LECTURE SECOND.

DELIVERED IN THE HALL OF THE COLOMBO ACADEMY,

On the 29th November, 1861.

THE BUDDHIST SCRIPTURES AND THEIR LANGUAGE, THE PALI.

FORTY-FIVE years before 'the conventional era' of the Singhalese did Gôtama proclaim the tenets of Buddhism. That religion, which was decidedly a modification of Brahmanism—devoid of its mystery, inhumanity, intolerance, and exclusiveness, and founded by a Kshatriya prince—was not long before it spread amongst the people, and became the State creed of the *Majjhima dèsa*. Kings were amongst his first disciples; thousands of Brahmans and fire-worshippers were reckoned amongst his votaries; and nobles, merchants, and itinerant traders formed his most attentive congregations.[1] Patronized by princes, supported by nobles, and encouraged by the State—the Sâkya fraternity soon increased in numbers, enjoyed a much larger share of freedom than other denominations of ascetics, and exercised far greater privileges than even the Brahmans or the laymen of the realm.[2]

With such adventitious aid, Gôtama's doctrines were speedily disseminated far and wide. They went early into

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[1] See Papanchasudanìya, vol. iii. p. 482. Here as elsewhere the references are to the writer's own MSS.

[2] Mahâ Vagga of the Vinaya Pitaka.

Pachchanta[1] beyond the confines of the *Majjhima dèsa.* Wherever they went caravan-keepers carried the glad tidings of the new Teacher; merchants enlarged upon his virtues; and itinerant traders related his doctrines. Great was the joy of those who were brought to the knowledge of the word. "*Sàdhu!*" "*Sàdhu!*" exclaimed all who had heard it. Those who had come under its influence lost no time in following the sage. Kings deserted their thrones, governors and chieftains their high trusts, nobles and ministers their avocations; and all their happy homes, wives and children—for the yellow robe of the Sakya 'mendicant'—*bhikkhus.*[2] Thus, at no distant period from their first promulgation, the *dhamma* became the household words of the people, the theme of the traveller, and the topic of epistolary correspondence between princes.

Although it is stated in the *Buddhavansa* that Gôtama, prompted by 'a misgiving common to all Buddhas,' was at first 'reluctant to proclaim the dhamma,' yet there seems to be no foundation for this assertion. For, as it is also stated, "he was destined[3] to save multitudes." He was essentially *Satta* 'the teacher.' His peculiar vocation was to convert. No part of his career contradicts the belief that he was most solicitous for the dissemination of his *dhamma.* His whole life, after he had become Buddha, was devoted to its proclamation, its elucidation, and its exaltation. Seeing that 'the harvest was great, but that the labourers were few,' he directed that 'no two priests should take the same road.'[4] As an encouragement to the first missionaries he declared that there were beings whose love for religion was not wholly extinguished; that their natural reluctance to hear the dhamma would vanish; and that there were others who could master it.[5]

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[1] This word is used to express 'foreign regions,' the boundaries of which are given in the *Mahâ Vaŋga Chammakkandaka* Sec.
[2] Atthakathâ of Sanyutta Nikâya.
[3] Buddhistical Annals by Turnour—Buddhavansa, p. 42.
[4] Maha Vagga, lib. 1, p. kr.
[5] Ib.

To render moreover his religion agreeable to the people, Gôtama even relaxed the rigid rules of discipline which he had at first enacted. He altered them to suit the circumstances, and also the prejudices of men. Where ordination could not be conferred without the intervention of *ten* priests, he reduced the prescribed number by *one-half* in favour of foreign countries. Where a village was rugged, stony, and overrun with brambles and thistles, the priests were permitted to wear thicker shoes than usual. Where bathing was rendered necessary more frequently than was allowed, as in the case of the priests of Ougein, he relaxed the rule in their favour. Where the use of skins had been prohibited, an exception was made in favour of those who had a national predilection for their use.[1]

Such were the expedients adopted by Gôtama for disseminating Buddhism amongst the people. Yet the happiest device of all was to reject for his doctrines the sacred language of the Brahmans, and to adopt the vernacular dialect of his time, the Pâli.

The account given by the Singhalese of their sacred Buddhist books, which receive the appellation of Pittakattâya and the Atthakatha, is, that at the first convocation, which took place in the eighth year of King Ajâtasatta's reign (543 B.C.), the now existing orthodox version of Pittakattâya was rehearsed according, as the Brahmans say, to their *Sruti*,[2] and was defined and authenticated with such care and precision, as to fix the very number of syllables which it contained,—that certain comments called the *Atthakatha* were made at the same time; that at the 2nd and 3rd convocations, the Pittakattâya was *rehearsed* with a view to the suppression of certain schisms which had sprung up, and additional Atthakathâ were delivered, exhibiting the history of Buddhism

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[1] Mahâ Vagga, p. Rhu.

