle of question—abusing  
(sic !) ladies."

These were the impressions he created in the minds of those who met him early in his career as a Buddhist Missionary. As time went on, his lashing tongue brought him many enemies. The British administrators of Ceylon regarded him as a "militant nationalist", "a religious fanatic," "a calculating and conceited poseur" and "an arch seditious agitator who wanted a lot of watching." In 1917 Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan in a letter to the Colonial Secretary stated : "He is an ascetic but caustic also, not sparing his own countrymen and priests," The local newspapers had been most unkind to him and even in circles where his work and his plans should have been better understood and appreciated he only found apathy and obstruction.



But the undaunted Anagarika was not altogether without friends and admirers. When the massive volume called the "Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon" was being prepared, its editor Arnold Wright invited the Anagarika Dharmapala to write the article on "Buddhism Past and Present". Sir Edwin Arnold, the author of the celebrated "Light of Asia", was a life-long friend of the Anagarika and gave him much assistance and encouragement in his struggle to restore Indian Buddhist sites to the Buddhists. Sir Edwin Arnold's letters to the Anagarika began with the unusually warm salutation; "*Very dear and honoured Friend.*" In his book "East and West", Sir Edwin called the Anagarika, "*My excellent friend*" (vide p. 721). He was a friend of many Indian national leaders such as Sarat Chandra Das, Rajendra Prasad, Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi with whom he was associated in a number of movements.

As eloquent as the newspaper reports which showed us how he was received by the Americans as a young man is a write-up by F. Yeats-Brown in "*The Spectator*" of 30th January, 1926. Under the heading "A Buddhist in Bayswater", Yeats-Brown recorded his impressions of the sixty-one-year-old missionary whose strength of conviction and the vigour of presentation had only increased with advancing age :

"Last month I heard a tall priest, dressed in the saffron robes of an Oriental ascetic, attempt to convert an American audience to Buddhism. A few days ago I saw him again in London and learned of his object in coming here. His project is to establish a Buddhist missionary centre in England.

"Before taking my seat in the Town Hall, New York, I had looked round the hall and observed that the gathering was composed chiefly of that curious type of citizen, with lofty brow but vacant eye, who seems to emerge from nowhere to form

the clientele of Eastern cults. Some distinguished persons, however, were supporting the speaker on the platform, amongst them Mr. Ralph Waldo Trine, author of *In tune with the Infinite*.

“Had any of us, I asked myself, really attained to inward harmony? Judged by outward appearance one person only in that audience of a thousand stood out as having learned the secrets of poise and peace, and that was the Anagarika Dharmapala who was to address us. Certainly he looked delicate, but he seemed to hold an inner light within him, a latent fire of purpose.

“‘Our friend is most infirm’ said the chairman ‘and you must excuse him if he speaks sitting down.’ But when our Buddhist came to speak, he rose to the full six feet of him and brandished a walking stick at the audience. ‘I learned your faith in a mission school in Ceylon’ he said, ‘and one day the missionary took his gun and shot some little birds—so—and so! That made me revert to the faith of my fathers. But I have studied the Bible and revere its teachings. Your Master was poor and homeless. In all humility I claim to follow in His footsteps. I also have no money and nowhere to lay my head. But I have a work to do in bringing the peace of the Buddha westward, and friends have provided funds for me to establish a church in London. On my way, I have stopped to tell you of the Lord Buddha, who was born a Prince and renounced his Kingdom to find, if may be, a solution to life’s mysteries. For six years he studied the Ancient Wisdom, to find at last, in the words of your Teacher, that the Kingdom of Heaven is within Man himself. There is no heaven or hell but of your own making.

Discover, then, the paradise here in this body pent—the heaven here and now of which Lord Buddha tells.’

“And so on for an hour. Not a move or a cough from the audience. Not a tremble in those lips that thundered the denunciation of an Isaiah against our spiritual sloth, nor any hint of exhaustion in that frail frame. Here was a man with a message. He delivered it erect, composed, master of himself and his hearers, with the art of an orator and the dignity of a priest to whom the world is nothing. When he sat down there was a dead silence, followed by a burst of applause. We were moved—but not converted.

“How will his audiences take him in England? Can the austere and bloodless precepts of Buddhism gain a foothold in this land of beef and beer? In order to find out, I made a pilgrimage to 52, Lancaster Gate, where the Anagarika Dharmapala is now living. He is a handsome man of sixty, with aquiline features and a shock of white hair. He was sitting over a gas fire, his saffron robe looking rather *depayre* in the gloom of a London winter.

“Buddha, he argues, came to India at a time when that country was in the bloom of its glory. His message can be understood only by a highly-developed people. So now that Great Britain and America are in the flower of their prosperity the Anagarika Dharmapala claims—and doubtless will receive—as fair a hearing for his preaching as our missionaries get in India and Ceylon. As a young man, the Anagarika Dharmapala was the guest of Sir Edwin Arnold in London, and went from there to Chicago to attend the World’s Parliament of Religions, as spokesman for Buddhism. Since then he has been working in Calcutta and Buddha-Gaya. During the War he was



imprisoned as a pacifist. No matter ; that is over. As an undoubted authority on Southern Buddhism he is to be welcomed. The East has something very real to give the West, although the West, in its worship of *nama rupa* (names and forms) is inclined to believe with Lord Chesterfield that ten minutes of concrete thinking is worth a lifetime of the ' inane meditation of India'.

“ Is meditation inane ? If we practised peace as we practise golf might not our asylums and hospitals be emptier ? Meditation has certainly not done the Anagarika Dharmapala any harm. He is serene, alert, perceptive, versatile in no common degree. When his time comes to die, he tells me, he will do it with open eyes. ‘ It is all over—snap—in a second,’ he says, ‘—one of the easiest actions in this beautiful life of ours. We priests who try to teach you of life would consider it an humiliation to die haphazard, struggling. We learn to meet death as it should be met. As to sleep, you can almost dispense with it if your mind and body are pure. Two hours is enough for me. Happiness ? You win it through meditation and your mind you conquer through right management of breath. I see you have the lotus seat—’ (half unconsciously, as I listened, I had crossed my legs in the ancient posture of the Buddhist statues) ‘—and that will help your breath. Breathing, as your doctors tell you, is directly linked with brain processes.’

“But to report him thus is scarcely fair. A philosophy which reaches from the bowels of man to cosmic space cannot be condensed into a few paragraphs. One thing, however, should be said. Buddhism has been misinterpreted as a vacuous striving after *nirvana*, and *nirvana* has been misinterpreted as annihilation, instead of being translated as bliss. Buddhists like Christian Scientists, affirm



happiness as a law. The Buddhist heaven is 'closer than hands or breathing,' and is to be won in this life, not in the hereafter.

"The Anagarika Dharmapala will create few eddies in the spiritual life of this country, for his teaching is too alien to our mental habits. But he should be heard by those interested in Eastern faiths, for as a teacher of them he is as authentic as he is eloquent."

This write-up, which was traced in the Library of Congress, Washington D.C., serves an important purpose apart from giving us an account of the Anagarika as an Englishman saw him. This particular speech was delivered by the Anagarika in December 1925 when he visited England with his nephew Rajah Hewavitharne. On that occasion C. Clementi, Officer Administering the Government of Ceylon, sent a secret dispatch to the Right Honourable Leopold Amery, the Secretary of State for Colonies, enclosing a copy of a report on the Anagarika by the Deputy-Inspector General of Police, C.I.D. This report is reproduced from the copy in the Colonial Secretary's Office (see appendix II) so that a comparison between the British Official suspicions and the British public impressions will enable us to assess the role of the Anagarika Dharmapala as a Buddhist missionary and a national revivalist.

## VI

### **Dharmapala and the British Administration**

THE attitude of the Anagarika Dharmapala towards the British Administration of Ceylon is abundantly clear from his frank and caustic remarks in both speeches and articles, published in this Volume.\* But the

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\* Reference is to "Return to Righteousness" edited by Ananda Guruge, Colombo, 1965.

reaction of the British Officialdom to his criticisms and his national and religious activities is generally not known. Official documents have not been published yet. With the permission of the Minister of Education, the file of papers relating to the Anagarika Dharmapala, maintained by the Colonial Secretary's Office, Colombo, has been released by the Government Archivist for use in the preparation of this publication.

The earliest document in this file is a ' *Personal and Confidential* ' letter addressed to the Colonial Secretary by the Anagarika Dharmapala on June 22, 1905. It starts with a complaint.

