

WORLD BUDDHISM



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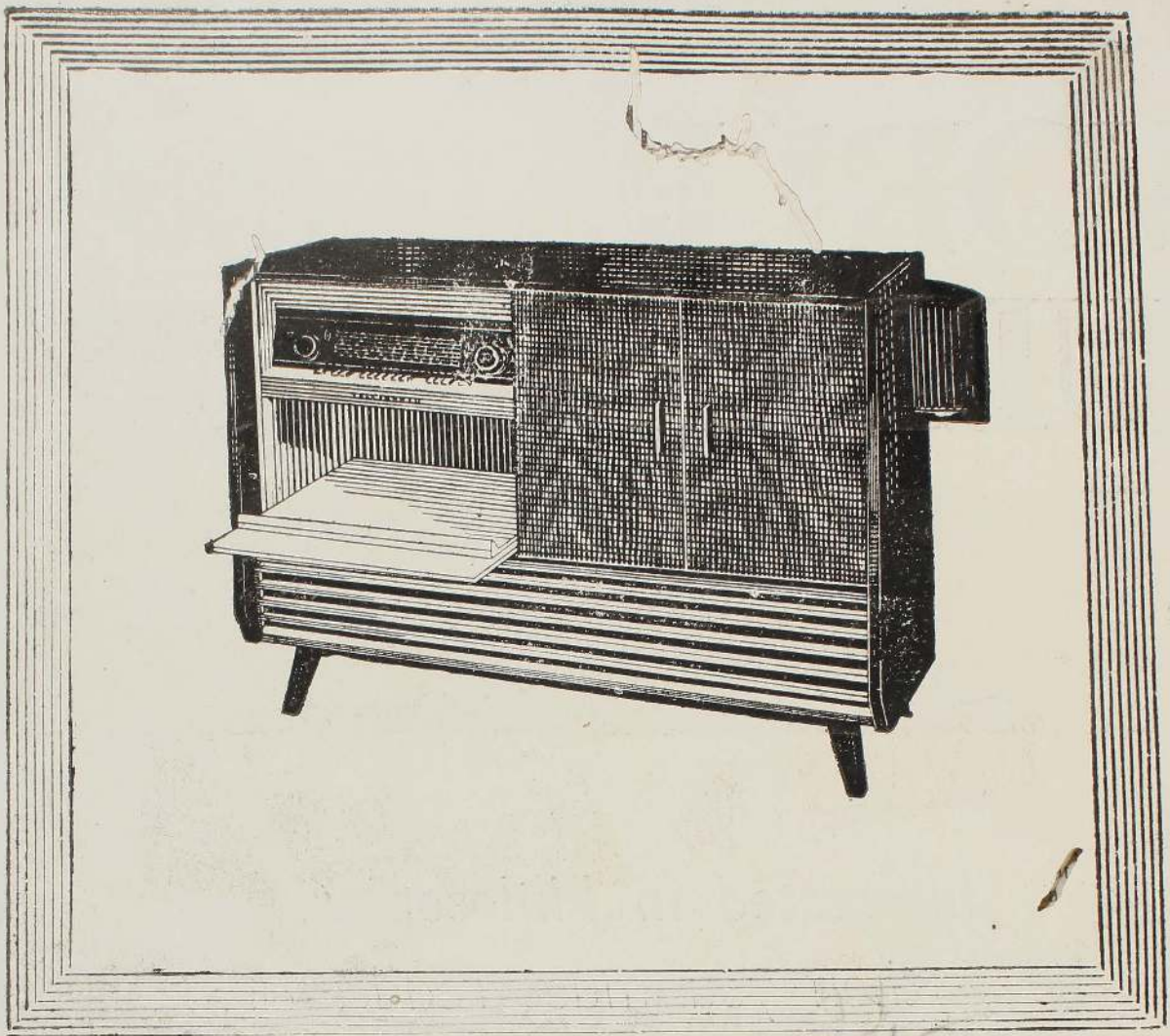
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of this new statue of the Buddha (see page 9)

World Buddhism

International Monthly: Established 2495 — 1951

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UNDUE EMPHASIS ON PUJAS AND CEREMONIES

By Austin de Silva

(Ceylon)

ON a day like the Vesak Day which falls in the month of May and which commemorates the Birth, the Enlightenment and the Parinirvana of the Buddha, it is appropriate that we should consider the prospects of Buddhism in the world today.

It was the philosophic East that first took to Buddhism which is often called a philosophy as opposed to the orthodox meaning of religion. Buddhism spread rapidly practically to the whole of the Eastern hemisphere, chiefly due to the missionary efforts of the illustrious Buddhist emperor of India, Asoka.

With the lapse of centuries, however, two principal forms or schools of Buddhism developed in the area—Mahayana and Hinayana. The former is confined chiefly to Tibet, China and Japan, while the latter flourishes in Ceylon, Burma, Thailand and Cambodia.

There are other schools of Buddhism as well, which do not have as large a number of followers as the two predominant schools of Mahayana and Hinayana. But what is important is that all these schools are strung together by one common thread which is the fundamental teaching of the Buddha—the Four Noble Truths, the Noble Eight-fold Path and the ultimate goal of Nirvana.

POPULAR PENGUIN

This idea is well illustrated in Christmas Humphrey's popular Penguin publication *Buddhism* which analyses practically all the important aspects and schools of Buddhism in existence today to push home the fact that despite the differences the main theme and the ultimate aim of all these are the same.

There is, therefore, no cause for these schools to argue with one

another or to declare that one's own school is the best and only true form of Buddhism. For instance, the Theravadins, specially in Ceylon, often declare that their form of Buddhism is the purest and that others are adulterated with secular beliefs. The others, however, will not agree with this trend of thought. Straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel should certainly be avoided.

IN CEYLON

For what is the truth? Take, for example, Buddhism in Ceylon today. Any observer will admit that it has come down to be a system of pujas and other ceremonies on which the Buddha placed very little or no significance at all. It is surprising that in almost all Buddhist temples in Ceylon great prominence is given to the Devala in which supplication is made to some god or other asking for favours or requesting that some enemy be mercilessly punished or destroyed. This is certainly against "pure" Buddhism which Ceylon often proclaims she is proud of.

Or again, a visit to any Buddhist temple will convince one how strongly pujas have gripped the devotee. Pujas are perhaps the sole means by which he hopes to attain Nirvana. But Buddha pujas or flower and other pujas are only a very minor aspect of Buddhism, which emphasises the intellectual rather than the ritual. The Buddha repeatedly laid emphasis on cleansing one's mind rather than on pujas and ceremonies.

However much he indulges in these outward forms of worship, the devotee will not attain Nirvana as successfully as he would by the practice of meditation. Meditation is the purification of the mind. While Ceylon has practically neglected this essential, Theravada

countries like Burma and Thailand have advanced considerably on this important aspect of Buddhism.

In Thailand, for instance, there is a special University for Meditation in which over two thousand monks and laymen, including several Americans, take classes daily. A recent attempt was made to introduce meditation schools to Ceylon also, on the pattern of Burma and Thailand, but the venture has not been the success it was expected to be owing to criticism by "secular interests".

One form of Buddhism which specialises in meditation is Zen. Zen Buddhism originated in Japan, and now it has branched over to the United States and even to the United Kingdom, where Zen sects have been founded.

The pendulum which once swung heavily to the East is now leaning towards the West. Buddhism, specially Zen Buddhism, is gradually getting a grip on the American continent, due entirely to the intellectual aspect of Zen which appeals to people who have begun to think seriously of the problems of life — the why and wherefore — due to the repercussions of the last holocaust brought about by World War II.

There is a similar wave in Europe, specially in Germany which was the greatest sufferer in that catastrophe. Here, as well as in the United Kingdom there is a move to establish its own Sangha — the Western Sangha — instead of hanging on to the apron strings of the Eastern Sangha. This is to be expected with the growing numbers of Western Buddhists and an increasing number taking to the yellow robe.

VINAYA RULES

The Western Sangha has even suggested that some of the minor rules of Vinaya, which was promulgated in the time of the Buddha Himself, and which is followed to the letter of the law today, should be altered to conform to the tempo of life and living in the West. This may sound heinous, but the plea of those who advocate it is that Western conditions are not the same as Eastern and that if Buddhism were to be propagated successfully in the West, these modifications are necessary.

Attention is also being focussed now on Tibetan Buddhism in which the occult predominates. It seems

that the well-known lines of Tennyson — "for yet we think that somehow good will be the final goal of ill" — are proving to be true in the case of Tibet as well. The flight of the Dalai Lama to India as a result of Chinese action in this land of mystery, accompanied by other lamas, has brought about a revival of Tibetan Buddhism in India, where Tibetan monasteries and Tibetan forms of worship are being established.

NO PLEA OR APOLOGY

This is neither a plea for a change in the Vinaya to suit the West nor an apology for Zen or any other school of Buddhism. What is necessary is greater tolerance on either side, a lopping of accumulations and accretions such as the undue emphasis on pujas and ceremonies, and the ushering of a World Buddhism centred round the fundamental teachings of the Buddha.

Ceylon should take a leading part in this move, for Ceylon is a country destined to be a pioneer in this effort. Buddhism in Ceylon

goes back to the days of the Buddha Himself. It is recorded that the Buddha visited Ceylon on several occasions, three of which stand out in the history of the Island. These three are the visits to Kelaniya, Mahiyangana and Sri Pada.

Apart from the sanctity bestowed on the Island by these three visits, Ceylon possesses the three most venerated relics connected with the Buddha — the sacred Tooth Relic in Kandy, the sacred Footprint on Sri Pada and the sacred Bodhi Tree in Anuradhapura. These are in addition to the numerous body relics of the Buddha enshrined in the numerous dagobas in various parts of the Island.

It is, therefore, to be hoped that Ceylon, as well as other Buddhist countries, without wrangling over minor and insignificant issues, should look into and consider the fact that there is one fundamental theme — the Buddha Dhamma — running through all the various schools of Buddhism and endeavour to help and encourage a World Buddhism, as opposed to various sects and sections, or life and let live.

WESTERN INTEREST IN BUDDHISM

THERE has been a great interest in recent times in the study of Eastern religions, particularly Buddhism, and its evolution from Hinduism.

Recently I met William Willetts, author of *Chinese Art* — a two-volume book in the Penguin series, writes "*Leda*" in *The Ceylon Observer*. Mr. Willetts was interested in the movement of Buddhism down south to our island, from the great continent of India, where it originated.

A few days ago, I had a long talk with a very interesting personality, Mr. N. Smart. A lecturer in Philosophy and Religion at the London University, he was on a short visit here in connection with the study of Buddhism. He was on his way to South India and then to Delhi on a visit of the Universities there.

But his main stop is to be Benares, where he goes as a Visiting Scholar, for a term in the Benares University to study Hinduism. After his Eastern experiences he hopes to complete his book on the Different Systems of Indian Philosophy.