[2] 'What they have heard with their ears'—so likewise the Buddhists say with regard to a portion of the Pittakattaya:—*Evammè sutan ekan samayan*—'So it was heard by me at a time.'

between each preceding convocation; and that they were all preserved in the *memory* of succeeding generations.[1]

It is moreover stated that the entire body of doctrines was afterwards brought into Ceylon by *Mahindu*, and orally promulgated by him upon his mission to Ceylon to disseminate Buddhism in it;—and that the doctrines contained in our present voluminous records were orally perpetuated by the priesthood in Ceylon until the reign of King Valanganbâhu (104—76 B.C.), when '*for the first time* they were committed to writing.'[2] It would also seem that these writings were afterwards consulted [412 A.D.] by Buddhagôsa for his compilation of the Atthakathâ, which were not then extant in Asia.[3]

I have examined the original expressions in the Pali records[4] which authorize the above summary, and, I confess, there is scarcely anything in the import of them hostile to the belief that the Buddhist doctrines, like those of Mahomet, had a written existence in Asia at the same time that portions of them were committed to memory, which is not disputed.

Memory and *Writing* being means by which both words and actions are perpetuated, and there being a great analogy between the mental and physical process by which this is effected,—it is not strange that nearly all acts in reference to them are found so expressed in metaphorical language as to render a double interpretation possible. Yet there are indeed certain expressions which may be more reasonably traced to a *written* than a memorial preservation of the word. Apart from the evidence deducible from the phraseology[5] of the scriptures themselves, we obtain most ample testimony from the inadvertent admissions of Buddhist writers,—that the doctrines of Gôtama were reduced to writing from the commencement of the Buddhist era, if not in the very lifetime of the sage.

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[1] See Buddhistical Annals by Turnour in Journal B.R.A.S., for July 1837.
[2] Mahavansa, p. 207. [3] Ib., p. 251.
[4] The Sumangala Vilâsinî and the Mahavansa.
[5] Most of the words are the same in the Sanskrit; and I find Prof. Goldstücker has correctly defined them in his *Panini—his place in Sanskrit Literature*—pp. 13—66, a work which I have only seen after the preparation of this Lecture.

Against this position, which may be supported by various circumstances and considerations, it has been asserted that the Buddhist scriptures mentioned "cannon" and "fire arms;" and spoke, though in the language of prophecy, of *Ionians* and *Asoka*; and, therefore, they were written *after* the invention of gunpowder, and *posterior* to the Greek domination in Asia. As for the 'invention of gunpowder,' its date is not ascertained; yet, granting that it was not known before the time of Petrarch and Boccacio, it may be affirmed that "fire-arms" are not mentioned in any of the canonical works of Buddhism. We read of cavalry and infantry; of horses, elephants, and chariots; of bows, arrows, spears, javelins, targets, and swords; but not a single word about "guns" or "gunpowder"; and I may remark that the very name for gunpowder does not exist in the Pali language. The work, however, which contains the expression referred to, is the *Malalangedara Vattu*,[1] another version of the *Lalita Vistara*,[2] which, I need scarcely observe, is a recent work, and, as its very name implies, 'a glowing exaggeration.'

As to the inference sought to be deduced, viz. that the *Yavanas*—who were "a head-shaving race"[3]—were *Ionians* or Bactrian Greeks, who could only have been known in Asia after the conquests of Alexander the Great,[4] it is indeed unfounded. Few subjects connected with the history and chronology of the East are capable of more satisfactory proof than that the *Yavanas* or *Yonas* had been known before Gôtama Buddha.

The identification of Yavana with Mahommedans, is indeed open, in the opinion of Professor Wilson, to the objection, that the former are mentioned in works prior to the Mahommedan era.[5] In one of Asoka's inscriptions, the Girnar, *Antiochus* is called the *Yona Raja*, "the King of the Yonas." The Milindapprasna speaks of *Milinda* as a Yòna King.

[1] See American Oriental Journal, vol. iii. p. 32.
[2] Bengal As. Journal, 1854, p. 614.
[3] "Sagara made the Yavanas shave their heads"—Vishnu Purâna, iv. 3.
[4] Prof. Benfey's article on India.
[5] Wilson's Hindu Theatre, vol. ii. p. 179.