“ Without giving any cause on my part you have spoken ill of me to Mr. Obeysekera, M. L. C. and that gentleman has spoken to my friends about your strictures against me—that I am trying ‘ to bag money ’ etc.

A gentleman occupying the high place as you do ought to be more compassionate and not show illwill.”

Having given a brief account of what he has done for nearly 20 years for “ the welfare of my religion and my country ”, the Anagarika proceeds to state :

“ With the exception of half a dozen office-seeking Buddhists, the Buddhist Community is willing to listen to me.

Now that I am going to stay in Ceylon it is well that I should not be misunderstood. *I have to be active and activity means agitation according to constitutional methods.*”

(See original of the letter in Appendix III p. 81)

In the last paragraph he appeals to the Colonial Secretary to sell to the Buddhists the land which the Government had acquired in Anuradhapura for the market and Government buildings. An appointment

was given for the Anagarika Dharmapala to meet the Colonial Secretary but an attack of neuralgia had prevented the Anagarika from keeping it.

In another letter dated 12th July, where he offers an explanation for his inability to interview the Colonial Secretary, the Anagarika Dharmapala makes further representations on the "Anuradhapura Question." He is concerned with the decision to erect the Episcopalian Church amidst the sacred shrines : He says—

“ Could you not use your great influence with the handful of Christians, who may worship at Anuradhapura when the Church is built to desist from erecting the structure for the Episcopalian Church amidst the three great venerable shrines. The Buddhists would feel deeply grateful to you, who have spent so many years in our island, if you will kindly persuade your co-religionists to have the structure erected near the Station . . . . This erecting of a twentieth (Century ?) cabook building worth a few thousand rupees in the midst of venerable monuments that have cost millions is simply an insult to aesthetic art and antiquarian taste.”

This letter ends with a reference to the strictures regarding which he complained in the earlier letter. He says :

“ I want to tell you that instead of ‘ bagging money ’ I have made my father bequeath property worth Rs. 30,000 to found two scholarships for Buddhist students who are willing to go to Japan for study.”

On this letter the Colonial Secretary writes :

“ I have not slandered this person in any way—to Mr. Obeysekera or to anybody else. Tell him to come and see me.”



After this we find no references in this file to the Anagarika Dharmapala for about two years. On October 21, 1907, Mudaliyar Simon de Silva had prepared a dossier on the Anagarika. It gives a brief account of his family background, education, employment, foreign tours and the lawsuits against Mahant on Buddha Gaya. It says :

“ Dharmapala next quarrelled with Col. Olcott and severed his connection with the Theosophical Society. He started a newspaper called ‘ Sinhala Bauddhaya ’ in connection with the Mahabodhi Society of which Sri Sumangala, High Priest, is the President. This Society of which Mr. Dharmapala is General Secretary is a dangerous Society—always anxious to stir up racial or religious animosity.”

Though the purpose of this dossier is not stated anywhere, it is a clear indication that the British administration had decided to exercise vigilance over his activities.

When, on the 20th of September, 1911, the Anagarika Dharmapala wrote a strong article urging the Sinhalese to aspire for self-Government (“ *The country of the Sinhalese should be Governed by Sinhalese*”), it was put up to the Governor by the Colonial Secretary—with the minute :

“ Mr. Dharmapala is an extremist, but negligible I think.”

But this attitude had changed when another article in Sinhala Bauddhaya, criticizing the English people, was submitted to the Colonial Secretary. The Attorney-General was asked to prosecute the Anagarika Dharmapala. But the Attorney-General replied :



“ This seems to me the language of religious fanaticism and not of sedition. I do not think it would be a judicious case for a prosecution.”

The Governor was apparently not pleased with this reply for he raised a query :

“ Is the A. G. aware of who Anagarika Dharmapala is and his antecedents. He is stirring up *sedition under the veil of religion* ?”

The result of this investigation was that the newspaper was issued a warning that it would “ be struck off the list ” and the Governor ordered the Attorney-General to “ *note some particulars about this dangerous agitation.*” A strict vigilance had come into operation and the movements of the Anagarika were reported by the Inspector-General of Police to the Governor through the Colonial Secretary and translations of his articles in the Sinhala Bauddhaya were regularly submitted to the Governor.

Some of these extracts of the Anagarika Dharmapala’s articles were scrutinized and passed on to the Attorney-General. On May 1, 1912, the Attorney-General reported :

“ I confess that I thought we had to deal with *an ignorant local fanatic*, but I see from the papers which His Excellency has ordered to be submitted to me that this man is a calculating and conceited poseur. The last extract submitted brings him within the criminal law if it is thought worth while to prosecute him. Whether it is worth while to do so, depends upon the extent of his influence . . . . . When he returns it might be well to have him watched, and his utterances and writings recorded. If it were shown that his seditious utterances were calculated and systematic, i.e., that he was deliberately sowing disaffection, and if a series of charges were presented together, the result would I think be more effective to a prosecution on a single utterance.”

While the Colonial Secretary's office continued to collect evidence against the Anagarika Dharmapala, it received substantial assistance from Mr. A. Reginald Fernando, the Editor of Lakmina, a Sinhala Newspaper. He sent extracts of the Anagarika Dharmapala's writings to the Colonial Secretary and urged that action be taken against him. On October 17, 1912, he says :

“ As far as I am concerned I propose to vigorously oppose Mr. Dharmapala's campaign against Government.”

On January 23, 1913, he wrote again to the Colonial Secretary :

“ You will excuse my pointing out that the article taken as a whole is seditious and I have got the authority of a well-known lawyer for making this statement. . . . *I shall not be surprised to hear one morning that Mr. Dharmapala is in the vicinity of Colombo with an army of Sinhalese Buddhists.*”

The Colonial Secretary merely acknowledged the receipt of this letter and did not take any action. Undaunted Mr. Fernando wrote again on June 2, 1914, enclosing an article from the Sinhala Bauddhaya of May 30, 1914 : He says :

“ It is not through newspaper rivalry or petty-mindedness that I take courage to approach you once more in regard to this matter, but for the sake of justice, decency and purity. This paper, which is owned by the Hon'ble Mr. L. W. A. de Soya and Mr. E. L. F. de Soya, has exposed Mr. Dharmapala from its very start and I am glad to say, Mr. Dharmapala is not today the hero he used to be.”

The Government decided to take action against the Printer and the Publisher of Sinhala Bauddhaya. As a result, Mr. D. R. Goonesekera was convicted and sentenced to three months' rigorous imprisonment.

While the criminal proceedings were pending, the Anagarika Dharmapala, who was about to leave India for U. K. baffled the British Administration by courting prosecution. On the 27th of June, 1914, he wrote to the Inspector-General of Police :

“ I have received information from Ceylon that the Police authorities are going to arrest me when I land in Colombo . . . . All this work shall have to be postponed if the report is true that I am to be arrested when I arrive in Colombo. *If you want me please wire at my expense.*”

The I.G.P. forwarded this letter to the Colonial Secretary saying :

“ From the attached copy of letter . . . . it does not appear that Dharmapala has any idea of the possibility of his being convicted. He courts prosecution, knowing apparently that he will not be convicted. Every possible line of securing evidence sufficient for conviction has been tested without success. *It would be fatal for Dharmapala to be acquitted.*”

After the conviction of Mr. Goonesekera and the failure of the appeal, Anagarika Dharmapala addressed the Attorney-General on August 21, 1914, and stated :

“ Before I start (for U. K.) I am anxious to receive an assurance from you whether you contemplate taking criminal proceedings against me on my arrival in Ceylon.”

He gave his permanent address and, in the final paragraph, expressed the following sentiments :

“ True that I criticize in my articles the officials ; but my loyalty to the British Throne is as solid as a rock and I have invariably expressed sentiments of loyalty to the King. But I love my religion, and Sinhalese Race, and my happiness depends on their welfare.”



The Attorney-General proposed not to reply this letter. When the Reports of the I. G. P. and the Attorney-General were submitted to the Colonial Secretary, he forwarded them to the Governor on September 7, 1914, with the minute:

“But in any case the sentence to which Dharmapala would be liable would be far too short to be of any service. We had better leave things alone and merely keep him out of the Island while the Order in Council is in force.”

The Governor did not conceal his disappointment when he returned the papers saying :

“I have read this *with much regret* but cannot but adopt conclusions . . . . All we can do is to see whether evidence is forthcoming hereafter and the I. G. P. should look to this.”