Mr. Smart was of the opinion that the main reason for the interest in the Buddha in Western countries is "the inherent power and attractiveness of the Dhamma". Many, he said are dissatisfied with orthodox forms of Christianity. Also in a suffering and perplexing world many people find intellectual difficulties in the way of accepting the existence of a creator God in the Christian sense.

Theravada, in his experience, is not as widely known in the West as are some forms of Mahayana Buddhism, notably Zen. This, Mr. Smart said, was a pity, since, to his mind, Theravada well repays study.

"It is of the greatest interest and importance, partly because in some respects it is very different from that which we are accustomed to in the West. And further as a philosophical system it displays a vast amount of subtlety," he said.

Mr. Smart visited Polonnaruwa and Anuradhapura during his short stay in Ceylon. He was most impressed with these ancient cities.

He thanked the governments of Pakistan and India for gifting the Hair Relic and Body Relics of the Buddha to the Buddhists of Ceylon. He paid a tribute to Gate Mudaliyar L. M. W. Senanayake, who was responsible for getting the Hair Relic to Ceylon.

FOLLOW THE PRECEPTS

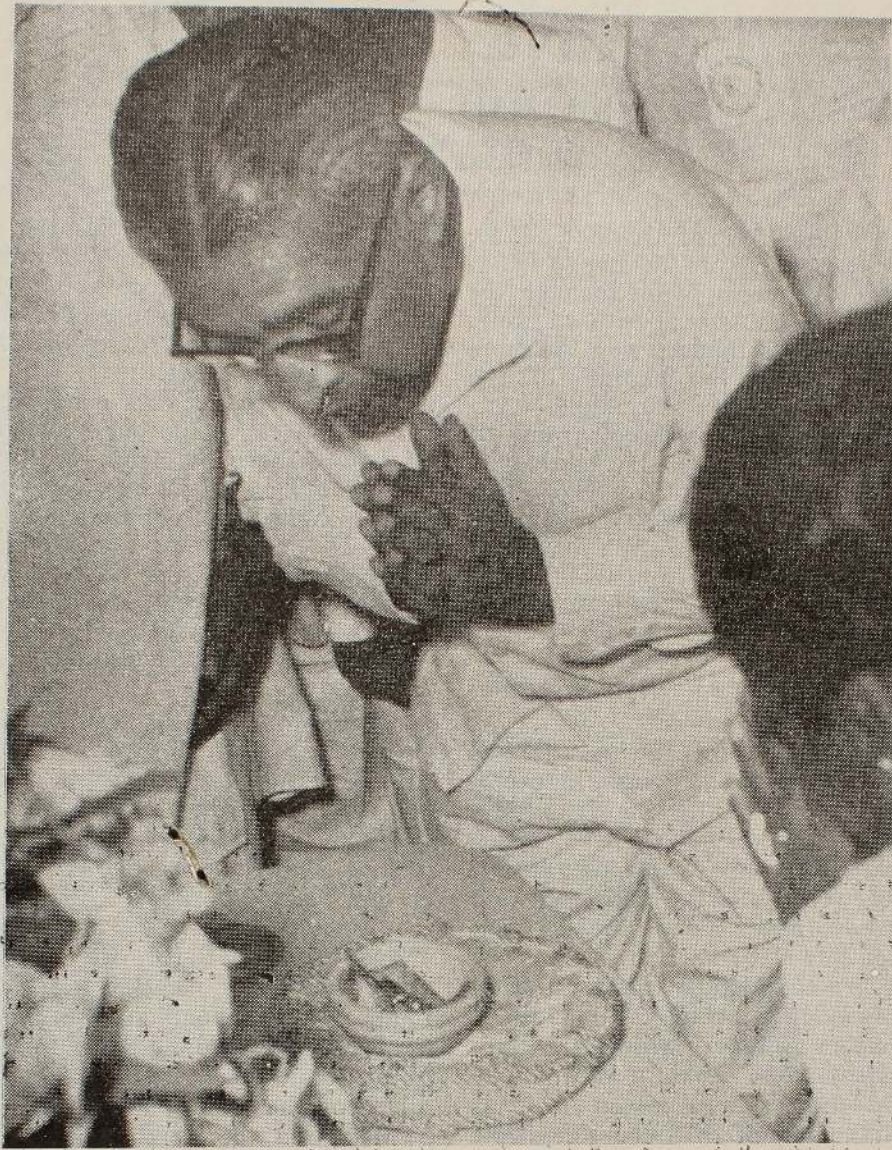
It was the duty of the Government, added the Prime Minister, to help the cause of Buddhism. Buddhists should work with kindness in this age of transition. If people followed the precepts of the Buddha there would be happiness, he said.

Cabinet Ministers, Nayaka Theras and the Pakistan and Burmese envoys participated in the ceremony.

The Relics were kept for public exposition from April 29 to May 11 at the Senanayakerama. During this period over 100,000 devotees walked past the Relics, paying their homage.

The Hair Relic was brought from Pakistan to Ceylon by Mr. M. Mahroof, High Commissioner for Ceylon in Pakistan in November last year and handed over to the Ministry of Cultural Affairs at a ceremony held at the Ministry in Colombo.

They were then handed over to Gate Mudaliyar Senanayake by Mr. P. B. G. Kalugalla, Minister for Cultural Affairs. The Relics were later taken in procession to Senanayakerama, Madampe.

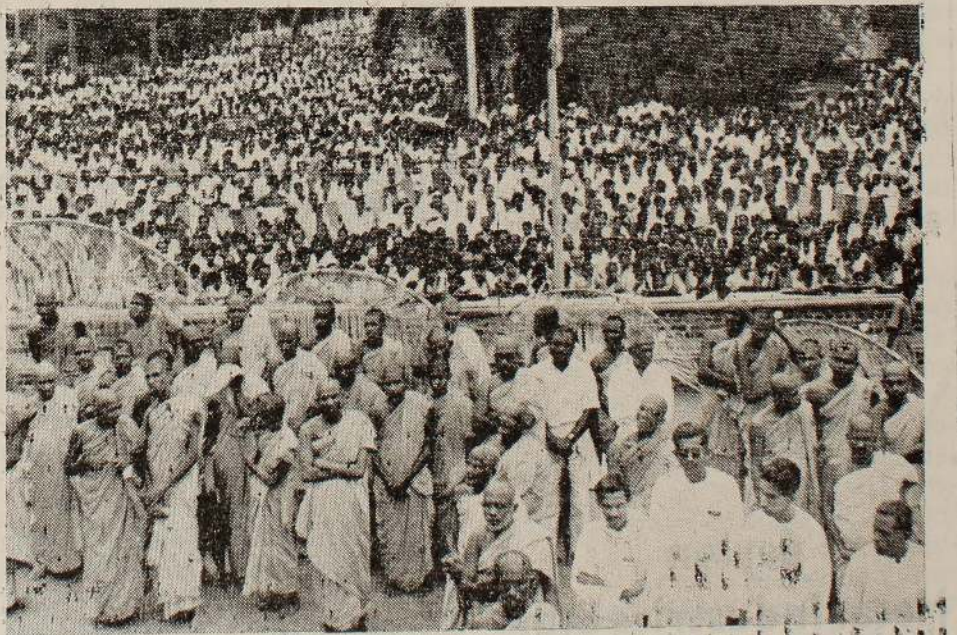


The Prime Minister of Ceylon, Mr. Dudley Senanayake worshipping the Sacred Hair Relic of the Buddha just before it was formally enshrined in the dagoba.

Hair Relic of the Buddha Enshrined

THE Hair Relic of the Buddha, which was gifted by the Government of Pakistan, along with Body Relics of the Buddha and body Relics of Arahants Kodanna and Majjhima were ceremoniously enshrined on May 12 by the Prime Minister of Ceylon, Mr. Dudley Senanayake, in the Sri Sambuddha Jayanti Stupa at Senanayakerama, Madampe, about 42 miles north of Colombo.

Five caskets containing the relics were placed in the stupa. Addressing the vast gathering at the enshrinement ceremony, the Prime Minister said that the clergy and the laity should co-operate if a country were to prosper.



The large gathering comprising both monks and laymen which was present at the enshrining of the Hair Relic of the Buddha along with other relics.



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MY FIVE DAYS IN MONGOLIA

By Bhikkhu Amritananda

(Nepal)

ON the 25th of October, 1959, we flew from Peking to Mongolia. We were flying through the Gobi desert. After about two hours we were told that we were reaching Ulan Bator, the capital of the Mongolian People's Republic.

When the plane turned round to land, we saw ice on the bank of a small river, which was a very pleasant sight for us. We then saw the capital city of Mongolia and also noticed some new industrial buildings. The city was situated at one end of the desert.

RED SILK ROBES

With a few jerks the plane touched the land. At the airport were several lamas, wearing glittering yellow and red silk robes, yellow caps, which looked like stupas, and huge boots. They were quite tall and stout and looked strong. They looked very much like Tibetan monks.

When the Deputy Head Lama of the Ganden Decchiling Monastery—the headquarters of Mongolian Buddhists—came forward with some other monks, and talked with us with the help of an interpreter, I saw vapour coming out from their mouths, as if they were smoking! It was so cold! I felt as if we had known each other long since. But as a matter of fact we had never met before. What made me feel like that? It must be their monastic life and because we belong to one Buddhist brotherhood.

Tibetan lamas often came on pilgrimage to Nepal, as Nepal is the birthplace of Lord Buddha. Buddhism was introduced to Tibet from Nepal in the 7th century A.C., after the marriage of the Tibetan ruler, Sron-btsan-Sgam-po (born in 617 A.C.), with princess Bhrikuti Dee, daughter of King Amsuvarman of Nepal. Since then Buddhism had become the religion of Tibet.

In the 13th century A.C., Buddhism came to Mongolia from Tibet, when the famous Khublai Khan of Mongolia ruled over China, after he had come into contact with one of the distinguished Sa-skya hierarchs, called Hpags-pa, who became spiritual teacher. Hpags-pa

be-hi slonged to the Sa-skya-pa school, which derived the name "greary" from the colour of the soil where its first monastery was built in 1071 on the site of the present Sa-skya in Tibet.

The Sa-skya-pa was even more closely related to the old Rnin-ma-pa school than the Bkah-rgyud-pa, and the monks of this sect were not celibates either. So they sought a synthesis between the old and new Tantrism on the basis of Nagarjuna's Madyamika philosophy. Since then the Mongolian people have been following the Tantric Buddhist tradition of Tibet.

After completing the usual routine with the customs office, we were driven to the city, which was about 16 kilometers from the airport, and then to a hotel in front of the central square, where the Mongolian Government holds parades.

In the afternoon of the day of our arrival in Ulan Bator, we had the great honour of meeting the Head Lama of the Mongolian Buddhists, the Rev. Erdenipal, an elderly monk of over eighty years. He is the president of the Buddhist Association of Mongolia, the Head Lama of the Degchiling Monastery, and also, I believe, a president of the Peace Committee of Mongolia. In the first place, they offered me a big cup of milk and garlanded me with a long silk scarf according to Mongolian tradition.