Whether he be identical with *Menander*, and the Yônaka country with *Euthydemia*,[1] remains to be proved. From the Milindapprasna, however, we learn that Milinda was born at *Kalasi* in *Alasaddo*, 200 yojanas from Sagal; and that Sagal was only 12 yojanas from Cashmir.

Isiodorus also mentions Sagal and Alexandria in the same sentence; and from the Mahawansa, moreover, we learn that *Alasadda* or *Alasanda* was the capital of the Yôna country. The mention of *dipa* or "island" in reference to Alasanda, in one of the passages above referred to,[2] presents, however, no valid objections against its identification with *Alexandria;* for Pali writers and Buddhists in general, like the ancient Greeks, had a very vague notion of the geographical position of countries.

Perhaps, the *Milindapprasna* as well as the inscriptions do not furnish conclusive proofs on the subject; since they were composed clearly after the date of *Asoka*, who is expressly mentioned there[3]—nor indeed are the *Natakas* of much value for the same reason;—but the same objection does not apply to *Manu*, or the *Maha Bharata*, in both which ancient works the *Yavanas* are expressly mentioned.

Now, according to the Pali Annals, the latter work existed before the Buddhist era. This has been however doubted; but I believe there is not the same misapprehension as regards the Buddhist era itself. Whether the Buddhist annals came into existence after or before the death of the sage, signifies nothing; for if it can be shown that Buddha, whose age is pretty clearly established,[4] had spoken of the *Yavanas*, their identification with the Bactrian Greeks must indeed fall to the ground. Mr. Turnour intimated this in his elaborate introduction to the Mahawansa, but failed to adduce any proof; and this omission has led Orientalists to doubt the statement of that eminent Pali scholar, viz. 'Yonas were mentioned long anterior to Alexander's in-

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[1] Vide Wilson's Ariana, p. 230.
[2] From the Milindapprasna.
[3] See, *The Friend.*
[4] Turnour's Mahavansa, p. *li.*

vasions in the ancient Pali works. It becomes, therefore, a pleasing duty—and it is no less my privilege—to cite the authority referred to by Mr. Turnour. It is the following from the *Majjhima Nikáya*, where Gôtama is stated to have asked with special reference to the distinction of *Aryas* and *Dâsyas* which had gained ground in the "foreign countries," such as *Yôna* and *Kâmboja* :—

'Assalàyana, what thinkest thou of this? Hast thou (not) heard that in *Yona* and *Kamboja* and in other foreign countries, there are various *Ayyas* (superiors) and *dâsas* (inferiors); that superiors become inferiors, and inferiors, superiors?'

Whilst the authority above quoted satisfactorily explains the reason why, as in the *Hero* and the *Nymph*, Kalidâsa has applied the term *Yavana* to '*menial* females,' it also proves that the *Yavanas* were anti-Buddhistical.

Since, however, it is expressly stated that the Buddhist doctrines, as well as the Vedas, were *memorially* preserved, the existence of *writing* itself at the date of the Buddhist era has been doubted by some.[1]

Great as was, and is the value set upon memory, and great as was the extent to which that faculty was anciently taxed by Oriental nations, yet we should not infer that writing was not known in Buddhistical Asia, as the Greeks concluded from the fact of the Hindus having administered justice from memory.[2] Nor should we be led away with the belief that it was possible for man to retain in memory the Pittakattaya with its voluminous Commentaries. The question is not whether it is possible, in the abstract, to commit a thing to, and retain it in, memory; but whether it is possible to do so to the *extent* which the *Pittakattaya*, etc., would indicate. A porter may carry a heavy load, but it is *not possible* to bear the weight of *Adam's Peak*. We may hear a rat squeaking at the distance of a few yards; but

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[1] See Prof. Max Muller's Hist. of Sanskrit Literature.
[2] Strabo, xv. 53.

it is impossible to do so at the distance of as many hundred miles. So likewise with our other faculties, for instance the memory. The matter in St. Paul's Greek Epistles which Beza committed to memory, or that of the sermons which the Guarnies could repeat with fidelity, bears indeed a very small proportion to the *Tepitaka*. If the Druids, who carried in their memories a large number of verses, the whole extent of their twenty years' learning, cannot by any means approach the contents of the English Bible, which is less than *one-eleventh* of the Buddhist Scriptures. If the poems of Homer, which extend to but 30,000 lines, were recited from memory, we ought to bear in mind that they are [2,000,000, ÷ 30,000 =] less than a sixty-sixth of the Buddhist works, the greater portion of which, being in *prose*, could not, moreover, tender that aid which the rhythm of poetry had afforded to the rhapsodists.