Accordingly, the I. G. P. was told on September 18, 1914 :

“His Excellency however desires that your vigilance should be in no way relaxed with a view to obtaining, if possible, further evidence against Dharmapala hereafter.”

The British Administration was awaiting an opportunity to discipline the Anagarika Dharmapala and in the outbreak of Buddhist-Muslim Riots of 1915 they found their chance. At the request of the Ceylon Government, the Anagarika's residence in Calcutta was searched by the Government of Bengal Police and several papers were seized and sent to Ceylon for



examination. In a report from the Government of Bengal to the Colonial Secretary of Ceylon the following information was given :

“ The Ceylon Government held that Dharmapala was quite the reverse of innocent as regards politics and that his preachings and writings in Ceylon were anti-British ; and further that he was the instigator of a scheme for sending young Sinhalese to Japan for technical education in the belief that the students would return with anti-British views . . . . It would appear that the German Indian Party contemplate working through the Japanese and that the Party relies on Dharmapala to play an important part in the scheme.”

On these data it was suggested that action against the Anagarika Dharmapala be considered. The Colonial Secretary was asked “ whether the Government of Ceylon would prefer to have this man under their own control.” His recommendation to the Governor was typical of the British Colonial Civil Service :

“ I think it would be much better not to have him in Ceylon where through his brother he would at once get into touch with all the disloyal elements. We could probably get him put away for a couple of years for sedition but I think that the advertisement of a trial would do harm disproportionate to the good. Reply that we had rather they kept him.”

The Governor's order of 29th July, 1916, was a Laconic “ *much rather* ”.

On the 28th of June, 1916, the Anagarika Dharmapala was ordered, on pain of imprisonment, not to leave Calcutta by sea or by land as long as the order was in

force. He appealed to the Secretary of State for Colonies in a moving letter where he recounted his service to the regeneration of Buddhism and said :

“ I am now fifty years old and when I was young the British officials did not suspect me, and now in my old age that I should be interned and suspected and watched is rather shocking.”

He concludes this appeal on a pathetic note :

“ Continuous political oppression on me has aged me much, and I am now almost an invalid, and my death will be hastened by the official tortures to which I am subjected.”

Sir P. Ramanathan, too, intervened on his behalf when he forwarded a letter of the Anagarika's mother, Mrs. Mallika Hewavitharne, to the Governor, with the comments :

“ I have known him from the days of his youth. He is an ascetic but caustic also, not sparing even his own countrymen and priests. They have refused for the last twenty years to hear him and his influence counts for nothing in Ceylon . . . Mr. Dharmapala's return to Ceylon appears to have been objected to by the Police Department, who do not appear to know that in Ceylon he has been and is a negligible factor.”

But the British officers in Ceylon thought otherwise and paid no heed to letters he sent on the hardships he suffered, (See the original of his letter of 8th May, 1917 Appendix IV p. 83.)

When in October 1917 the Government of Bengal was prepared to cancel the order of internment, the Ceylon Government wanted as a condition an undertaking from the Anagarika Dharmapala that he would not visit Ceylon.

From 1919 onwards several appeals had been made to the British Government of Ceylon to allow Dharmapala to return to Ceylon. On March 11, 1919, Mr. Armand de Souza met the Colonial Secretary on his behalf. But the Colonial Secretary's recommendation was as follows :

“ Dharmapala is as absolutely irresponsible as you will see from this letter here which breaks off into abuse just when he is endeavouring to make a good impression. I doubt whether he could really do much harm . . . . but he is much linked with (sic !) Mrs. Besant and Indian sedition generally and he might stir up some trouble among the young hot-heads here which it would be best to avoid . . . . I do not advise allowing him to return.”

The Governor's order on this minute reveals the British attitude to the Anagarika Dharmapala further :

“ I have read sufficient of these papers to decide that under no pretext whatever will I permit this man to return to Ceylon while it lies in my power. After the Order in Council ceases to be operative he will return at his peril.”

Similarly when Dr. C. A. Hewavitarne made representations on behalf of the Anagarika, the Governor's reply was :

“ (1) Inform him that his brother can return at his own risk after the Order in Council ceases to be in force, but not before,

(2) Inform I. G. P. confidentially.”





After much agitation he was given permission in December, 1919, to return to Ceylon. He came to Ceylon in 1920 but for a few days. He came again on the 15th of April, 1921, and on this occasion addressed, twenty meetings. Police kept detailed records of his movements, and his meetings in the following manner :

“ At a Meeting held at Santhagara Hall, Darley Road, Maradana, at 3.30 p.m. on Sunday the 11th instant, ANAGARIKA DHARMAPALA delivered a lecture on Buddhism.

There was a large gathering which consisted mainly of the working classes.

DHARMAPALA said that for calling the European man “ PARA SUDDHA ” he was confined in Calcutta for six long years as a prisoner, and was daily watched by three Constables.

When Ceylon was taken over by the British Government there was a definite promise given to the Buddhists that their religious rights would be respected. (He did not say anything beyond these remarks, on this point.)

He said that the . . . do not eat anything touched or prepared by the Sinhalese or any other people, except their own. The Sinhalese on the contrary buy everything from the . . . , eat things prepared by the “ . . . ” and associate with them. As long as “ . . . ” do not care to buy or eat anything touched by the Sinhalese and others there is no reason why the Sinhalese should go to them to buy their things. Do not buy anything from a . . .

. . . He said that his name was David originally, but after reading the Bible he gave up that name, the reason being that, according to the Bible David was a murderer who caused Uriah's



death, and took his wife as his mistress. The Sinhalese Buddhists should give up all Christian names and adopt Buddhist names.

DHARMAPALA said he has returned to the Island with the intention of re-starting the defunct "SINHALA BAUDHAYA". He was asked by D. B. JAYATILLAKA and Dr. W. A. DE SILVA not to do so but he is determined to start it. Every Sinhalese ought to buy a copy of the paper when published.

A BUDDHIST PRIEST, whose name could not be ascertained, made a complaint to DHARMAPALA to the effect that arrangements are being made to build a Roman Catholic Church at Kalapaluwawa just opposite a Buddhist Temple. DHARMAPALA requested the priest to oppose the building of the church, and to inform the authorities that if the church is built against the wishes of the Buddhists there would be TROUBLE. (Sinhalese word used—"KOLAHALA".)

The priest said that Mr. Fraser, Government Agent, would be coming to inspect the place on the morning of the 16th inst. and requested DHARMAPALA to be present also. He said he would do so.

2. ANAGARIKA DHARMAPALA delivered a lecture yesterday, 13th June, 1922, at 5 p.m. at Santhagara Hall on Buddhism.

There were about 100 people present, the majority of whom were workmen.

He spoke of Buddhism in India prior to 800 years ago. He said that the whole of India then was a Buddhist country. The Arabs came to India and destroyed Buddhism. The ruins of the destroyed temples could be seen even at the present day, and urged the people to go and see them. . . .

•

He further said that a trick is being played on the Sinhalese by using the word "Ceylonese" generally for the "Sinhalese". He studiously avoided mentioning as to who is playing this trick.

He said he cares very little for the trousered man. The trousered man is an incorrigible fool who wastes his money in imitating foreigners. He will leave them all alone. But he is interested in the welfare of the people (you—referring to the workmen) as there is nobody to advise them. They have no leader.

The Meeting terminated at 6.45 p.m

The Meeting was attended to by Inspector Peries and myself.

3. ANAGARIKA DHARMAPALA delivered a lecture on Buddhism at 5 p.m. on the 16th instant at Santhagara Hall.

The gathering consisted of workmen of whom there were about 300 people, a few clerks and students of Ananda College and about 10 Buddhist Priests.

DHARMAPALA in the course of his speech whilst running down Christianity made use of the following words :— . . . .

I want the whole of the present Government to be a Buddhist Government. I want the Governor to be a Buddhist. I want the Colonial Secretary and all other high officials to be Buddhists. . . .

DHARMAPALA said that he is preparing a pamphlet against Christianity. I will show these Christians . . . what their religion is . . .

I have come this time to do something. I am going to start again the "BAUDHAYA" (news-paper). I want all of you to help me. Do not be afraid. Forget not that we are the lion race. . . .

The Meeting at Santhagara Hall terminated at 6.45 p.m.

DHARMAPALA delivered another lecture at Ananda College. The lecture began at 7 p.m. and terminated at 9 p.m. This lecture was almost the same as the one delivered previously."

