

## A BUDDHIST PRIEST.

TWO TRAVELERS HAVE AN INTERESTING TALK WITH HIM.

They Found Him In Ceylon, Where the Original Buddhism Is Maintained—The Chaplain Asked Questions, but Was Not Converted by the Answers.

My companion, the chaplain, has a keen interest in all psychological questions and especially in the development of the religious man. In Japan and China he pursued his investigations without rest, but he had never found the opportunity for which he longed—to talk with some authoritative exponent of Buddhism. Here in Kandy, the opportunity offered, and it was speedily embraced. I decided to go along to give a layman's view of the interview. We learned that we could see and talk with the high priest by means of an interpreter. Now, Ceylon, you must know, is the place where the original Buddhism has been maintained. In Japan and China it has been modified and corrupted. In Ceylon you still find the real article. Besides, Kandy, from having so important a relic as the Buddha's tooth—large enough to serve as a dentist's sign—is the very holy of holies of Buddhism. To this place must the seeker after truth come, and here we were, the secret saint within night and hearing. So we meandered half way round the lovely embowered lake which adorns Kandy—an artificial construction of the Kandyan kings, 300 years old, fed by a pure mountain stream—and came to a maze of stone buildings, under big trees and spreading palms.

At the entrance we were joined by a numerous retinue of priests and monks, draped in raiments about the size of sheets, yellow in color, arranged to leave the right arm and shoulder bare. This is the costume of one sect. The other covers both shoulders. We were conducted through narrow ways, under projecting leaves, which gave a pleasant shelter from the tropical sun, and with considerable hurry were introduced into a room opening on a gallery occupied by a single old man. He was reclining on a lounge, and as his yellow robe had slipped down he presented the appearance of a spare bronze figure. He slowly rose to receive us, adjusting his flowing robe. Chairs were brought for us, and we sat down, while the attendant priests stood about, curious in picturesque attitudes.

Saving the chaplain for the more knotty points, I announced through the interpreter that we were travelers from America, laying a lively interest in the religious studies of all forms of human development and happy to be able to meet and converse with one who stands high in the Buddhist faith. That the name and fame of Buddha were not unknown to us, and that we came respectfully to learn more of his teachings, that there were admirers of Buddha and Buddhism in our country who would be glad to hear what he could tell us better than anybody else.

The high priest bowed and furtively scratched his side under the loose folds of his robe. We took this as a favorable symptom, and the chaplain squared himself for the delivery of questions which had been growing hotter and hotter within him for three months. He asked leading questions in his impatience to get on, and I cannot undertake to follow them in their order. But the substance of what we learned was that Buddhism is the one true way, and he who obeys its laws obtains peace. The five points of the law prohibit killing, lying, stealing, unchastity and intemperance. The chaplain asked if all the priests in Ceylon are celibates. The answer came out rather slowly that they are all required to be, and that when it is discovered that one is not he is discovered and can be priest no more.

We were informed that Buddhism is kept in its purity in Ceylon, and that Kandy is undoubtedly the true center of it, because it has the Buddha's tooth. They have a catechism which is taught to the youth, and the priests give ethical instruction to the people by preaching and teaching at stated times. The law against killing animals is very strict. The chaplain asked the high priest if he would kill a cobra. He said he would not. "What would you do if one came into your room?" asked the chaplain. The reply was that he would remove him. To the question, "What is understood by Nirvana?" the answer was that it was a state of perfect peace, no desire unsatisfied, conscious happiness. One of the other priests put in a remark which seemed intended to modify the last expression. He said: "In a warm day we are fanned. We cannot see the air, but it gives us pleasure." They used metaphors in several cases. They spoke of life as a candle burning in the wind, which disturbed its flame. Protected, it burns steadily.

The chaplain asked if they believed in God. The reply was that there are many gods—some good, some bad. But who created the world? It came into existence spontaneously. It could not be otherwise, as a cocoanut tree bears cocoanuts and no other fruit. The old gentleman spoke sententiously. His teeth, unlike Buddha's, have not been preserved. He seemed rather amused at some of the questions, and he frequently scratched himself under his robe. There are about 60 priests and monks attached to this temple. They arise at 4 o'clock in the morning, devote some hours to study, then go out with their bowls on begging expeditions, return to study in the afternoon, clean up the buildings and grounds, go to bed at 10. They are not wholly dependent on what they get by begging.

I do not think the chaplain will become a Buddhist. He did not get anything to convince him that Buddhism is the only right way.—Cor. Boston Herald.

At Salzburg, Austria, a man was kept prisoner in a cellar for 15 years, during which time he never saw a human face.

## THIS, THAT, AND THE OTHER.

Montana gold miners are flocking to African gold mines.

Spain has fewer daily papers than any other country in Europe.