CUP OF MILK

They offer, at first, a big cup of mare's milk to any honourable guest. Without offering a cup of milk no talk is begun. All the hundred monks of the temple including the Rev. Erdenipal, were quite eager to know something about Nepal, its people, religion, etc.

After having presented some gifts, on behalf of the Nepalese Buddhists, to the Head Lama of the monastery, I explained to him the historical relation between Mongolia and Nepal—the birthplace of Sakyamuni Buddha, whose teaching the Mongolians have been following since Buddhism came to their country. From the point of religion and cul-

ture, Nepal and Mongolia have had historical ties. Buddhist history shows that wherever Buddhism penetrated, the art, culture and civilization of those nations were improved.

I also expressed the genuine wishes of the Nepalese people that they were quite eager to renew their old friendship with the Mongolian people. Welcoming me, the Reverend Grand Head Lama expressed that his happiness and joy were very great and that he was very much pleased to meet me in their country — a son of Nepal where the Buddha was born more than 2,500 years before. The joy, he said, was not only his, but it belonged to all the Buddhists of Mongolia. On that day the time was short: so they fixed another time to meet me and hear a talk about Nepal and Buddhism. I did according to their wish.

BEAUTIFUL TENT

It was in his big beautiful, round tent which served as the monastery, that my first interview with the Head Lama took place. There was an altar on the opposite side of the entrance with several small images of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. In front of these there was a small table on which there were seven silver cups filled with water, some candles, a Vajra and hand-bell, and a jar with sacred water in it. On both sides of the altar there were seats raised about a foot high from the ground.

In front of the seats there were tables on which they put big plates of sweet cakes for the guests. The guests were seated on the left of the altar and the hosts on the right. The floor was covered with red and blue carpets. At the centre there was a big pole fixed to the ground, to which the ends of the sticks were fixed, and the other ends of the sticks were fixed to the wall. The wall was covered with a red screen. The sticks were red in colour. There were paintings with golden colour in red and blue background, which is usually found in every temple in Mongolia.

The following day, 26th October, we visited the National Library of Mongolia. It can boast of several million books in Mongolian and other languages, and mostly in Russian, English, Chinese and Tibetan on various subjects. The library is not yet completely modernised. Most of the book-shelves are made of wood but they seemed strong, neat and clean.

My joy was very great when I saw some books in our Newari and Rajana characters. There I saw a copy of *Astasahasrika-pragya-paramita*, in Newari characters, written many hundred years ago. I was extremely happy too to find the Kangyur, Tanguyur, engraved on silver plates. In the first page of the book were beautiful carvings of the Buddha and Bodhisattva figures, and inlaid with some precious stones.

What a tremendous devotion the old Mongolian people must have had for that! How much time they must have devoted in writing such work! Besides these, there were some other books written in gold in Tibetan characters. They also had several editions of the Chinese Tripitakas.

During our five days in Ulan Bator we saw many places of interest. We saw the Historical Museum, monasteries, University where there are 5,000 students, schools, kindergarten schools, hospitals, children's palaces, some factories and a big coal mine.

We also visited a sanatorium, where one is treated with mineral water. There were several hospitals in Ulan Bator. Most of the shops in the street were not to be recognized from outside. Due to the cold climate, the front side of most of the shops was kept closed. However, there were a few shops with window decorations, and could be recognized from outside.

FRANK TALK

On the 29th October we had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Y. Tsendenbal, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Mongolian People's Republic. In other countries he would be called a Prime Minister. We had a very frank and free talk for over 90 minutes.

He had sharp eyes and a very friendly manner. He told us that he was much pleased to meet us — the first people from Nepal to visit Mongolia, in his office.

I, on my part, explained to him that the relationship and friendship between the two countries had been established with the coming of Buddhism to Mongolia. He expressed his simple wish of renewing the old friendship between our two countries by means of exchanging cultural and religious visits.

On the 30th October, the last day of our stay in Mongolia, early in

the morning we were taken to the Ganden Degchinling Monastery, the biggest monastery in Ulan Bator. I had an unforgettable time there. At the end of every month the Buddhists of Mongolia hold a big ceremony in this monastery. So, there was a big crowd in the temple compound. People from far and near came to take part in the ceremony. As soon as the door of my car opened, the mass of people rushed towards me. I did not expect to see such a big crowd there. The monks and the police could do nothing with the crowd. Although I was shielded by the monks, I was really squeezed in by the crowd.

OFFERED MONEY

As I went through the crowd, the people bent their heads towards me and I touched their heads in blessings in accordance with their custom. Some of them extended their hands as well for me to touch them, while others offered me scarfs and money.

I was taken into the shrine-room where many monks were already engaged in their ceremony. Soon after I got into the shrine-room, they closed the main door, on account of the crowd. I was requested to participate in the ceremony. As a guest and brother in the Dhamma, I complied with their kind request. I was given a raised seat, about three or four feet high from the floor.

Then the Rev. Erdenipel conferred on me the honorary title of "Gegen" (Holy One). Handing over to me his address of welcome, beautifully written in Mongolian characters in gold, he covered me with the golden coloured robe of a Grand Lama.

After this they opened the door and let in the people gathered outside, one by one, in order to have my blessings. As the crowd was very big, it took me more than four hours to bless them.

Meanwhile, the monks went on performing their ceremony. They blew their long trumpets, beat drums, rang hand-bells, recited some sutras, and went through "Mudras" with the Vajra (thunderbolt). Indeed it was an impressive ceremony!

As I sat on my high seat, my thoughts travelled from the present times back to the times of the Buddha. I do not believe that our Sakyamuni Buddha, ever performed such ceremonies nor told us to do so. Modern people who seeing such

ceremonies would no doubt get unhealthily impressions regarding the Doctrine of the Buddha, and say that Buddhism is nothing but ceremony.

However, I would say that they are gravely mistaken. The profound doctrine of the Buddha can certainly be scientifically explained. Then suddenly I turned my mind from this subject and tried to spread my Metta to all the people who came to see me. I wished them health, prosperity and happiness I repeated "Sukhihotu." a numberless times.

About one hundred monks live, according to their ranks, in more than a dozen houses in this monastery. They had a library. The monastery owned some property and it is also supported by the general public. Every monk got a share out of the income of the monastery every month. Other sources of income were offerings and donations from the public. If the income was not sufficient for their maintenance, the Government helped them. The monastery is free from any kind of tax. The monastery does not belong to the State.

In Mongolia all the people are Buddhists. There is no doctrine

or religion or tradition other than Buddhism. The whole population of Mongolia is about one million.

According to the Grand Lama of the Gandan Deggechiling Monastery, there are about ten thousand monks belonging to different sects in Mongolia. There were very few monks who knew Sanskrit. However, they know Tibetan quite well. Tibetan and Chinese are taught in their University. They want to take part in international activities of the Buddhist world.

The Mongolian people are friendly, hospitable, and kind. Their dress is similar to that of the Tibetans. The women of Mongolia dress in a long skirt-like garment, covering their arms with long sleeves, tied round their waist with a long belt. They wear long boots, which are called "Vutul"—knee-high, heelless soft leather boots. They also wear precious ornaments, such as earrings, bracelets and rings of gold and silver, often inlaid with precious stones and pearls. The men's dress is almost the same as that of the women, but they wear a cap of fur or of other material.

We were served with Mongolian food. We tried our best to enjoy it, but sometimes we failed because

we were not accustomed to the taste. They seemed to have been made almost all of meat.

The Mongolians speak Chinese and Russian. A very few of them can speak English too.

In the city one can see the ancient round tents of the nomads, side by side with many modern-style buildings.

What made a deep impression on me were their religious traditions and ceremonies after the Rnin-ma-pa school of Tantric Buddhism founded by Padmasambhava in Tibet. As the monks of Mongolia follow the Vinaya and practise celibacy, I believe that the tradition in Mongolia is not only of the Rnin-ma-pa school but also they have combined it with the Bkag-gdams-pa or Dge-lugs-pa who had taken a synthetic view of the teachings of both the Hinayana (Sthavirvadian) and Mahayana: enforced celibacy upon the monks and discouraged magic practices.

On the morning of 31st October, 1959, we left Ulan Bator.

Mind is the forerunner of (all evil) conditions. Mind is chief; and they are mind-made. If, with an impure mind, one speaks or acts, then pain follows even as the wheel the hoof of the draught-ox.

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Can Non-Buddhists Tread the Eightfold Path?

ANYTHING unpleasant which helps to deflate the ego, if accepted graciously, makes it easier to find in actual experience the meaning of no-self, of Anatta. Hence an article like that of the Anagarika P. Sugathananda (*World Buddhism*, March, 1960) is a very acceptable present to the one with whom he finds fault. Apart from this, all readers will be grateful to him for stressing what is so often overlooked by Westerners, that the Noble Eightfold Path is not a mere system of ethics.

At the same time it will be a sad thing if Buddhism is to become narrower than Christianity, and I cannot believe that this will be so. For wherever I have travelled in India and Burma I have found the same insistence that people not of the Buddhist fold might yet tread the Eightfold Path in its entirety.

When I was making the pilgrimage of the Buddhist places in India a very eminent bhikkhu remarked of the local postmaster: "He is a very fine man; he is really a Buddhist though he thinks he's a Hindu."

At several Vipassana meditation centres I found it was taken for granted that non-Buddhists could practise and find liberation. "There is only one Dhamma," said my own instructor. "Of course you will not expect people in your country to become Buddhists before they practise Vipassana meditation". And he went on to tell of a Burmese Christian doctor who had come to that centre.

The Four Noble Truths are certainly basic if anyone is to find liberation from suffering; they are far more than a system of morals, but also they can never be grasped with the intellect alone, for the thinking organ is only the sixth sense and these Truths show what is beyond intellect, and must be experienced to be known.

It is only when one has come up against and accepted the inevitable unsatisfactoriness of all things of time and space (including intellectual formulations) that one really grasps the meaning of Dukkha. And one can transcend this suffering only in so far as one finds in actual experience that it springs from the sense of

"I-ness", or ego, with its desires and lusts on the one hand and its aversions and hatreds on the other, and finds, too, that it is this "I" that forever stands in the way preventing one from getting beyond the things of time and space (here and now, as well as hereafter) and thereby finding liberation from pain.

It is when one finds these things in actual experience that the way opens up for getting rid of the making of these false selves, for example, complexes relating to the body or brain which make one say "I suffer", instead of "the body suffers", or "I am deeply offended and hurt" when one means that "a complex of self-esteem has been injured", and so on.

Finally, in the silence of Vipassana meditation, (which as I see it is closely akin to Quaker silence) one finds the self or ego is dissolved away completely, or, as science has found out by other means, body and mind are composed only of ceaselessly changing atoms.

It is because the learned person tries to grasp these truths with his intellect that, as a rule, so I was told, he finds Vipassana meditation more difficult to master than the simple farmer, who merely follows instructions without trying to formulate the how, why and wherefore. It is also for the reason that these matters lie beyond intellect that those who do not have the same intellectual understanding as orthodox Buddhists, may yet tread the Eightfold Path in its entirety.