On June 17, 1922, the Inspector General of Police reported :

"It would be safer to get rid of him at once. He is out for doing harm and not good. There is no reason why he should be permitted to deliver addresses in this strain. The longer he is allowed in the Colony the more dangerous he will become. He is sowing discontent and trouble will arise. The easiest method of dealing with Dharmapala is to notice him to quit."

The recommendation, however, was not accepted by the Governor who in a secret communication directed :

"I should prefer to let matters further develop. His conduct will possibly later on bring him in conflict with Civil Law when steps must be taken."

Police had apparently changed their opinion of the Anagarika Dharmapala when it reported, "He is a man of no account now. He has no influence, associates or followers in the Island" and the I. G. P. added : "Prior to 1915 Dharmapala was a mob-leader and a man to be closely watched." But when he returned on September 6, 1924, the vigilance of the Police continued unabated and a comprehensive state-



ment, in tabulated form, of his addresses had been prepared for submission to the Colonial Secretary. (See Specimen page of this Report in Appendix V.)

On the 19th of June 1925, Anagarika Dharmapala left for Marseilles en route to U. K. and U. S. A., and the Chief Secretary's file on him closes with the letter (already mentioned on page 41 and reproduced on pages 79, 80) addressed by the Officer Administering the Government of Ceylon on the 21st of June to the Secretary of State for Colonies enclosing a full dossier on him which, far from being complimentary, states that it was advisable that Dharmapala should be very carefully and closely watched while he was on the continent for the following reason :

*“ It may possibly be that he is making this trip with the object of getting into touch with M. N. Roy, a notorious Indian Bolshevik and publisher of revolutionary papers in Berlin.”*

Today we are sufficiently far removed from the scene of conflict between the British Empire-builders and the patriotic national leaders to assess justly the services rendered to the nation by the Anagarika Dharmapala. At a time when the events of the past can be seen from a clearer perspective, a glimpse of the sordid pettiness which characterised the foreign masters' attitude towards native agitators and campaigners makes our admiration grow for those who toiled through odds to achieve their aims and ideals. It is from such a point of view that one finds in the dusty pages of C.S.O. files invaluable information to understand the Anagarika Dharmapala—the man and national hero.

## VII

### The Mission of Anagarika Dharmapala

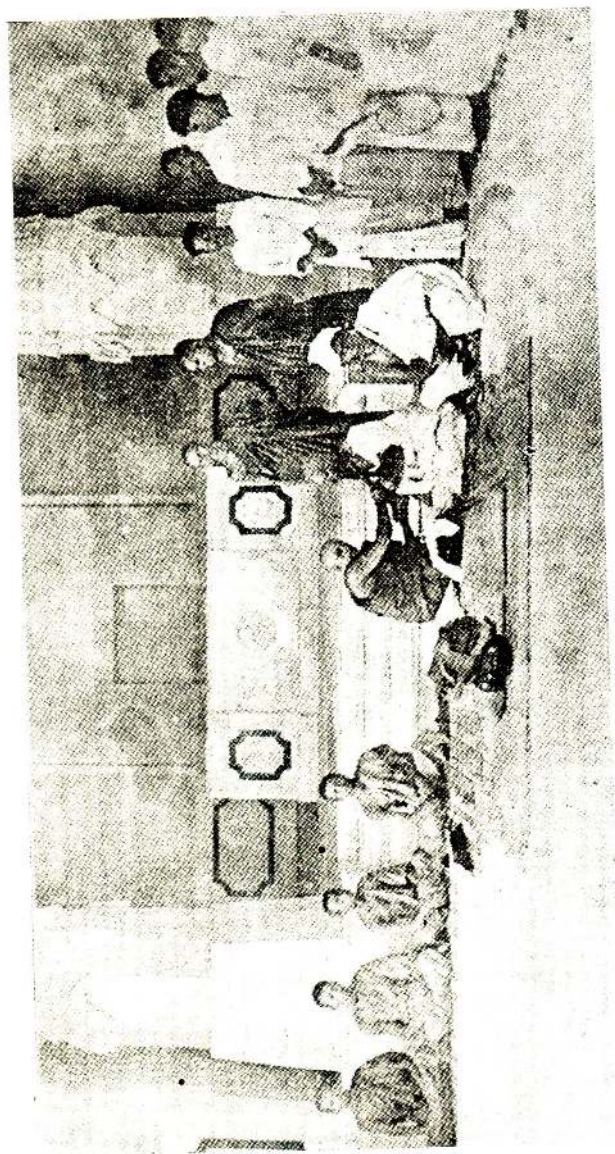
THE Anagarika Dharmapala renounced all that wealth and position could give him including the comforts of a happy and contented home-life, with a desire to work for his religion. This is exactly what he told his parents when he left them. All he wanted from his father was a paltry allowance of rupees five a month. The inspiration and the training he had from Ven. Gunananda and Ven. Sumangala as well as from Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky was intended to make him a religious propagandist. As a theosophist, his interest would have been in the religious way of life in general rather than in any particular religion.

But a series of events very early in his career made him see the problems of his country so vividly that he soon changed his course of action and adopted for himself a wider programme of activities which ranged from Buddhist research and missionary propaganda to social services and political agitation.

The long and arduous tours, which took him to remote villagers and gave him many opportunities to understand them and their difficulties, had convinced him, beyond any doubt, that the root-cause of all the national problems of Ceylon was the loss of independence. He once said, "*There is something about an alien rule, no matter how beneficent, that stupefies*" (p. 694.) He observed that since 1505 "Ceylon had been the happy hunting ground of the buccaneering pirates of Portugal, Holland and the British Isles." (p. 700.) He studied the evils of Western Imperialism. "It was for the sake of Mammon that the European races sailed in their ships," he wrote in 1915, "Portugal, Spain, Holland, Venice, France were







Anagarika Dharmapala becomes a Buddhist monk as Ven. Devamitta Dharmapala.

the competing rivals that carried on mutual warfare to gain the upper hand in the Indian Ocean and Yellow Sea. Of culture they had none to speak . . . . What evil did not these early navigators backed up by the Pope and King commit on the nations that lived peacefully in their own way in their native lands . . . . For a century European culture that was presented to the ancient races of Asia was the very opposite of what they had learnt to observe. Instead of temperance and sobriety, they learnt their opposites. Instead of compassion and kindness to animals the Westerners taught Asiatics to slaughter animals for pleasure and for food." (p. 398.)

The Anagarika was convinced that no nation could be great unless it was politically independent. "When a nation is politically dependent on another nation the weaker nation loses its individuality. A subject race could not produce heroes." (p. 396.) "As slaves no social or economic progress is possible . . . . If a nation that is able to supply their own wants finds themselves handicapped by the obstacles that are set forth by a superior race, no progress is possible." (p. 400.) He illustrated these points with reference to India. With feeling he asked, "India, the land of the gods, the land of the Brahmans, the land of the Buddhas, the land of the great righteous monarchs like Asoka, Siladitya, Vikramaditya, the land of Aryan culture, what is India today but a corpse? Millions of starving people, illiterate, ignorant, living like dumb beasts, without high ideals, living in a state of moral inferiority, without any hope, victims of fatalism, full of fear, superstitious to an abnormal degree, receiving not a word of sympathy—this is the India that gave a beneficent civilization built on ethical ideals." (p. 399.)

It was the Anagarika's aim that Ceylon should be independent. "The bright, beautiful Island of Ceylon is under the barbaric imperialism of England," he



mourned in 1902, "The sweet, tender, gentle Aryan children of an ancient, historic race are sacrificed at the altar of the whisky-drinking, beef-eating belly-god of heathenism. How long, Oh! How long will unrighteousness last in Ceylon?" (p. 484.) He urged the young men of Ceylon to agitate for freedom. "We must work systematically," he said, "having before us the goal of self-government and Home Rule under British protection for Ceylon. We must agitate constitutionally with ceaseless vigour." (p. 511.) In 1916 he hoped that Ceylon would get within forty years a status similar to New Zealand (p. 720) and his ideal was a commonwealth of nations. In 1915 when the holocaust of the First World War was raging in Europe he repeatedly urged: "A co-operative commonwealth working for the welfare of the many and for the happiness of the many is the kind of institution that civilized humanity needs." (p. 458.)