Some mahogany trees in Honduras are worth from \$5,000 to \$6,000 each. It is estimated that every thousand years the human race grows an inch taller.

The early English and French kings took "moneys" with them on their travels, who coined money as it was needed.

At the end of the eighteenth century the annual average mortality was estimated at 50 per 1,000, and in 1892 it had dropped to 19.1 per 1,000.

The alerodes citri, a minute white fly, is reported to prevail to an alarming extent in many sections of Florida, and is proving a dangerous pest to orange trees.

The use of hypodermic injections of alcohol brains looks like a cautious head option, but they are recommended by an eminent bacteriologist as a cure for epilepsy.

What is believed to be the oldest piece of metal money ever made is the mint in Philadelphia. It was minted in Eginia about 700 B. C. The design is in high relief, representing a tortoise crawling along the face of the coin.

The town of Carmel, Maine, has for four months kept in prison Wm. Davis because he refused to tell anything about his financial standing in a suit for damages for injuring a boy who had hung up a burlesque May basket on his premises.

A scheme has been propounded in a French town for slugging huge cables from point to point over the "house tops" and rigging up cars on them that will whisk people along at the rate of fifteen miles an hour. The motive power will be electricity.

From Mülltich, in Silesia, an extraordinary case of trance is reported. Some delay occurred in the burial of a lady, owing to the grave not being ready. She was the wife of a major in the army. On the fourth day after her supposed death, the maid was placing fresh flowers round the coffin, when she was startled at seeing the body move. Finally the supposed corpse assumed an erect position. She had evidently been in a state of coma during these four days.

SENSE AND NONSENSE.

"What made Spendthrift promise his bride that as long as he had a dollar she could have fifty cents of it?" "Because she had all the money."

"This is a somewhat free translation," said the literary young woman in the book store. "No, miss," replied the new clerk. "It cost a dollar and a half."

"I should just like to know what's become of your good resolutions?" "You would, eh? Well, I wanted mother to see them, and so I inclosed them in a letter to her, and gave it to you to mail, and she wrote me that she never received it. That's what's become of them."

Hard Times. Old Highwayman—Glad to see yeh back safe. Did yeh do as I said—point y'r gun at every one that came along and yell, "Y'r money or y'r life!" Young Highwayman (gloomily)—Yep.

"What did yeh git?" "Nawthin' but lives."

An Indignant Sermon. L. Maiden in Parli—At last! At last! Some success has arrived.

RARE AND READABLE. There is a disposition in Boston, it is stated, to revive a last century custom and have the wedding ring placed upon the thumb.

Workmen boring for an artesian well in Louisiana struck a maple log in a sound state of preservation at a depth of 540 feet below the earth's surface.

Mrs. Mary A. Curtiss Meridian, La., recently recovered \$2,000 damages against a saloonkeeper of that place for selling her husband whisky when already drunk. The verdict has been affirmed by the state supreme court.

A 22-year-old man of Bangor, Me., learned for the first time, a few days ago, that he has a twin sister, alive and well, in Providence, R. I., where she is married and has a family. Their mother died when the twins were five months old. Two Bangor families adopted them, and the one taking the girl moved out of the state shortly thereafter.

The greatest purchase of land in all history was when the United States purchased from France for the sum of \$11,000,000 the territory of Louisiana, which included beside the present limit of that state what is now Texas, Arkansas, Missouri, Iowa, Indian Territory, Nebraska, Minnesota, Dakota, nearly all of Montana and parts of New Mexico, Kansas, Colorado, and Wyoming.

## SOME LAUGHING GAS.

CURRENT HUMOR ORIGINAL AND SELECTED.

An Easy Conundrum for the Ladies—An Indignant Sermon—The Up-to-Date Tamest! Artist—Other W and Satire.

An Affectionate Tale. Barber—Poor Jim has been sent to an insane asylum.

Victim (in chair)—Who's Jim? "Jim is my twin brother, sir. Jim has long been brooding over the hard times and I suppose he finally got crazy."

"Hum! Not unlikely." "Yes, he and me has worked side by side for years and we was no alike we couldn't call each other apart. We both brooded a good deal, too. No money in this business any more."

"What's the matter with it?" "Prices too low. Unless a customer takes a shampoo or something, it doesn't pay to shave or haircut. Poor Jim! I caught him trying to cut a customer's throat because he refused a shampoo, and so I had to have the poor fellow locked up. Makes us very melancholy. Sometimes I feel sorry I didn't let him slash all he wanted to. It might have saved his reason. Shampoo, sir?"

"Y-e-s, sir."

Replenishing a Wardrobe. She (coaxingly)—Your little wife is very anxious to see her mother again. He—Yes, of course—very natural. She—I cannot go to visit her, you know, without a complete new traveling outfit, and a few new dresses for 'extra occasions; but if you feel very poor, my love, I can stay at home and have mother come here, you know.