Several liberal minded Christians have remarked: "To me the best Christian I have met was a Hindu, Mahatma Gandhi". Surely there are also liberal minded Buddhists who would say that the best Buddhist they had known was a Hindu, Mahatma Gandhi. Must the fact that Gandhiji was not in the least interested in the doctrine of dependant origination (though he surely would not have denied what seems obvious) debar him from having this said of him.

Marie B. Byles,
(Cheltenham, New South Wales,
Australia.)

NEW STATUE OF THE BUDDHA

ASSERTING their deep devotion to a religion based on Truth, the people of Wat Som Hong in the community of Bur-O near Vientiane, have instilled a beautiful statue of the Buddha cast out of 900 kilos of brass contributed by people from all over Laos.

The statue was cast in Phya Wat, Vientiane, from which it was taken recently to Wat Som Hong. It is 2.50 meters tall and 1.55 meters wide.

Wat Som Hong, the site on which the dazzling statue now stands, was restored shortly before the statue was dedicated. Wat Som Hong originally lay on the bank of the Mekong river. But the river ate away the grounds and the shrine was left in ruins.

Then in 1936, a Buddhist monk, Phracrew Prasad Sungkhagit, directed its restoration with the help of his brother. Through their efforts Chao Mounk Kampa, a high province official, dedicated a plot of land for the new site of Wat Som Hong. All the people of Bur-O helped to restore the wat.

BEGAN IN 1957

The casting of the statue, which now rests in the restored shrine began in 1957 and was completed early this year. One of the biggest contributors of the brass used for the casting of the statue was Major General Sounthone Pathammavong, the commanding officer of the Royal Lao Army.

Throughout the Lao provinces, the General collected 500 kilos of brass which he turned over to Phracrew Prasad. The people of Bur-O contributed 400 kilos of brass. And the monk personally supervised the casting of the statue.

Prasad became a novice for the Sangha when he was only 17. A steadfast follower of Buddhism, he was inspired to carry out the wishes of the people of Bur-O to have a principal statue of the Master in Wat Som Hong.

Though little he recites the Sacred Texts but acts in accordance with the Teaching, and forsaking lust, hatred and ignorance, truly knowing, with mind totally freed, clinging for naught here and hereafter, he shares the blessings of a recluse.

Moral Impact of Buddhism

By David Ben Gurion

(Prime Minister of Israel)

IN mentioning India, I do not refer to the wisdom of the Brahmins. In the Upanishads, it is true, there may be found jewels of pantheistic metaphysics, but this wisdom was the possession of the few and did not prevent the perpetuation of the caste system, which degraded millions of human beings to the level of the unclean, nor did it uproot the brutal custom of suttee, the burning of widows alive, which has its origin in the Atharva-Veda.

India's great contribution was the teaching of Buddhism. The founder of this doctrine, Sidhartha Gautama, one of the princes of Northern India, and known in the world as the Buddha, was in his lifetime a symbol of human nobility and moral purity, and without doubt was one of the ten greatest personalities in human history.

The Buddha rebelled against the Hindu caste tradition. In the Buddhist community—the Sangha—no caste discriminations are recognized. All men are equal. The Buddha recognized the equality and status of woman with man. The

Buddha was indeed convinced of his great personal mission and of the significance of his teachings, but he did not put himself in the central position in the new teaching which he preached.

When the Buddha was on the point of death, he saw his favourite disciple Ananda crying. He said to him: Do not cry, Ananda. You shall be a light unto yourself. You will have no need of me.

HIS TEACHING

The Buddha rebelled against the Hindu tradition of sacrifice, which was the central feature of the Brahminist creed. He rejected the privileged position of the Brahminists. It is not privilege through heredity but the righteousness of a man himself which entitles one to the distinction of being a Brahmin or a higher man. That was the Buddha's teaching.

The teachings of the Buddha are not restricted to laying down a noble and redemptive way of life, but radiate profound and original philosophic thought.

To preach this doctrine two thousand five hundred years ago in an Indian society dominated by Brahminism called for great spiritual courage, a revolutionary spirit and great creative capacity.

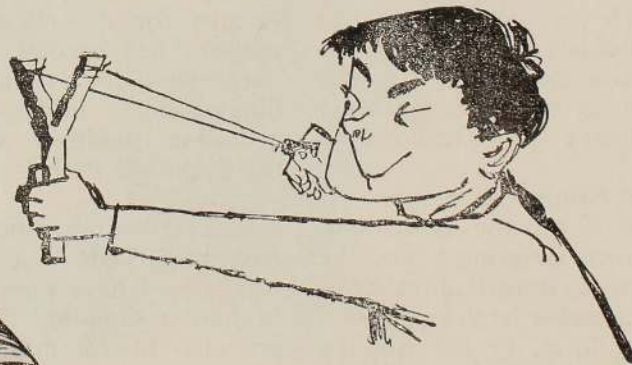
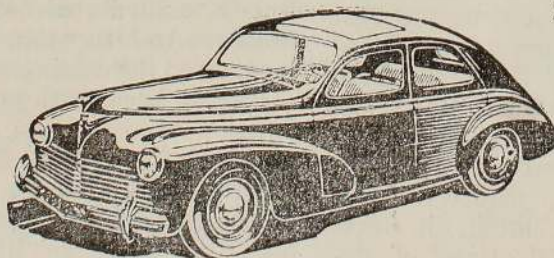
It is remarkable to think that his doctrine, which originated in India, has almost disappeared from the land of its birth, but has spread among the peoples of the Far East—Ceylon, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Burma, China and Japan.

Although there is in it much of the negation of the material world, and nirvana is its highest ideal, Buddhism overcame the influences of its pessimistic beginnings and preached love, kindness and compassion to every living creature: nor in the main, are its ethical imperatives different from our Ten Commandments.

The Buddha was the educator of the peoples of the Far East, which for some reason were not reached by the message of Judaism, either in its original form or in its Christian and Moslem version, and his teaching is still an educative and moral factor of tremendous force for hundreds of millions in the eastern expanses of Asia.

(From an address on the occasion of the conferring upon Mr. Gurion of the degree of Doctor of Laws, at Brandeis University, Waltham, Mass. USA, March 1960).

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STATE RELIGION ISSUE IN BURMA

THE Cabinet of Prime Minister U Nu of Burma, at its first meeting in Rangoon, appointed a commission to advise the Government on the State religion issue.

U Nu had promised during the last elections that, if voted to power, he would take steps to make Buddhism the State religion of Burma.

The commission includes some of the leading Buddhist monks, a retired Chief Justice, U. Thein Maung, and a Supreme Court Judge, U Chan Htoon, who is now the President of the World Fellowship of Buddhists.

The Commission has been asked to submit its report to the President of Burma by the end of this year. It will hold discussions with Buddhist leaders and organisations and also obtain the views of the Islamic and Christian communities.

BUDDHIST ORPHANAGE IN ANURADHAPURA

"It is indeed a pity that the admission of a Buddhist child to a non-Buddhist orphanage should cause him to lose his faith in his religion. What I admire in this institution is the religious freedom that it has assured for its inmates".

This statement was made by Mr. Justice K. D. de Silva, when he opened the Asoka Lama Niwasa at Anuradhapura, Ceylon. The institution is managed by the Anuradhapura Buddhist Association.

Mr. Justice de Silva said that an orphanage of the type was a long-felt need for Anuradhapura. It was at the 40th annual sessions of the All-Ceylon Buddhist Congress that it was first decided to open the institution.

MONASTERIES RAZED TO THE GROUND

Toklon Tsang Rimpoche, head Lama of Phiong, one of the oldest monasteries in Ladakh, accompanied by Abbot Gregon Sonam, has returned to Leh from Tibet where they had been under Chinese detention for forty days, following the Tibetan revolt.

Toklan Tsang Rimpoche was in Tibet for seven years studying Buddhist scriptures and ritual.

The two Ladakhi religious leaders said that they had gone through great ordeals while in Chinese detention.

They said that several Tibetan monasteries, some of them very important ones, had been razed to the ground by the Chinese who had looted their valuables and destroyed old manuscripts.

GIVE BACK TAMPLE LANDS, SAYS MANDALAYA

The Ratnapura District Sasana Arakshaka Mandalaya of Ceylon has asked the Government to restitute temple lands which were confiscated during the days of the Colonial regime.

This demand was made at the annual conference of the Mandalaya held last month.

Under the Waste Lands Ordinance, during the time of the Colonial Government, large acreages of land belonging to Buddhist temples were taken over and given over to tea, coffee and rubber plantations.

A number of Buddhist organisations, including the All-Ceylon Buddhist Congress and the Ceylon Maha Bodhi Society, have agitated for the restitution of the lands to the temples to which they originally belonged.

The Buddhist Commission and the Sasana Commission strongly urged the Government that these lands be restituted to the temples. These two Commissions pointed out that the temple lands were vested in the Sangha by the Kings of Ceylon for the maintenance of monks and the upkeep of the temples.

The Mandalaya also adopted a resolution that the Jataka stories should be filmed and screened to develop good religious moral values.

STATE AID SOUGHT FOR BUDDHISM

The building of temples and dagobas did not in itself signify Buddhism. A man with a clean mind was a living temple, said the Ven. Devamottave Amaravansa Thera, at the 40th anniversary celebrations of a Dhamma school in Nawalapitiya, central Ceylon.

He said that the Catholic faith had developed in the world because it was under State care. The only way to save Buddhism was to give it similar protection. If Buddhism was to be protected it should be assisted by the State.

The Buddhists loved their religion more than themselves, but the Government, whose duty it was to protect their interests, cared little for religion. Whatever Government came into power, it had a duty to see that the religion of the majority was given its due place.

HEAD-HUNTERS CONVERTED

The last head-hunters in Burma have become devout Buddhists and have begun to do no harm to anyone.

Officers of the Burmese Army, who have returned from a reconnaissance of the Chinese frontier zone, reported that the Wa tribute had abandoned their sacrificial practices and had been converted to Buddhism.

The Wa tribe is the most primitive and little-known Burmese tribe and live in the north-east of Shan State near the Salween river, where it leaves Burma to enter Chinese territory.

CEYLON'S PRIDE IS BUDDHISM

"Buddhism is the only thing that Ceylon could be proud of", said the Ven. Pandit Polonnaruwe Wimaladhamma Nayake Thera, Professor of Theravada Buddhism at the Vidyodaya University, Colombo.

He was speaking at the eighth annual general meeting of a Dhamma school in Dehiwala, near Colombo.

He said that Dhamma schools were doing very useful work. Dhamma schools were giving a tremendous impetus to the march of civilisation. Whatever good customs and habits children had were due to the good work done by the Dhamma schools.

NEW CENTRE FOR TRAINING BHIKKHUS

The All-Ceylon Buddhist Congress will shortly open a centre at Pelmadulla to train bhikkhus in Buddhist educational and missionary work.