The mere slogan that Ceylon should be free was not adequate to wake the people from their century-long slumber. The campaign for independence had to be multi-pronged. The Anagarika's analysis of the many forces behind British imperialism enabled him to isolate the ones which had to be immediately subdued. He was not a mere rabble-rouser though the British called him a "mob-leader". His moves were calculated and well-planned. He did not want to destroy an edifice merely because he disliked the builder. He would rather inherit it and, as its owner, embellish it in a manner he thought fit. The Anagarika's attitude to the British had changed from time to time. In 1892 he felt that the British domination was "the best of foreign rule" which Ceylon had gone through (p. 524); in 1909 he called them "the most enlightened, the most philanthropic, the most cultured of all European races." (p. 530.) But by 1926 he had come to the conclusion: "The British are an arrogant race, very selfish." (p. 666.) He was aware of the strength and magnitude of the British Empire (p. 714 and p. 724). He



found fault with them for "making every effort to undermine our noble religion." He further said : "The British are giving us opium, ganja, whisky and other alcoholic poisons and are introducing every kind of abominable vice that is helping to undermine the vitality of our people." (p. 764.) But he was, at the same time, conscious of what the British had done for Asia for he says, "England gives everything to Asia—her arts, sciences and Christianity. We have the Dhamma which they have not—and our duty is to give Dhammadana to them." (p. 775.)

He knew that a vigorous campaign was essential if the British were to be got rid of. But it had to be so planned that the benefits of Western Civilization which they brought to Ceylon such as education, science and technology were retained while only what he termed the "Western abominations" were eradicated.

The Anagarika's methods differed according to the group he was trying to win over. To the intellectual he had intellectual arguments. For instances, he would say : "The British have built roads, extended railways and generally introduced the blessings of their materialistic civilization into the land : and with this inception of the modern era the Aryan Sinhalese had lost his true identity and become a hybrid. Practices which were an abomination to the ancient noble Sinhalese have today become tolerated." (p. 494.)

He blamed the British for all the evils which had befallen the peasantry : "After a hundred years of British rule the Sinhalese as a consolidated race is on the decline. Crime is increasing year by year, the ignorance of the people is appalling, without local

industries the peasant proprietor is on the verge of starvation, cattle are dying for want of fodder, for the pasture lands and village forests have been ruthlessly taken away from him and made crown property, and sold to the European to plant rubber and tea. The Government is forcing the poor villager to drink intoxicants by opening village liquor shops by the thousand, in opposition to the united voice of the whole people. It was the British Government for the first time for the sake of filthy lucre opened liquor shops in the year of Christ 1801 in Ceylon ! Since then with muddle-headed indifference the Government has continued to give liquor to the illiterate villagers and today the prisons are full of criminals. (p. 508.)

He repeatedly asked : “ Within the last . . . . years the most enlightened, the most philanthropic, the most cultured of all European races have been associating with the Aryan Sinhalese of Ceylon, and what do we see today as fruits of the tree planted by them ?” And the Anagarika invariably answered : “ *Drunkenness, poverty, increase of crime and increase of insanity.*” (p. 530.)

He castigated the British for their economic policy : “ Well, we have the roads and the railways for which the people have paid and are paying and shall pay for ever and ever. Have we schools for the young, factories where we make our own cloth, and other requisites that we are in need of ? Where are our dockyards, our arsenals, our gas works, our electric workshops, our agricultural colleges, our scientific laboratories, &c. ? The British Planters have about 900,000 acres of tea and rubber plantations, and the money that they get is taken away to England. Rice,

the staple food of the Sinhalese, is imported from India, also our currystuffs. Pins, Needles, Ink, Stationery, Glassware, Crockery, Hardware, Wearing Apparel, Shoes, Hats, Machinery, Cutlery, Clothes, Umbrellas, Bentwood Furniture, &c., are all imported from abroad." (p. 535.)

He drew their attention to the suffering masses : " We who live in palatial mansions, " he said, " can have no idea of the terrible suffering of the poor villagers." (p. 527.)

On another occasion he stated : " In Ceylon people are dying of parangi, fever, anchylostomiasis, malaria by the hundred thousand annually ; the school children attending village schools are underfed, ill-clad and in the town of Colombo thousands of poor children are living like vagrants without any kind of control over them." (p. 517.)

The fault for all these, he argued, lay in the hands of the British administrators whom he bitterly disliked. Calling them " *White Brahmans* ", the Anagarika criticized them for their " intolerable arrogance " and lack of compassion. He further said that the British administrators, intent on making money left " behind their moral consciöusness in their Island home." (p. 666.)

To others he had other arguments. He was convinced that the agitation for national freedom is an involuntary by-product of national pride. He urged the Sinhalas to read their history and take pride in their culture : " The study of history I consider is of the utmost importance for the development of the patriotic consciöusness." ( p. 506.)



He kept on reminding them : “ The Sinhalese are a people with noble traditions with a noble literature, with a noble religion.” (p. 541.) “ The history of evolution can point to no other race today that has withstood the ravages of time and kept its individuality for so long a time as the Sinhalese people.” (p. 484.) “ No nation in the world has had a more brilliant history than ourselves.” (p. 506.) It is this individuality of the nation which he was anxious to preserve. He was shocked at the sight of young Sinhala men and women who adopted the Western way of life. In his writings in the local Sinhala press he ridiculed them and in his speeches he attacked them most mercilessly. His aim was to convince them that the aimless life of luxury which they led by aping the European planter or administrator was a thing to be ashamed of. He began with the dress. He said “ Persecuted by the Portuguese and robbed by the Dutch the Sinhalese have lost the vitality which makes man a man. Look at the twenty different forms of dress adopted by the Sinhalese which greets the stranger’s eye in Ceylon. Why, it is absolutely impossible for him to distinguish a Sinhalese from a Goanese ; for in name and dress he is no more than a Eurasian.” (p. 640.)

In the Sinhala articles he resorted to sarcasm and ridicule. A new hat which the Sinhala women adopted in imitation of European fashions was compared by him to a basket which a vegetable vendor carried on her head,\* and “ the Lanka Watti Hat ” was the subject of a cartoon in the “ Ceylon Nation ”. He advocated the Indian saree to women and the cloth and banian for men. In no field of reform had the Anagarika had such quick results as in giving the womanhood of

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\* See “ Dharmapala Lipi ” p. 17—Sinhala writings of Anagarika Dharmapala (XIV and 348 pages) edited by Dr. Ananda Guruge and published by the Ministry of Social Services and Cultural Affairs, 17th January, 1965 (Price Re. 1).

Ceylon a dress more in keeping with her natural grace. The European fashions among Sinhala women vanished almost overnight.



**THE LANKA WATTI HAT.**

The other sign of national inferiority complex, he attacked, was the use of foreign names. Very early in his career, the Anagarika realised that the argument "What's in a name?" had no place in a movement for national resurgence. He urged that the Aryan Sinhālas should go by Aryan names: "A patriot's blood boils with indignation at the sight of the present anglicised Sinhālese who loves neither his country nor nation. Fancy the descendants of Vijaya having names like Pereras, Silvas, Almedas, Diases, Liveras, Dons, Donas, Sarams, Ruberos, Botejos, Rodrigos, 'et hoc genus omne'. Why a European would hardly believe that the owner of such a name is a Sinhālese." (p.639.)

He scoffed at the anglicized Sinhālas for their meaningless and slavish adoption of alien customs and habits. He poked fun at them at meetings and, whenever he met them privately, he never failed to give them a piece of his mind, even when they were his closest relatives or friends.

It is here that the Anagarika Dharmapala quarrelled with the missionaries. A thorough student of Christianity, with an unusually high degree of familiarity with Christian scriptures, the Anagarika was a sincere admirer of the ethical doctrines of Christ. (See Chapter 47.)\* He had often in his articles referred to his appreciation of the lofty teachings in the Sermon on the Mount (p. 695). He, of course, rejected the idea of God and creation and he had repeatedly given his arguments in support of his standpoint. (pp. 33, 78, 79, 160, 180, 192, 257, 268, 303, 4, 420, 438.) He was equally critical of the attitude of the Christian Church to science and progress (pp. 421, 716). He felt that Christianity had failed in Europe and his arguments were as follows:—"Christianity has been a complete failure in Europe. During the middle ages the Papal domination kept the people in Ignorance. Darkness prevailed in Europe for nearly 18 centuries. With the birth of Modern Science theology received a blow, and

\*Reference is to Chapter 47 of "Return to Righteousness" edited by, Ananda Guruge, Colombo, 1965.



materialistic theories gained ground. With the progress of scientific thought there came into being discoverers and inventors of new laws and deadly weapons. The contradictory teachings of Jehovah and Jesus were taught in schools and colleges along with physical science. Between theology and science there can be no reconciliation, no compromise. Theology is opposed to modern science. The former teaches a special creation, the latter an evolution. Science teaches the gradual evolution of man from lower types. Theology teaches that Jehovah created man from the dust of the ground. But for modern science Europe today would have remained stagnant as she had been for 19 centuries. Science helped to discover the laws of hygiene, sanitation, electricity. In ethics Europe made no progress." (p. 452.)