He—Poor! Nonsense. I'm making money right along. Here's a check.

A Hallday Dodge. First Merchant (sadly)—The holiday trade was a failure.

Second Merchant—Not with me. I sold out everything with a rush. "Phew! How?"

"Got up a guessing contest and gave prizes."

"Guessing contest? What about?" "Each customer was allowed to guess what the things he bought were intended to be used for."

She Told Him. Husband—One of your New Year's resolutions was that you would not quarrel with me for a year.

Wife—Yes. "Well, you are snapping at me half the time already."

"Yes." "I should just like to know what's become of your good resolutions?"

"You would, eh? Well, I wanted mother to see them, and so I inclosed them in a letter to her, and gave it to you to mail, and she wrote me that she never received it. That's what's become of them."

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Money Saved is Money Earned. Mrs. Winks—I'd just like to know why those Minkas have so much more money than we have.

Mr. Winks—Mrs. Minkas was born on Christmas day and married on Christmas day, so that the three celebrations came at once. Think of the pile Mr. Minkas has saved on presents to her! Good News.

The Quick and the Dead. Citizen (with poor memory)—I should like the present address of Hon. Mr. Greatman.

Newspaper Office Boy—Next door to the right. "Thank you. For whom shall I inquire?"

"The obituary editor."—N. Y. Weekly.

Another Problem Solved. Citizen (who likes home-made bread)—My dear, I hear that the baker's trust has rushed through a law forbidding women to make their own bread.

Wife (indignantly)—They have, have they? I'll show 'em. Here, Maria, run out and get me some yeast!

Report for Appointments. Mr. Brickrow (at the opera)—Goodness me! You have stuffed your ears with cotton.

Mrs. Brickrow—Hush! That's no I won't get interested in the music. I don't want people to think I am not used to good society.

Red Thoughts St. Ove. Agitator—Do you ever stop to reflect, sir, on the condition of this country? Citizen—I have thought much upon the subject, thought long and deeply.

"Ah, I am glad to find there is one besides myself who has given this great subject attention. What is your opinion, does this country most need at the present time?"

"A fool killer!"

Know Your Chosen. Student—What is pessimism? Philosopher—The faith of cowards.

"Then what is optimism?" "The faith of fools."

Know the Brother. Struggling Pastor—Brother Minkins! Intends to give our new chapel a beautiful memorial window.

Wife—He probably wants something to look at when the contribution box goes around.

An Example. Mrs. Hardacre—Oh, Pal! There goes one now!

Mr. Hardacre—One what?

Mrs. Hardacre—Why, one of them walking coats I read about in the fashion papers!

Not Interested. First Citizen—There is to be a big meeting to-night, a great outpouring of the masses in ways and means to reform the city government, so that its affairs may be administered with strict economy. Come along.

Second Citizen—Um—I'd rather not. Fact is, I am after an office myself.

Alarming Figures. Old Lady—I feel awful nervous. Are you sure we won't have any accidents? Conductor (fond of statistics)—Every person who rides on a railway takes one chance in 1,491,010 chances of being killed.

Old Lady—La, what! Why didn't that reckless agent tell me so before I bought my ticket?

Struck a Bonanza. Moldy Mike—I've struck a soft thing now.

Dusty Dan—What's that?

Moldy Mike—I go into a town, and tell 'em I'm going to a stranded open company, and want 'em all to be at the school-house at 7 sharp, and hear me give a concert. They always come. A free show draws the crowd every time. Well, I don't git more'n half-way through me best solo, "After the Ball," then they begin to throw eggs and cabbages and all sorts o' garden produce by the bushel. I just gather it up and slips out th' back door. Been livin' like a fightin' cock all winter.

Very Unpleasant. Mrs. De Style—The papers say that our minister is to be tried for heresy.

Mrs. Tailor-Made—He ought to be. Only last Sunday he said that heaven is a place where fashions never change.

A Scientific Fact. Editor—Here's a curious thing I found in an exchange and printed in my paper yesterday, though I don't know whether it is true or not. It says: "A man can't write the word yawning five times without yawning."

Friend—I saw that in your paper yesterday, and tried it. It's true. While writing the word yawning I yawned two or three times.

"Well, that's remarkable, unless you tried it late at night."

"No, I tried it just as soon as I got through reading your paper."—E.

Pretty Far Gone. Clara—Do you think Algy is really and truly in love?

Dora—In love? Why, the poor fellow is so desperately in love that his latest made-to-measure suits hang on him like ready-made clothes.

Experience vs. Superstition. Mr. Hopeford—The date you have set for our wedding comes on Friday. Friday is supposed to be an unlucky day.

Mrs. Lakeside (from the west)—So I've heard, but it can't be any more unlucky than the other days. I've tried all the rest.

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