The Congress has received a gift of 12 acres of land for this purpose and the Department of Cultural Affairs has made a donation of Rs. 50,000 for the centre. The Congress plans to put up buildings costing Rs. 100,000 for a start.

The Congress has made arrangements to have 30 to 40 bhikkhus trained at a time. The course of training is expected to last about 18 months.

The curriculum at the training centre includes the teaching of a number of Asian languages which will enable the bhikkhus to embark on their educational and missionary work abroad.

BUDDHIST ROYAL WEDDING

In the Kingdom of Laos, Princess Dhara Savang was wedded to Prince Sisouphanouvong recently at the Royal Palace in Luang Prabang.

The bright sun shone on the gold-clad spire of the sacred Wat Phoesy, the Buddhist temple rising opposite the Palace. As the afternoon shadows lengthened more and more people settled comfortably beneath the towering spire. They were there to see the Royal procession pass.

Drums announced the approach of the Prince and his wedding procession. A majestic elephant, bearing the traditional bananas, sugar cane and coconuts symbolising sweetness, happiness, long life, strength and courage, was at the head of the procession.

A line of colour followed. There were the Royal Pages in blazing scarlet, the Palace guards in vivid green, and the bridegroom's escort in white uniforms garnished with gold braid.

Walking slowly beneath crimson ceremonial umbrellas was the bridegroom, son of Prince Samphanta-vong. He walked up the wide steps of the white Palace where he awaited his bride.

Another brilliant procession passed in front of the crowded hillside. It was the wedding entourage of the bride who is the daughter of Crown Prince Savang Vathna. The bride wore a traditional wedding robe of gold embroidered with Lao silk. As she approached the Palace the Prince met her.

Together, the Royal couple passed beneath the Royal Crest and proceeded to the Throne Room. There in the presence of Lao dignitaries, Buddhist ceremonies united the Prince and Princess in marriage — a

marriage destined to strengthen one of the oldest royal families of Asia.

NEW BUDDHISTS SEEK SAFEGUARDS

A mammoth procession organised by the Republican Party of India and the members of the Scheduled Castes who have embraced Buddhism, was taken out to the Council Hall in Bombay on March 16 to present a petition to the Speaker of the Bombay Legislative Assembly, the Chairman of the Council and the Chief Minister.

The procession was stopped about 100 yards away from the Hall. The leaders who were allowed to enter the Hall, presented the petitions through their legislators.

The petitioners pleaded that the safeguards given to members of the Scheduled Castes under the Constitution should be extended to the Scheduled Castes members who had embraced Buddhism.

A similar petition was presented to the Governor of Bombay.

NEED FOR BUDDHISM STRESSED

"Buddhism teaches us self-respect and equality. There is stress on



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individuality in Buddhism and it teaches discipline", said Dr. Htin Aung, Minister for Burma in Ceylon, presiding over the prize-giving at a Buddhist girls' school in Ratnapura, Ceylon.

Whatever changes the atom could bring, he added, need not worry them as long as their children were taught to respect law and order.

He said: "We are closely tied to Ceylon through our common religion and culture. In a way we have been more fortunate than you because we were subject to British rule only at the end of the 19th century and had no break in our way of life.

"In certain matters materially, however, we are far behind, but in spiritual matters far ahead".

POLITICS IN SUNDAY DHAMMA SCHOOLS

Boyagoda Dharmaratna Thera, speaking at a meeting at Wattala, near Colombo, appealed that Sunday Dhamma schools should not be registered without their bona fides being checked. They were often the breeding ground of the poisonous germ of politics.

He said that even those who considered religion to be the opium of the masses were organising Sunday Dhamma schools nowadays. There was no doubt what their intentions were.

The Buddhist masses were being duped by these vicious elements who were perverting even religion to achieve their aims. Such Sunday Dhamma schools were a great impediment to the spread of the Dhamma, he said.

RED HAT LAMA WILLING TO RETURN

His Holiness Gyalwa Karmapa, the head of the Red Hat Sect of Buddhism, who escaped from Tibet, stated in Calcutta that he was willing to return to his country if favourable religious conditions were created there.

The 37-year-old Karmapa, who fled Tibet a couple of days before the Dalai Lama left Lhasa, said he hoped that the question of Buddhism in Tibet would be discussed by Prime Minister Nehru when he met the Chinese Prime Minister Chou En-lai.

His Holiness said that Communism and Buddhism could co-exist in Tibet, but it was for the Dalai Lama

to decide in what form such co-existence could come about. "A reconciliation is always possible in all circumstances", he said.

He believed that the Dalai Lama was pondering over the question as to how lamaism should be reformed to fit in with modern times.

Gyalwa Karmapa has some thousands of disciples in the Himalayan kingdoms of Sikkim, Bhutan and part of Nepal. The royal families of Sikkim and Bhutan are among his disciples.

He said his main task at present was to see that the 14 incarnate lams and 300 others who had come with him to India "do not go astray and do not forget lamaism." He would not like any of them taking up non-religious work.

MONK ON CULTURAL TOUR

Ceylon's well-known artist-monk, Ven. Mapalagama Vipulasara Thera, chief incumbent of the Ratmalana temple near Colombo, has left for Japan on a cultural tour.

The Ven. Vipulasara's trip is sponsored by the Department of Cultural Affairs and the Japanese Embassy in Colombo.

He said that during his two-month visit would give talks and lectures on Buddhist art and hold a number of exhibitions. He took with him a number of paintings.

AUSTRALIA TO HELP TIBETAN REFUGEES

The Prime Minister of Australia, Mr. Robert Menzies, told Parliament in Canberra that Australia was giving £ 100,000 (about Rs. 11,000,000) to meet part of the cost of resettling 16,000 refugees from Tibet.

Mr. Menzies said that Australia's decision followed "informal" personal correspondence with Prime Minister Nehru of India.

Mr. Menzies said that Australia's contribution would help in a scheme to resettle 1,000 Tibetan families on farms in India's north-west region.

It would relieve the Indian Government of a small part of the burden it had so generously assumed, Mr. Menzies said.

THAILAND'S BUDDHIST UNIVERSITY

Thammasat University of Thailand is to be removed to a new site

where it will be possible for it to expand to meet the growing needs of an increasing student community.

Meanwhile, the Thai Government is working out an elaborate programme to institute administrative and academic reforms in the University with a view to improving the services for students raising the academic standards.

The present site of the University is surrounded by huge commercial buildings and there is no way of expanding the campus.

NEO-BUDDHIST "POLLUTED" WELL

For drinking from a well belonging to Hindu villagers in Pimprijalsen, a neo-Buddhist marriage party had to pay a fine of Rs. 25 to clean the "polluted" well, according to a report from Ahmednagar, India.

Mr. R. D. Pawar, Republican Party member of the Bombay Legislative Assembly from Ahmednagar, according to the report, said that a neo-Buddhist boy from the marriage party, which was proceeding in a string of bullock carts through Pimprijalsen, drank from the well used by Hindus only.

Immediately the shocked villagers encircled the marriage party and demanded Rs. 100 to clean the well.

The neo-Buddhist members of the party profusely apologised for the "irresponsible act" of the boy, but the villagers would not be satisfied.

However, a settlement was reached at Rs. 25 after seven hours of "detention" of the party. Mr. Pawar said that the villagers abused the neo-Buddhists, and even "man-handled" some members of the party.

FILM OF DALAI LAMA'S FLIGHT

The Tibet Society of London may obtain the world distribution rights of a film depicting the Dalai Lama's flight from Lhasa to India last year.

The Dalai Lama is believed to have shot the film himself while he was escaping from the Chinese. The film shows detail of his dramatic escape from the Potala Palace and his hazardous journey across the Himalayas in heavy snow and bitter cold to the Indian border.

Ever since the Dalai Lama's arrival in India there has been brisk competition for the film distribution rights. If the Tibet Society gets them, it will utilise the profits to aid the Tibetan refugees in India.

The Society is said to be planning to sell the film to British Television as well as to other television network in Europe and the United States. The film may also be shown in India.

CATHOLIC CHURCH IN POLITICS

The Lok Sabha, New Delhi, debated inconclusively a Communist member's Bill to restrict "the use of the Catholic Church for political purposes and the participation of ecclesiastic personnel of the Catholic Church in political activity".

Mr. Nagi Reddy, who moved the Bill, charged the Catholic Church with interfering in the political life of the country and issuing threats of ex-communication against those Catholics who voted for the Communist Party.

The Catholic Church was financed, and its activities guided, by foreign organisations, he said.

The Bill was strongly opposed by Mr. M. Maniyangadan who contended that the Catholic Church had never acted contrary to national interests or interfered in the country's internal politics.

Mr. T. C. N. Menon said that the Bill was not aimed at the Catholic religion but against the misuse of religion to influence political activities. In Kerala, he alleged, every Catholic priest was using the pulpit for political propaganda.

BIBLE LESSONS BANNED IN PAKISTAN

The Director of Education in Karachi has told a Protestant-sponsored grammar school of which the British High Commissioner of Pakistan is a governor, to stop requiring that the Bible be taught to all pupils.

The co-educational grammar school is a Protestant foundation managed by a board of governors, headed by the High Commissioner, Sir Alexander Symon.

It has an English headmaster and its 800 pupils include many British and other foreign children as well as Christian and Muslim Pakistanis.

A spokesman of the Education Department said that he had received "many complaints" that the school's enrolment form required parents to agree to the teaching of the Bible to their children.

The directors of the school have agreed to waive this condition in accordance with the principle that children professing one religion should not be forced to learn the scriptures of another.

Some other missionary schools in Karachi have been directed to submit for approval text books used in "character building" classes, some of which are alleged to be objectionable.

CAMPAIGN TO SAVE BUDDHISM

"Buddhism in Ceylon is deteriorating rapidly. The remedy for it is the improvement of Sasarakshaka Samiti campaign".

This statement was made by Acharya Telikada Upasena Thera, president of the Sasarakshaka Pradeseya Mandala of Galle in South Ceylon.

He said the Government should be praised for supporting these societies. So far about 3,500 Sasarakshaka Samities have been established.

Today, Buddhism was facing attacks from various ways, added the Thera. It was the duty of the Buddhist public to safeguard the Buddhist heritage.

GIRLS' SCHOOL UNIFORM CONTEST

THIS Contest is open to all girls of any age either at school, working or otherwise engaged. The purpose of the Competition is to design a practical uniform in keeping with the climate and adapted to suit our culture and background.

Any number of entries may be submitted by a person provided each entry is accompanied by a Fifty Cent Stamp or Postal Order. All such Entry Fees received will be donated to The Home for the Aged, Moratuwa.

Designs submitted must be drawn on one side of a quarto sized blank paper in Indian Ink with the full name and address of the competitor on the other side. All entries must be sent by post direct to The Secretary, Lanka Weaving Mills Ltd., Velona, Moratuwa.

A Cup will be awarded to the competitor whose entry is adjudged the best by a panel of judges comprising Principals of Girls' Schools and others. The decision of the Judges will be final.