He was also convinced that it was bound to fail in Asia for other reasons. (pp. 400, 406.) In spite of his own doubts regarding the effectiveness of the role which Christianity played in Europe or Asia, the Anagarika did not attempt either to convert Christians to Buddhism or to destroy the Christian Church in Ceylon. His attitude to Christianity is an important index to his way of thinking on the entire religious problem. He said : " Christianity is looked upon as the religion of the ruling power by the converts who look upon themselves as orphans willing to receive the crumbs that fall from the master's table. A native Church managed by the natives themselves with no white supervision and supported by the contributions of the converts themselves would help to make them more independent and individualistic. Then will come the inspiration for self-sacrificing work ; but so long as that is not done Christianity will be an exotic foreigner to the soil." (p. 407.) In short, the Anagarika's concern had been that Christianity, as expounded by the missionaries, bolstered up imperialistic rulers and was a threat to national independence. He was not

against the Christian religion or the church. He only wanted the control over the church to be national, i.e., a national church managed by the natives of Ceylon.

This attitude to Christianity is not surprising because the Anagarika always held lofty views on religious tolerance. He once said, "Religion is a thing of the heart, and it is beyond the power of man to go into the heart of other people. To oppress a human being for his inner conviction is diabolical." (p.271.) He nurtured within him the "exalted hopes for the brotherhood of man and for a Utopian period, not too far distant, when Christian and Jew, Mahommedan, Brahman and Buddhist would associate with joyous understanding, purged of the prejudices and hateful passions that an intensity of religious belief invariably inspires in the narrow-minded and ignorant of any race, nation or creed." (p. 690).

The Anagarika's *bete noire* was the foreign missionary. With the planter and the bureaucrat, he was regarded to be the spearhead of the movement which weaned the people from their religious and cultural heritage. (p. 464.) It was the combination of these forces which made the Anagarika vituperative in his attacks. He said : "The Sinhalese people have submitted with silence for the simple reason that they have not had the weapons to fight against the intrusion of the scheming missionary who, backed by his official compatriot, never scrupled to abuse his trust by an exhibition of officialdom in making converts of boys and ignorant men to religion which for 19 centuries has done more harm than good to the world." (p. 525.)

The aim of the missionaries, he said, was to make the Buddhist, "Christians or indifferent Buddhists." (p. 773.) The product of missionary education worried him immensely. This is what he had to say of him in 1892 : "As for the so-called educated Sinhalese, the product of missionary civilization, he is a useless



entity and does nothing for the welfare of the Sinhalese race. Ignorant of the momentous questions of the day beyond reading a local newspaper, he is unfit to give an opinion on any important question. If he goes to England it is to extravagantly spend the money his father had left him, and he returns home with ideas of the 19th century Western sensualist. There is hardly one among the university educated Sinhalese who has done any material good for his countrymen. All idea of altruism is blunt in him and his greatest bliss consists in attending a Queen's House Ball, or a Governor's Levee. Social and political reformers, are not to be found among the so-called educated Sinhalese, and as long as this state of affairs continues we cannot expect any progress in the people. The ruling Briton knows that there is no educated public opinion among the Sinhalese people. He, therefore, treats the people with contempt." (p. 525.)

The denationalization to which the converts were subjected, the manner in which they adopted western names, dress and customs and the attitude they developed towards the Colonial powers led the Anagarika to conclude that the foreign missionary was "the advance agent of the European trader and whisky dealer." (p. 718) and "the political agent of Christian Governments and the commercial agent of capitalists and traders." (p. 25.)

He had concluded that the activities of the missionaries could not succeed in Asia because they were teaching people not what they wanted but dogmas of a religion in which the people were not generally interested. He felt that the millions of rupees spent by Europeans and Americans for the propagation of Christianity were in vain. He wanted the West to spend this money to spread the knowledge of science and technology in the East, to save the millions of Asians from famine, pestilence and ignorance and to elevate the standard of living of the masses of Asia, who were stricken with poverty and want. This type



of international co-operation, he repeatedly urged was superior to the teaching of Christian dogmas and biblical legends which were already being questioned in the light of scientific development. Holding the view that Christianity was "a system utterly unsuited to the gentle spirit of the Aryan race" (p. 442), the Anagarika Dharmapala urged the British to adopt an intelligent religious policy. His appeal to the British Government in 1908 is an able summary of the ideals he stood for: "But it is in the power of the British Government, which now rules the land with absolute sway, to protect the Sinhalese race from further losing its ancient religion by following the ennobling instructions laid down by the Tathagata. Let the Buddhists be given a form of local self-government according to the ancient traditions, based on the beneficent teachings of their Saviour. By nature the Sinhalese Buddhists, 'are polite, kind to their children and fond of learning.' Let the noble British nation, so eager to do good, prevent the sale of opium, arrack, and other intoxicating drugs to the Buddhists. Let industrial and technical schools be started in populous towns and villages. Let the methods adopted in the ancient days by the good kings of old, like Gamini, Buddhadasa, Parakrama Bahu, and other rulers, be repeated. Let the Mahawansa be a guide, and let the learned elderly Maha Theros (high priests) of the different parts of the island be asked to advise the Government as to the best means to be adopted for promoting the material and moral welfare of the Sinhalese Buddhists. That both the British and the Buddhists may thus thrive side by side in Ceylon is the sincere wish and prayer of the Anagarika Dharmapala." (p. 496.)

And his appeal to the people themselves was as eloquent as it was wise: "Our own leaders who have been educated under British influence in England are indifferent to the welfare of the Sinhalese. Our wealthy landowners, plumbago dealers, rubber and coconut planters, though comparatively few, yet may do

substantial service, if they would unite and work harmoniously to elevate the rising generation. Christians and Buddhists should unite and work for the elevation of the Sinhalese people. Religion should in no way hinder our patriotic activities, and it had not prevented Sun Yat Sen, the son of a Chinese Christian, from working for the elevation of the Chinese people. (p. 510.)

As significant as his agitation for national independence and religious freedom was his attitude to aliens who were gradually establishing themselves in the Island as planters, traders and labourers. As early as 1906, he urged in a letter to the Colonial Secretary that legislation similar to the Alien Prevention Act of England was urgently needed. He argued : "Aliens are taking away the wealth of the country and the sons of the soil where are they to go ? The immigrants who come here have other places to go to, the Sinhalese has no place to go to. It is just that the sons of the soil should suffer while the alien enjoys ? England so powerful has an Alien Prevention Bill to prevent paupers coming to her shores, and the ignorant helpless Sinhalese villager is made a victim by the alien sharper who robs his ancestral land." (p. 528.)

Again in a memorandum to the Secretary of State for Colonies he said in 1915 : "The Sinhalese of Ceylon should be protected from aliens who make money and leave the Island for good." (p. 541.)

In 1922, he had observed the beginnings of the Indo-Ceylon problem and sounded a warning note, which, unfortunately, was not heeded. In the local press, he carried on a vigorous campaign against the alien, whom he called a "national foe". He wrote verses in the "Sinhala Bauddhaya" on the manner in which the Sinhalese were exploited by aliens and published along with them a cartoon which showed a helpless Sinhala in the grip of alien traders, money-lenders and land grabbers.\* (Reproduced on next page.)

\* See " Dharmapala Lipi " p. 21.





A Cartoon from the Sinhala Baudhaya showing a helpless Sinhala in the grip of alien traders, money-lenders and land-grabbers.



It was the Anagarika's firm conviction that the problems of Ceylon could only be solved by the sons of the soil. "We require men of education with brains", he said, "to lead the people and to defend their interests from the western free-booters who come here to ruin our people by giving them alcohol." (p. 512.) Again he said, "What we need in Ceylon is a body of men, who, with enthusiasm, will go forward to awaken the sleeping people of Ceylon who are now having a moribund life." He wanted these leaders trained. He urged the young men of Ceylon "to study politics, philosophy, history and industrial economics, and to go to the root causes of our national decay." (p. 517.)