All designs submitted will be the property of Lanka Weaving Mills Ltd., Velona, Moratuwa, who shall be free to use such designs as they wish, when necessary.

Details in regard to the closing date of the Competition, panel of judges, etc., will be published from time to time in the women's page conducted by 'Mano' of the "Ceylon Observer", published on Wednesday evenings.

This competition is being sponsored by Lanka Weaving Mills Ltd., Velona, Moratuwa, whose decision shall be final and binding in regard to any matter not covered in this notice.

3,000 BECOME BUDDHISTS

About 3,000 people from twenty surrounding villages embraced Buddhism at a colourful ceremony held at Paud, a small township about 30 miles west of Poona, India, on March 20.

The Tri Sarana and Pancha Sila were administered by the Ven. Bhikshu Sangharakshita of the Triyana Vardhana Vihara, Kalimpong, who later addressed the converts asking them to live up to the precepts of their new religion and work vigorously for its further propagation.

Mr. Y. Ambedkar, who presided over a meeting held on the occasion, also spoke.

SHOULD BHIKKHUS BE IN FILMS?

The Buddhist Advisory Council of Ceylon is to seek the advice of the Nayaka Theras (chief monks) as to whether it is permissible for a bhikkhu to appear in a film or for a layman to act the part of a bhikkhu.

Clarification is desired because a current Sinhalese film portrays bhikkhus.

Some members of the Buddhist Advisory Council contend that it is a breach of the Vinaya rules for a bhikkhu to appear in a film because it is inconsistent with the views of renunciation taken by a bhikkhu at the time he is ordained.

Other members express the view that it is improper for a layman to wear robes and act as a bhikkhu in a film. They state that a person should wear robes only after he had been properly ordained.

MARCH ORDINATION IN LONDON

The month of March must surely become the expected time for Samaneras to be ordained if the present tradition continues, states *Sangha*, the Journal of the English Sangha Association for April 1960.

As last March, so this, with between 30 and 40 lay people squeezed in the front room of Sangha House to see John Richards being ordained by the Ven. Saddhatissa Maha Thera. Present also were Bhikkhus Pannavaddho, Dhammiko, Vimalo and Samaneras Dhammaratana and Jivako.

The Buddha-rupa with incense and candles burning on the shrine before it, which was decorated with

flowers and plants, occupied a corner of the room, the bhikkhus sitting before it.

The Pali ceremony was explained after the chanting of the Karaniya Metta Sutta and Anumodana by the Ven. Saddhatissa. He then gave a short address comparing the establishment of the Buddha Dhamma in the United Kingdom and that in Ceylon in the time of the Emperor Asoka.

Asoka's son, Ven. Mahinda, would not declare the Sasana established in Ceylon until a Sinhalese Sangha was in existence. Only when the West had monks drawn from among its peoples could the Sasana be said to be truly established in the West.

The new Samanera was given the name of Mangalo. But Samanera Jivako who was given Pabbaja last month received from the Ven. Saddhatissa a new name in order to avoid confusion when he goes to India where there is already an Englishman who has the same name — Sramanera Jivako. So, Jivako is now Sujivo.

DALAI LAMA AT DHARMASALA

The Dalai Lama, accompanied by his mother and sister and his personal staff, has gone from Mussorie to Dharmasala in India to take up his residence there.

More than 800 Tibetan refugees had gone to Dharmasala to welcome their temporal and spiritual leader. Addressing the large gathering, the Dalai Lama said he was very much pleased to see them.

BUDDHIST SCHOOLS IN CEYLON

"Government has not accepted even in principle that a school where the children are all Buddhists, the headmaster should be a Buddhist. This has resulted in a deterioration in the teaching of religion in certain schools."

This statement was made by Mr. H. Jinadasa, Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Education in Ceylon, addressing a meeting of headmasters of schools run by the Buddhist Academy.

He said that before teachers were appointed due consideration should be paid to the religion of the pupils.

Mr. Jinadasa said that though there was a regulation in the Education Code that children should be

taught the religion of their parents, no purpose would be served if the headmaster and the members of the staff of that school belonged to a different religion.

He said that a Buddhist atmosphere would not be created in a Buddhist institution merely by decorating the walls with Buddhist pictures or by observing the Eight Precepts on Poya Days. In order to live the Buddhist way the teachings of the Dhamma should enter every aspect of one's life.

WAS IT STOLEN FROM CEYLON?

The statuette of the Buddha carved out of a one-piece sapphire, recently seized by the police in Amritsar, India, may prove to be stolen property.

A report from Amritsar states that following newspaper accounts about its seizure, Sir Richard Aluvihare, High Commissioner for Ceylon in India, has written to the authorities at Amritsar, stating that a valuable statuette of the Buddha made from precious stone, was stolen from a temple in Ceylon some time in 1956.

The High Commissioner has asked for a photograph of the statuette in order to determine its origin.

The police asked the High Commissioner to send a representative to examine the statuette.

FREEDOM IS DALAI LAMA'S HOPE

In a message to the Afro-Asian Convention on Tibet, which was held in New Delhi last month, the Dalai Lama expressed the hope that the efforts of the rising nations of the world would win justice for Tibet and restoration of freedom to its people, now suffering under a new form of colonialism.

Stating that the Tibetans had no quarrel of any kind with the great Chinese people, the Dalai Lama said: "All that we ask is that we should be allowed to live on equal terms with our neighbours as in the past, while following our own traditional mode of life."

The Dalai Lama said that he had always sought a peaceful and amicable settlement, and even after his arrival in India, he had appealed for a just and peaceful solution of the Tibetan question.

BUDDHISM AS CEYLON'S STATE RELIGION

A CAMPAIGN to make Buddhism the state religion of Ceylon is being conducted in view of the forthcoming general election in the Island on July 20.

The Dean of the Faculty of Buddhism at the Vidyalkara University, Colombo, the Ven Bambarande Siri Seevali Thera addressing a public meeting at Panadura said that Panadura—once the Buddhist fortress of Ceylon—should be the spear-head in the campaign to make Buddhism the State religion of Ceylon.

"As for me, I shall spare no pains and start away forth-with for the consummation of that ideal," he said.

Siri Seevali Thera said the State religion in Thailand was Buddhism and that Burma, too, recently had passed a Bill to make Buddhism the State religion of the country. As such he could see no reason why Buddhism should not be made the State religion of Buddhist Ceylon.

"Our culture and civilisation dating back to thousands of years

demands that Buddhism should be the state religion—it is a right we have lost—and no person should object to our proposal.

"This does not mean that other denominations like Christianity, Hinduism and Islam are to be relegated to the background. They will all be given their rightful place as in Thailand and Burma.

"Once Buddhism is made the State religion it will be possible to make Buddhism a compulsory subject in all schools. There will then be no need for Dhamma schools which are now run with difficulty", he added.

POLITICAL PARTY'S CAMPAIGN

Meanwhile the Dharma Samaja Party, a Buddhist political party which contested the last general election of March 19, has decided not to contest the July election.

But the policy of the party regarding Buddhism has been indi-

cated in a statement made by the secretary of the party, Mr. L. H. Mettananda

In the course of this statement Mr. Mettananda says: The Dharma Samaja Party has now decided not to contest any seats or align itself with any political party at the next General Election. Instead an island-wide campaign will immediately be launched with the aid and assistance of the Maha Sangha to achieve the following objectives:—

SASANA REPORT

To secure the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Report of the Buddhist Committee of Enquiry published on 4th February 1956. (The main reason which brought the Mahajana Eksath Peramuna under the late Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike into power, was the undertaking given by Mr. Bandaranaike and the Mahajana Eksath Peramuna that these recommendations would be implemented).

To secure the implementation of the recommendations of the Buddha Sasana Commission appointed by the Bandaranaike Government.

To remove the disabilities imposed on the Buddhist community during

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the foreign occupation of the country and to remove the discrimination practised against them since political independence was gained in 1948 particularly in the fields of education and employment.

To create public opinion in the country against the present system of education which has placed a large part of the educational structure in the hands of private sectarian bodies.

To place before the public evidence of the use of State aided schools, orphanages, homes for the aged, child protection homes, schools for the deaf, dumb and blind, hospitals etc. for proselytism and promoting the interests of private sectarian bodies, and to compel the Government to pass legislation and adopt such other measures as are necessary to see

(a) that educational opportunities provided for by the State are distributed equally among persons according to their ability to benefit from such opportunities regardless of religion, race or class.

(b) that educational and other facilities are not used for the purposes of promoting the interests of sectarian bodies, thus leading to religious and racial disharmony and division among the people.

(c) that proselytism of school-going children, orphans, the deaf, the dumb and the blind and poorer members of the Buddhist community by grant of financial assistance and by other undue means is effectively checked.

To stress the need of creating a social environment in which the Buddhists can follow the Buddhist way of life.

To re-establish the close relationship that existed in former times between the Sangha and laity. During the times of the Sinhalese Kings it was this close relationship and the results that flowed therefrom which earned for our country the name Dharmadvipa.

ANTHER PARTY

Another political party, the Jatika Vimukti Peramuna, led by Mr. K. M. P. Rajaratna points out that the patriotic people of Ceylon should act quickly and correctly in order to ensure the continued maintenance of Buddhism and the Sinhalese language.

They should take, the party adds, as a lesson U. Nu's resounding victory at the general election in Burma, which was won on the basis of the slogan of Buddhism as the State religion.

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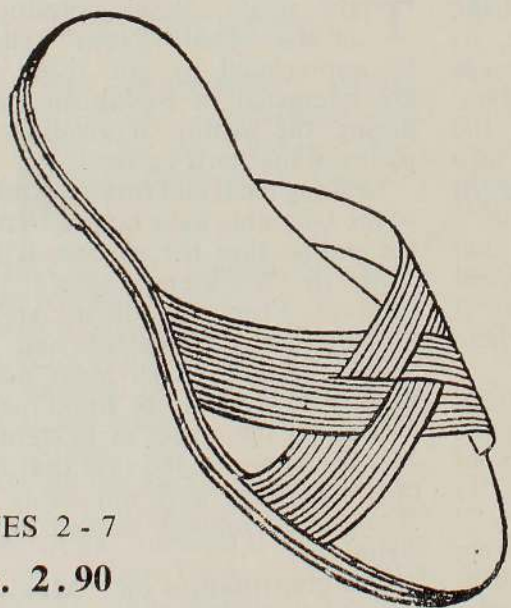
Ceylon Daily News Vesak Annual : 2504-1960. Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd., Lake House, Colombo, Ceylon. Rs. 4/-.

The Buddhist Vesak Number : 2504-1960. Young Men's Buddhist Association, Colombo, Ceylon. Rs. 3/-.

The Bosat Vesak Number : 2504-1960. 65D, Training School Road, Havelock Town, Colombo, Ceylon. Rs. 1/-.

The Maha Bodhi Vaisakha Number : 2504-1960. 4A, Bankim Chatterjee Street, Calcutta, India. Rs. 2/50.

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COMPREHENSIVE SURVEY OF BUDDHISM

WORLD BUDDHISM VESAK ANNUAL : 2504-1960. Buddhist Publications, 171/4, New Buller's Road, Colombo, Ceylon, Rs. 2/-.

A SURFEIT of even good things is nauseating — and an annual which would have cramped together repetitious articles on hackneyed "religious" themes would have not only been dull and boring, it would have also been waste.

Fortunately, this is what the *World Buddhism Vesak Annual* of 2504-1960 does not do. On the contrary, here is presented a comprehensive, colourful and intensive survey of some of the important aspects of Buddhism, as practised in many parts of the world today.

The articles, which are interspersed with some excellent pictures, cover a variety of topics to the layman and the scholar, the Buddhist and the non-Buddhist. Some of them, for instance, "A Genuine Way to Nibbana" by Mirissee Gunasiri Maha Thera, and "The Buddha and Tradition" by Victor Karunaratne, emphasise the rational nature of Buddhism.

The former article deals with the Brahmajala Sutta. Here are discussed the philosophies of the East and West and their inadequacy "to arrive at the final solution of the universe", as contrasted with the philosophy of the Buddha, "the leading free-thinker and rationalist of our time", who, "with the master-key of rational understanding" "scrutinised the so-called religions and philosophies".

In the latter are examined the implications behind the Buddha's continuous and systematic attack on everything savouring of servile obedience or unthinking tradition, and here a strong case is made for a Buddhism that would be a philosophy of flux, a philosophy that could and would change with the changing needs of society and hence, would obviate the necessity for the adoption of devious methods to avoid supposedly inflexible rules.

On this same theme, T. U. de Silva in "Man and Mind" highlights the power and influence of the mind, how it works and how it comes to "know" an object.

"Right Speech" by Amarasiri Weeraratne, on the other hand, stresses the importance of the faculty of speech and the reason why it should not be abused.

It is not only this aspect of Buddhism that is brought into the limelight in this annual. One of the greatest contributions that Buddhism made to the cultures of the world was in the sphere of Art.

J. Malalgoda takes up this subject in an article dealing with the Buddha Image in relation to Art. He pays special attention to the Samadhi Buddha image at Anuradhapura, an image which has attracted the minds of India's Nehru, Russia's Ouspensky and China's Fah-Hien.

Dr. C. E. Godakumbura deals with the history behind this image later on. To this topic of Art may also be assigned the account given at the end of the annual, of the exhibition of "Art in Buddhism" held in the Newark Museum in New Jersey, United States.

The phenomenal expansion of Buddhism and the reason for it are also examined. In "New Horizons in Buddhism", M. R. Ratnajinendra gives six reasons for this tremendous expansion, namely, the rational character of Buddhism, its comprehensive moral code, its appeal to the masses, the patronage extended to it by kings and nobles, its cult of self-sacrifice and the personality of the founder who by example and precept showed the values inherent in his doctrine.

The various metamorphoses that Buddhism underwent once it spread are seen in the various forms it took in the different countries where it was adopted.

Professor Shuyu Kanaoka in "Buddhism in Japan" discusses the most prominent characteristics of Buddhism in Japan, while in "Is Tibetan Buddhism to Survive?" Sramanera Jivaka makes a strong plea for the survival of Buddhism and the restoration of the Sangha in that country.

The myths, legends and ceremonies that grew around Buddhism are also given their due share of prominence. C. de Saram gives some interesting anecdotes from the

life of the Ven. Sariputta, while C. Prabha discusses the Maga Puja — how it came to be celebrated and its significance. B. R. Bhatia deals with the geography and history of "Four Places Held in Highest Veneration", namely, Lumbini, Bodhi Gaya, Sarnath and Kusinagar.

The foregoing would reveal the diverse nature of the topics discussed in the annual, as well as the fact that Buddhism today is in no two countries quite alike. Yet behind this diversity there is inherent an essential unity.

This unity of the many "Buddhisms" that prevail today is emphasised throughout this magazine.

As one writer states, the "supreme value" of Buddhism today "must lie in the creation of a moral and spiritual influence sufficient to ensure the survival of civilisation in the midst of dangers arising from the scientific and inventive genius of man himself. This is the end to which the energies of the entire Buddhist world must be directed".

Harsha Pandita Gunawardene

WEALTH OF READING MATTER

**CEYLON DAILY NEWS
VESAK ANNUAL : 2504-1960.**
Associated Newspapers of Ceylon
Ltd. Lake House, Colombo.
Rs. 4/-.

THIS year's Vesak production of the "Daily News" should be appreciated by all those who are interested in Buddhism, considering the wealth of reading and pictorial matter it carries.

Leading local and foreign students of the Dhamma have helped to make the publication the success it is.

Martin Wickremasinghe's "Inspiration From Buddhist Art" is an extremely educative and instructive article which must not be missed by students of Buddhist art. Criticising the critics of Eastern art, Mr. Wickremasinghe says that these critics perhaps were not aware that Rembrandt himself copied Mogul paintings.

The contribution on "Many and the One" by the President of the London Buddhist Society Mr. Christmas Humphreys should appeal greatly to students of Buddhist philosophy. Mr. Humphreys who has tackled the subject through years, knows what he writes about.

S. R. Wijeyatilaka's "Random Thoughts on the Ocean Wave" criticises the Western thinkers who "have impatiently dismissed the Buddha's teaching as platitudinous and impracticable." He retorts "that they fail to realise that the Buddha practised every word he preached".

"Kataragama" by Dr. C. E. Godakumbure, "And What of Tomorrow?" by the Rev. Jack Austin and "The Beginner in Meditation" by Prasitt Stuart Clifton carry their own appeals to the reader in a restricted sphere. The article on Meditation is particularly timely at a time when there is a steady revival in the development of the inner self in man.

A number of other writers have graced the annual with their contributions, including Chiang Lan on the "Buddhist Academy of China", "Royal Patrons of Learning" by M. R. Ratnajinendra and "Progress of Buddhism in Great Britain" by the Ven. H. Saddhatissa Thera.

Carrying six art plates in colour and four pages of murals, also in colour, and fully illustrated with appropriate photographs and drawings, and the cover a fresco painting in colour depicting King Dhammasoka going in procession in search of the Dhamma, the annual should be a must in the library of students of the Buddha Dhamma.

V. de S.

ANNUAL WITH 25 ARTICLES

THE BUDDHIST VESAK NUMBER, 2504-1960 : Published by the Young Men's Buddhist Association, Colombo, Rs. 3/-.

THIS annual publication keeps up to the standard of its predecessors by presenting a large number of articles of a heavily doctrinal type. The student of the Dhamma will find ample material for him to read and ponder over.

The Editor has combed the world for his contributors and he has been quite successful in getting together articles from representative Buddhists and students of Buddhism from countries such as West Germany, Australia, India, Great Britain, the United States and, of course, Ceylon.

The profundity of the contributions can be gauged from the subjects that have been tackled such as

Suffering, Dukkha and Its Origin, Anatta and the Moral Problem, the Concept of Time in Early Buddhism, and Causal Association.

There are as many as twenty-five articles in the annual, apart from the Editorial and a Note on the Buddhist Flag. The Note states that this year must be regarded by Sinhala Buddhists "as one of special commemoration, for it is the seventy-fifth anniversary of the raising of the Buddhist Flag in this fair island of ours".

The Editorial also refers to the Buddhist Flag and observes: "The message of the Buddhist Flag and of the Public Holiday of Vesak is, therefore, this: that the Sinhala Buddhist should ever be mindful of his heritage, cherish it and strive to enrich it by his own contribution".

Although the annual lacks the colour and the illustrations which were evident in previous years, this year's number will also be welcomed by all those who are interested in the study of the Dhamma.

A.

PROBLEMS OF LIFE DISCUSSED

THE BOSAT VESAK NUMBER, 2504-1960 : 65D, Training School Road, Havelock Town, Colombo 4. Rs. 1/-.

PRIDE of place is given this year in the *Bosat Vesak Number* to an article by the Ven. Narada Thera, entitled "The Problems of Life." Who? whence? whither? why? what? are the questions discussed and answered by the venerable Thera.

There are other articles of equal interest by learned Theras, such as "Buddhism and World Peace" by the late Ven. Soma Maha Thera, "Loving-Kindness" by the late Ven. Nanamoli Thera, "The Purpose of Life" by Vinitha Thera and "Four Sacred Shrines" by Piya-dassi Thera.

Two other articles of value are "Asoka's Message" by S. F. de Silva and "Sila and Silabbatapararamasa" by the Anagarika Sugatharamanda. The lesson of Asoka to us, says Mr. de Silva is "live earnestly the good life—so that we may not only be happy but can bring happiness to all."

A tribute to the late Soma Maha Thera by Guido Auster, Director

of the Oriental Department of the German State Library, Berlin, concludes this useful little annual.

A.

EMPHASIS ON MEDITATION

THE MAHA BODHI VAI-SAKHA NUMBER : 4A, Bankim Chatterjee Street, Calcutta, India, Rs. 2/50.

THE May issue of *The Maha Bodhi* which is an enlarged number to commemorate this year's Vesak, contains a number of learned articles analysing various aspects of the Dhamma, as well as comments on the progress of Buddhism today.

The subject of meditation has received special significance. The contribution on "Buddhist Meditation" by Bhikku Shanti Bhadra of the Buddhistisches Haus, Berlin, should be read with interest by those who are today making an effort to establish meditation classes with a view to making this essential aspect of Buddhism popular.

This is aptly followed by a poem by the Australian exponent of Buddhism, Marie B. Byles "At a Vipassana Meditation Centre", and "Meditation—First Step" by P. M. Rao.

"Every year", he says, "when the Thrice Sacred Day comes round we temporarily withdraw our minds from worldly affairs and begin to think devoutly of the Blessed One."

Other articles include "The Great Hesitation" by Sister Vajira, "Cula Subhadda" by I. B. Horner, "The Spirit of Asoka" by Tuvia Gelblum, "The Buddhist Doctrine of Ahimsa" by the Ven. H. Saddhatissa, and "An introduction to the History of Buddhism in Korea" by Philip Karl Eidmann.

The number is appropriately illustrated. It ends with the usual Notes and News, covering Buddhist events of note.

A.

DICTIONARY OF PALI PROPER NAMES

MISS ISALINE B. HORNER, the well-known British Buddhist scholar who is now the President of the Pali Text Society, states that the Society expects to re-issue the *Dictionary of Pali Proper Names* which appeared from the pen of

Dr. G. P. Malalasekera in two Volumes, in 1937 and 1938, respectively.

The work was published in the Indian Texts Series which came into being as a result of the personal interest taken by the Viceroy, Lord Curzon. It was issued for the Government of India with the imprint of the firm John Murray of London.

Some of the material for this *Dictionary of Pali Proper Names* had been earlier collected by the Swiss scholar Edward Muller-Hess and by Professor T. W. Rhys Davids. In utilizing this material Dr. Malalasekera himself made very considerable additions by patient industry and research, so that the publication became an invaluable reference work to those engaged in Buddhist studies whose number showed phenomenal increase with each year.