He was naturally concerned with the educational policy which could produce such leaders. "We should see that every child born of Sinhalese mothers and fathers receives a liberal education," he urged. He was shocked by the conditions of the village schools which he described as follows: "Vernacular Schools of the Island are so many 'black holes' where the brains of the Sinhalese children are scooped out and when they leave the school only one in ten thousand has the vitality to survive the moral disintegration." (p. 498.)

He castigated the Government for the apathy it showed in the field of education. He argued that the expenditure on the higher education of the children of four millions of Ceylonese was less than the salary paid to the Governor. (p. 532). In 1912 the per capita expenditure on education per annum was Rs. 5.44 in Government schools and Rs. 3.52 in Assisted Schools (p. 508.) He was most dissatisfied with the facilities for higher education. He told the young men of Ceylon: "The education that we get in our local scholastic institutions does not make us men, but ill-paid clerks, and to get a higher education, as it is impossible in Ceylon, I should ask you to migrate to Madras, Calcutta, Benares, Bombay, Lahore, Aligarh or Rangoon. Men who pass examinations

in either of the Indian Universities are employed as Judges of the High Court with a monthly salary of Rs. 4,000, and the cost of education is three times lower than what you have to pay in Ceylon. What we get in Ceylon is a bastard education without a solid foundation and the quicker you abandon the local schools and go to India the better for you if you wish to be men." (pp. 517-518.) He drew the attention of the people over and over again to the deplorable conditions in education. In 1912 he said, "In Ceylon the schools are very inferior, the educational vote for the whole people who number 3,494,317 is Rs. 1,442,464, which when proportionately divided, you will be astonished, comes to about half anna per month per head. There is no university, no technical college, no industrial school, no weaving school, no art school, and the boys who are poor can't afford to pay the exorbitant rate of Rs. 15 per month as school-fee which is charged at the Government School. The Christian missionaries have opened a few high schools but admission to these sectarian schools means that the Buddhist pupil loses his faith in the Lord Buddha and laughs at the Aryan customs and comes out as a thoroughbred Eurasian. This is most deplorable." (p. 765.)

As a solution he urged young men of Bengal to open schools in Ceylon. (p. 766.) He was also conscious of the need for education of girls as a necessary step to produce in Ceylon "a race of true Buddhists" (p. 798.) America and Japan were the models he had in mind ; no person before or after the Anagarika has been such a vociferous and persistent supporter of scientific and technological education. His conviction that the

future of Ceylon depended on industrial education prompted him to get his father to institute a system of scholarships to train young men in crafts and industries in Japan.

The Anagarika Dharmapala was fully conscious of the grave need for economic development. Addressing the young men of Ceylon, he said : "We are ignorant of the first principles which regulate the production, distribution and exchange of wealth. We consume ; but we do not produce fresh wealth. Our ancestral wealth we squander in luxuries, and we do not find fresh fields to increase our wealth by industries. For nearly seventy generations the Sinhalese have been experts in the science of construction of tanks to hold water for irrigating fields, and yet we get aliens to do our work!" (p. 514.) He urged them further : "We must learn to stand on our legs and not depend on the alien. We must revive our industries, give work to our countrymen first before we feed the distant Austrian and Belgian who supply us with his manufactures. We allow our own cow to die of starvation in our own field and we are feeding the cow in distant Switzerland and Denmark whose milk and butter we use. Behold the Asiatic trader who sells us rice and currysstuff and maldive fish. Cut off from the whole world we live in this land like the Andaman islanders, and we are not enterprising enough to visit other lands and pastures new. Those who go to England for pleasure and do nothing for the progress of our people are drones. We must unite and work in harmony to increase the wealth of our people. We are custodians of our posterity. We have to look to the future to protect the intersts of the coming generations of Sinhalese." (p. 511.)



In this field, again, he was not a mere theoretician. He practised what he preached and the institutions, he set up, blazed the trail for the growth and development of cottage industries.

The creation of a national awareness of the political, religious, social, educational and economic problems of the country is the most remarkable achievement of the Anagarika Dharmapala. This, to us, is of greater significance than the bold and tenacious struggle he carried on in India to re-establish Buddhism in the sub continent and to restore its sacred sites, such as Buddha Gaya and Isipatana, to the Buddhists.

Far greater than the glory which the Anagarika won for Ceylon by his zealous missionary activities in Europe and America and far greater than the cordiality and friendship he earned for Ceylon in various countries in the world is the historical significance of his struggle for national independence, through the promotion of Buddhism, the development of education, the formulation of a policy on aliens and on the economic progress of the nation. Consciously or otherwise, we of modern Ceylon have been guided by his views on some of the major problems of the day, and that indicates the tremendous impact which he had on the people of this country.

Thirty-two years after his death, we hark back to his clarion call :

*“Arise, awake, unite and join the Army of Holiness and Peace and defeat the hosts of evil.”* (p. 660.)

## APPENDIX I

Anagarika Dharmapala's Letter to Francis J. Payne,  
London dated 3.4 1925.

VEN: ANAGARIKA DHARMAPALA,  
DIRECTOR GENERAL  
BUDDHIST MISSION OF INDIA

"NAMO BUDDHAYA"

4a Colliage Street ①  
Colcutta 20/4 248 B  
1925

My dear Friend,

It seems that your vigorous activities in the arena of the Dhamma propaganda have come to a standstill. How did the collapse come? What have you done with regard to the publication of your Beastial-Bible? When activities cease people understand that life has left the body. While we are alive we have to do good Kamma? What are we here for? The answer is given in the Maha Mangala Sutta. There is nothing so evil as association with the muddle headed, and that is what 99% of people do. Priests, theologians, political leaders, lawyers, statesmen are of one mind the people are enslaved. They have to work for the benefit of those who have created a god and elected a king. Jehovah told Samuel to warn the Hebrews not to elect a king. But he

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failed to convince the idiots, and gave the tallest of the lot, a donkey-driver, to be made king. The conflict arose between Jehovah and the people's sovereign. Both parties went down when Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem. Jehovah went into a state of suspended animation. The Hebrews went into captivity.

The Dhamma of the Tathagato is little understood in the West. No two scholars agree with the ultimates of the Dhamma. The first requisite necessary to understand the Dhamma is Wisdom (Panna). To have panna one should be armed with the <sup>adjuncts of the</sup> first two principles of the Noble Eightfold Path. The British people are imbued with the spirit of sensualism, which is a hindrance to enter the Path. Absolute renunciation is too philosophic a requisite to be undertaken by the muddle-headed who wish to be governed by the priest and the aristocrat, failing both the wife

Forty years of ceaseless activity has made me

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those who have created a god and elected a king. Jehovah told Samuel to warn the Hebrews not to elect a king. But he failed to convince the idiots and gave the tallest of the lot, a donkey-driver, to be made king. The conflict arose between Jehovah and the people's sovereign. Both parties went down when Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem. Jehovah went into a state of suspended animation. The Hebrews went into captivity.

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Forty years of ceaseless activity has made me



physically weak. For 34 years I have spent <sup>192</sup> my life in India in voluntary exile. The name of the Lord Buddha was hardly ~~then~~ known 34 years ago by the people of India. Today all India acknowledges Him as their God. There was no Vihara in India, no Buddhist publication, no preaching until started by the Maha Bodhi Society. There is a great harvest to be reaped if there are Buddhist workers. The number of Untouchables waiting to be rescued from the Brahmanical despotism is 65 millions. The Brahmans don't want them. They are ~~thought as~~ <sup>not allowed by</sup> the Brahmans to walk in the same road with them. Christians and Moslems wish to convert them, and steps are being taken by both to have them converted. There are 70 million Moslems. If the Untouchables are converted the number of Moslems will increase to 135 millions. Padres will be glad to have the number of Native Christians increased from 3 millions to 68 millions when the Untouchables become Moslems there will be a tough fight between Moslems + Hindus.

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Indian Christianity is synonymous with butchery & alcoholism. I wish to start a propaganda to carry the Dhamma to the untouchables, but I am now so very weak that the Doctors advise me to take complete rest in a German Sanitarium for 3 months, otherwise I shall be completely break down and be of no use to the Cause.

I propose leaving Calcutta next month about the 10 of May and go to Colombo, there to take steamer for Marseilles. <sup>in Europe</sup> After my arrival I shall let you know. Would it be helpful to the Cause if I visit England.

The Buddha Dhamma is too sublime for the barbarian <sup>pagans.</sup> they do not want to give up alcohol & meat. They are satisfied with the low Caste gods and the fetish priests.