Thus it went out of the market quite soon, and academic groups were anxious for a re-issue. The Pali Text Society eventually arranged to finance it and make a photographic reproduction. This was assured to it through the kindness of the Governments of India and Pakistan in whom the copyright has been jointly vested since 1947.

The two volumes will come into the market in the course of the year and will be priced at £ 6.10.0d.

GEIGER ON CEYLON CULTURE

**CULTURE OF CEYLON
IN MEDIAEVAL TIMES :**
by Professor Wilhelm Geiger,
Edited by H. Bechert. Published
by Otto Harrassowitz, Wies-
baden, 1960. 309 pages and
4 plates. Price approximately
Rs. 47/50.

THE posthumous manuscript of Professor Wilhelm Geiger on *Culture of Ceylon in Mediaeval Times* has recently been published in the Federal Republic of Germany, edited by Dr. H. Bechert. Professor Geiger had finished this work in 1940.

Wilhelm Geiger (1856-1943) was occupied for about half a century with studies on the Sinhalese language, history and culture and is commonly recognized to be the most eminent amongst the European scholars in this field of research. This work is based generally on the *Mahavamsa*, the "Great Chronicle"

of Ceylon and its continuations, but he made use of other important sources too.

Geiger's last comprehensive treatises, though remaining unknown for a long time, have lost nothing of their importance. A geographical introduction is followed by a discussion on social organization, domestic life, settlement, cultural activity and professional life.

The second part deals with kingship and government and the third part with religion and the Buddhist Sangha in Ceylon. Geiger's not published supplements and corrections to his own edition and translation of the *Mahavamsa* (and the *Culavamsa*) are collected by the editor and added at the end of the book.

It is also a great pleasure for the widow of Professor Geiger to see her husband's last work published during her lifetime. She was in Ceylon together with him. She is now more than 80 years old and lives near Muenchen.

Dr. H. Bechert is also well known in Ceylon. This young German scholar was sent to Ceylon during 1958-59 by the "Institut fuer vergleichende Sprachwissenschaft and Orientalistik" of the University of Saarbruecken for the purpose of doing research work regarding the development of the cultural history of Ceylon. His main interest lies in the study of the Sinhalese language and literature.

Dr. W. Kuenzel

April Activities at London Vihara

IN the course of a speech given by the Ven. H. Ratanasara, on Sunday, April 3, entitled, "The Buddhist Concept of Wisdom" he said, "Buddhism is not meant for fools. It is only the intelligentia who can understand and practise Buddhism."

The Ven. Ratanasara explained that the observance of mere rite and ritual would not help an individual to attain wisdom, which was identical with Nibbana the highest goal of Buddhism. He who had progressed in meditation and wisdom was indeed close to Nibbana.

On Sunday, April 10, Dr. E. Michael Mendelson gave a lecture for the Buddha Study Association entitled "The Nature of Burmese Buddhism."

On Sunday, 24th Mr. Dharendra Sheel Shastri, spoke on "The Place of Buddha in Hinduism."

On Monday, 14th a memorial Buddhist Service was held for the late King Norodom Suramarit of Cambodia at the London Buddhist Vihara. It was sponsored by the Royal Cambodian Embassy in the United Kingdom.

The Ven. Saddhatissa Mahathera, assisted by the Ven. Ratanasara and the Samanera Dhammaratana officiated during the 'Pansukula' service. His Excellency, the Ambassador for Cambodia, Mr. Au Chheun, did the traditional waterpouring while passing the merit to the late King.

The Ven. Saddhatissa, in the funeral sermon said, "The Buddhist world mourns the death of this devoted Buddhist King and valued son of Cambodia."

Wednesday, 13th being the Sinhalese New Year Day, quite a number of Sinhalese Buddhists visited the Vihara and performed 'Buddha-puja'. Led by the Ven. Saddhatissa, 'Paritta' was chanted for them by the bhikkhus.

On Thursday, 14th the Ven. Saddhatissa sent a New Year message to Ceylon from the B.B.C., London.

On Friday, 15th the bhikkhus were invited to the Burmese residence for dana

which was given by Mrs. U. Aung Soe and the Ambassador for the Union of Burma to mark the Burmese New Year Day.

On the same date, Mr. John Mason of Leicester, a practising Buddhist who said that he had not seen a bhikkhu before, called at the Vihara accompanied by Mr. Robin Wragg to seek advice of the Mahathera on how to promote an interest in Buddhism in his own town.

It is gratifying to note that Mr. Mason, with the assistance of Mr. Wragg and Mr. W. J. Oakley has now started a Buddhist Group at 54, John Street, Hinckley, Leicestershire.

A 'Pansukula' service was held on the 19th at the Vihara for the Chief Marshal of Thailand, Mr. Chalermkiat Watanagura and his wife who lost their lives in a plane crash at Formosa.

On Sunday, 24th in accordance with Thai Buddhist custom, an elaborate 'Paritta' ceremony took place at the London residence of Major S. Cholasap. Many a Thai Buddhist came to receive the blessings of the 'Paritta'. The Paritta-Mandapa had been gaily decorated in the oriental fashion.

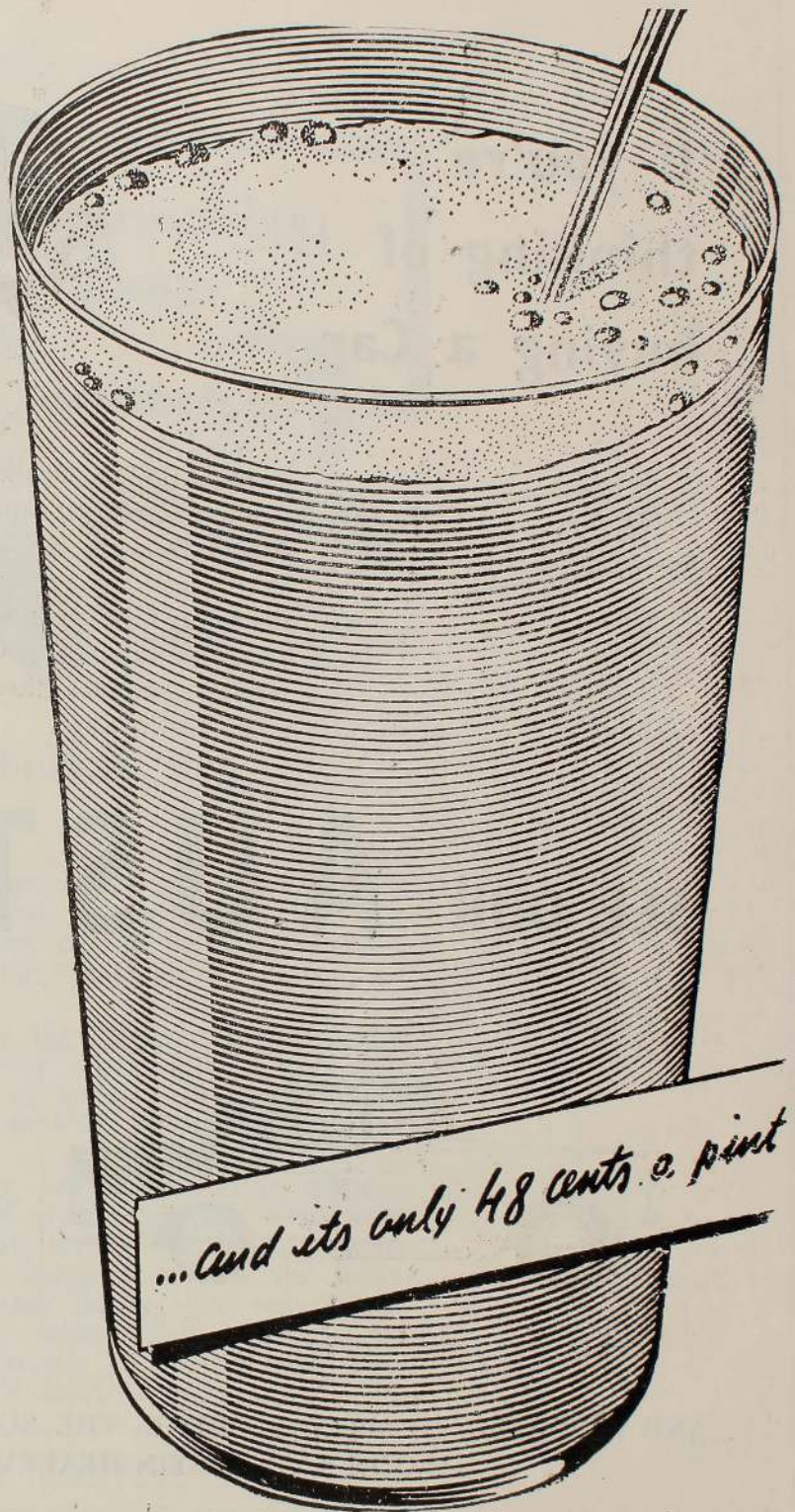
The Ven. Saddhatissa has received the following letter from Mrs. Marie Hopps of the Manchester Buddhist Society which he often visits: "Your talks are so helpful and always an incentive to further endeavour and consequently one would not willingly miss them. I trust however, that it will not be long before we again have the opportunity of sitting at the feet of such kindly wisdom".

Buddhist Scriptures, a new translation of Dr. Conze for Penguin Books, has now sold out its first edition, and a second edition is to be re-printed.

WORLD BUDDHISM, MAY 1960

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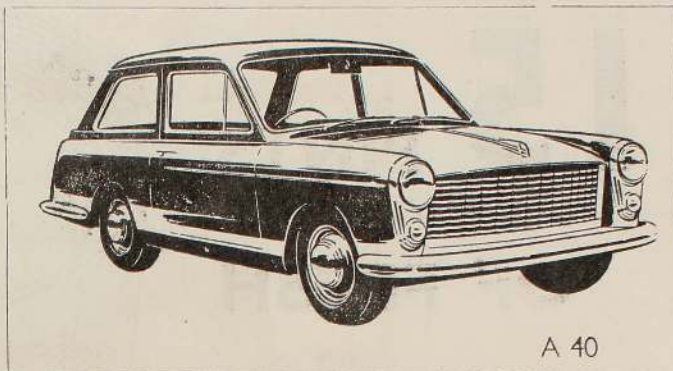
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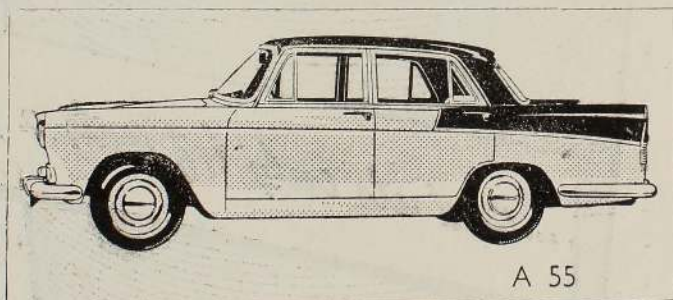


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