Yours affectionately  
The Anagarika Dharmapala

Francis J. Payne Esq.  
London.

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Francis J. Payne Esq.  
London.

Yours affectionately  
The Anagarika Dharmapala.

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## APPENDIX II

16th June, 1925.

The Hon:  
The Colonial Secretary,  
Colombo.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward herewith, a statement on Anagarika Dharmapala as requested by your Memo of the 16th June 1925.

1. Anagarika Dharmapala is a Sinhalese, Buddhist, height about 5feet 9 inches, hair grey and tied in a knot but hanging down his neck. He is of a brownish complexion and has a clean shaven face. He has a slight defect in his right leg, which he raises rather higher than the other when he walks. His Original name was Don David Hewavitarana, but since he took to preaching Buddhism he adopted the name of Anagarika Dharmapala. The word "Anagarika" meaning "Homeless".

### 2. His relations.

Dharmapala is the eldest son of the late Don Carolis, Mohandiram, head of the firm of H. Don Carolis & Sons, well-known furniture dealers at 1st Cross Street, Pettah, Colombo. His other relations in Ceylon are

- (a) Dr. C.A. Hewavitarana - brother.
- (b) Edmund Hewavitarana, who was arrested during the riots in 1915 and imprisoned for the part he took in the riots. Edmund Hewavitarana died whilst serving his time in jail before the pardon which was granted arrived.
- (c) Neil Hewavitarana, a son of the late Edmund Hewavitarana, is a nephew of Dharmapala and is a partner of the Firm.
- (d) J. Moonesinghe, Proctor, who does not practice his profession is a brother-in-law of Dharmapala. Moonesinghe has a son Mr. Malin Moonesinghe, a nephew of Dharmapala who is a member of the Ceylon Civil Service.

### 3. A brief statement of Dharmapala's movements since the riots in Ceylon in 1915.

Dharmapala was not in Ceylon during the riots. He was in Calcutta at the time and was then under the surveillance of the Calcutta Police. He was in India since 1913 and did not return till 9.12.1921. He went back to India on 12.12.1921. After this he paid frequent visits to Ceylon but did not spend much of his time here. Dharmapala is a notorious seditiousist and a warrant was issued by the Police Magistrate of Colombo against him on 20th June 1915 under section 130 of the Ceylon Penal Code. He was also prohibited from landing in Ceylon - vide your letter addressed to Dr. C.A. Hewavitarana dated 11th June 1919. These - the warrant and the restrictions with regard to Dharmapala's coming out to Ceylon - were however withdrawn by your confidential letter dated the 10th December 1919 addressed to the Inspector General of Police. When Dharmapala was in India the Indian Police communicated with the Ceylon Police and the Head of the Criminal Intelligence Office, Simla, writing to the Inspector General of Police, Ceylon, in a letter dated 22.6.1915 stated that Dharmapala had a most suspicious history, and that the Indian Police had been interested in him for years. I annex hereto a copy of an abstract of information on record in the Criminal Intelligence Office, Simla, forwarded to the Inspector General of Police, Ceylon.

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CYLON GOVT. ARCHIVES.

4.



4. Dharamapala's political and religious activities.

Dharamapala was entirely anti-government and always had imaginary grievances against the Government of the Colony. At meetings at which he spoke he almost invariably attacked Government officials and always said something uncalculated against the British. At a general meeting of the Ceylon National Association held on 14.9.24 at which Dharamapala presided, the first resolution proposed was against the selection of Sir Hugh Clifford as Governor of Ceylon. Copy of the resolution appears below :-

"The Sinhalese National Association in meeting assembled view with great alarm and misgivings the selection of Sir Hugh Clifford, the ex-Colonial Secretary of Ceylon, whose administration has been detrimental to the best interests of the country, as Governor of Ceylon, and earnestly enter upon a protest upon the said selection. That a cablegram be sent to the Secretary of State for the Colonies to that effect".

With regard to religion he very seldom preached his religion. His idea of preaching Buddhism was to attack other religions such as Christianity, Islamism, etc.

6. Dharamapala's following in Ceylon.

Dharamapala does not appear to have much of a following in Ceylon. This may be due to the fact that he has been away in India for so long and was therefore unable to move about amongst his own people. Neither did a large number of the more sensible Buddhists are not for supporting his extremist views.

7. Reasons for Dharamapala's present trip.

It is understood that Dharamapala is taking this trip for the purpose of obtaining medical treatment. I have my suspicions that this reason is not bona fide. It may possibly be that he is making this trip with the object of getting into touch with M.H.Roy a notorious Indian Bolshevik and publisher of revolutionary papers in Berlin. I think it is advisable that Dharamapala should be very carefully and closely watched whilst he is on the continent.

8. Dharamapala has booked a second class passage to Marseilles by the s.s. "Makosaki Maru" which sails about the 19th instant. He and Mr.R.Hewavitarne have booked together on one second class ticket.

S. Subramani

Sgd. H. Ludovici.  
Acting Deputy I.G. Police, C.I.S.

com 646 042 100.

CEYLON GOVT. ARCHIVES.

APPENDIX III

14676  
SECRETARIAT COLOMBO  
24 JUN 1905



Pis ml +  
Confidential

Aloe Avenue  
22 June 05

Dear Sir,

Without giving any cause on my part you have spoken ill of me to Mr Obeyesekere M.C., and that gentleman has spoken to my friends about your strictures against me - that I am trying to buy money' etc.

A gentleman occupying the high place as you do ~~you~~ ought to be more compassionate and not show illwill.

For nearly 20 years I have done all I could for the welfare of my religion and my country, in whose interests I have spent over Rs 10000 and travelled 3 times round the globe in preaching Buddhism.

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CEYLON GOVT. ARCHIVES.

Placed as I am there is no need for me to be dependent on others. This is why I resigned Govt service after having passed the Clerical Exam in 1886. With the exception of half a dozen office seeking Buddhist the Buddhist Community ~~are~~ is willing to listen to me.

Now that I am going to stay in Ceylon it is well that I should not be misunderstood. I have to be active and activity means agitation according to constitutional methods.

The Amradhapura problem has to be solved. It is very easy to be solved. For <sup>the use of a</sup> Europeans you have given Havelock Park and the Col. M.C. has paid down the money. You can do the same thing for the Buddhist in giving them the land now taken up for the Market, bazaar, Courts, and the Doctors Bungalows. The Buddhist are prepared to pay a reasonable price to <sup>get</sup> buy back their sacred property. You have spent a long time in Ceylon and I hope you will serve our people more in helping them. I monumentalise your name in the hearts of 2 millions of Buddhist is the wish of  
The Anagarika Dharmapala



APPENDIX IV

Will read Judge  
whether the rights as to  
the state of his health is  
conceded and whether a change  
to Calcutta is being proposed  
Dear Sir:

9543  
SECRETARY GENERAL  
4a College Square  
7

Calcutta May 8, 1917

V. 15.5.17  
Draft

Since June 1915, I am under  
solitary confinement, not being  
allowed to leave Calcutta.

The result of this confinement  
in an <sup>ill-ventilated</sup> house has told upon my  
health, and am now an invalid  
suffering from chronic constipation  
hernia, deafness and throat trouble

Since last week I am suffering  
from renal colic and St Col and  
Dear J. M.S.; Dr W. Younan M.D.,  
and Dr Nilratan Sircar, eminent  
medical men are attending on

128728

me.

952<sup>3</sup>/7

Here I have no friend, no relation, no home comfort, and I suffer much.

Although I have been greatly persecuted by the authorities, I have done my duty to the British Govt at this time of trial by contributing Rs 1000/- to the War Fund; and investing all my resources in War Bonds as well as of the Br. B. Society's, amounting to Rs 52,000.

Doctors are of opinion that a change of climate is necessary. If I continue to suffer for another few months as I am doing now, I don't think I shall live for.

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CEYLON GOVT. ARCHIVES.

another year. I don't believe  
the Ceylon Govt wishes the destruction  
of my life

In my youth and manhood  
no charge was brought against  
me. I am now old, feeble, and  
ill why should I be unnecessarily  
persecuted and mentally tortured?

Kindly convey the contents  
of this letter written from a sick  
bed to His Excellency Sir John D'Almeida

Yours faithfully  
The Anagarika  
Dhamapala

To The Private Secretary  
H. E. The Governor of Ceylon  
Colombo.

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CEYLON GOVT. ARCHIVES.