Now, reliable history furnishes us with no account of such wondrous feats of memory as are stated in Hindu and Buddhist writings. There are none such recorded in our Holy Scriptures. From all that appears in the Bible, the mode by which,

> '—we, by tracing magic lines, are taught
> How to embody, and to colour thought—'

was known before the Israelites left Egypt [1491 B.C.]; or, in other words, *writing* was used at a time when its existence among the Hindus does not clearly appear. Neither does it appear from the Holy Scriptures that memory was made the Tablet of any of its doctrines, '*write this*,' '*said the Lord unto Moses*,'—and why?—'*for a memorial*,' that it might not be forgotten;—and where? *in a book*.—Exod. XVII. 14. The Ten Commandments were not only *proclaimed* by the voice of God, but were engraved (*written*) by Him on Tablets of stone. The author of the book of Exodus "took the book of the covenant and *read* it in the audience of the people." He furthermore *recorded* all that was revealed to him by God in *books*. Man's memory was not thus regarded as unerring or sufficiently stable to

dispense with a *written record*. The old Pali proverb *Su-chi-pu-li mutto katan pandito bhaveyya*, is indeed well known.

Buddhistical Annals, moreover, prove beyond all manner of doubt that in the lifetime of Gotama, not only was *writing* practised (1); not only that Buddhist doctrines were conveyed by means of it to different countries (2) (3) (4); not only that laws and usages were *recorded* (5); and that little children were taught to *write* (6); but that even women were found able to do so (7). The various passages which authorize the above statement also prove that the character used at the period above indicated was the *Nagari*.[1]

A question still remains for investigation, and which it may be convenient to dispose of here—what *materials* were employed for the purpose of writing at the period of the Buddhist era? All Orientalists know that palm leaves were used in connection with writing. We are also accustomed in this country to examine ancient *titles* engraved upon metal. Numbers of these were also found in excavations in different parts of Asia. The Royal present from Bimbisara to Pukkusati was written upon a gold plate of 6 feet by $1\frac{1}{2}$ (see Extract No. 2). This costly material, however, was selected to enhance the value of the gift, and to give weight to the opinion concerning the virtues of Buddha, whom he introduced to the notice of his friend. This, therefore, may be regarded as the exception and not as the rule. For gold could not have been easily procured by poor scholars, and still poorer mendicant priests. Copper and other metals, though less costly than gold, were yet selected only with a view to perpetuate state documents, *e.g.* King Parakkrama bahu [A.D. 1200] made it a rule that 'when permanent grants of lands were made to those who had performed meritorious services, such behests should not be evanescent, like lines drawn upon water, by being

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(1.) Mahâ Vagga. (2.) Papancha Sudaniya. (3.) Mahâ Vagga. (4.) Maha Kappinna Vatt. (5.) Sumangala Vilàsini. (6.) Mahâ Vagga. (7.) Dampiâ Atuva.

[1] See the description of this character in reference No. 2.

inscribed upon *leaves*—a material which is subject to be destroyed by rats and white ants—but that such patents should be engraved on plates of copper, so as to endure long unto their respective generations.'

Copper is, moreover, an unwieldy substance. It could not be written upon with the same facility that we now experience in tracing a pen on paper. Except by engraving, no lasting impression could be made upon it ; and engraving was by no means practicable. It could not keep pace with the current of thought. Ordinary writing could not be effected by its means. If the Indians had a Pope who corrected a single line 70 times, the engraver would doubtless have had to perform a work of no ordinary labour! Inferior metal was not, therefore, the substance upon which the Poet and the Scholar drafted compositions. In Ceylon, every Pansala which is identical with the Indian *lipi sàlà*, has a sand-board ; and this is used by poets for composition, and by children for exercises in writing. An author, while composing, usually wrote *first* on these tables, for the convenience of making alterations, but when he had perfected his composition, the same was, it may be presumed, transferred to a more durable substance than the *Velipila.*

For the preservation of one's writing a more permanent material was required than the sand, or tablets of wax. Strips of wood and bambu were used, and the use of the latter probably led to the invention of *paper* in China from reeds. Yet paper, whether known at this time or not, was not used by Orientals, except by the inventors themselves. In the Hindu mind there was, as it is still seen, a feeling of aversion to paper. Books written on paper were probably in ancient times, as they are now, not generally used in Asia. Nor have we any reason to believe that paper was known in India at the Buddhist era. But skins were. It should again be borne in mind that originally the Hindus were no slayers of animals, and though the hides of the antelope, etc., came into use gradually, and though animal sacrifices, doubtless, produced a good deal of skins, yet there is no mention of hides as a *writing material*; and Buddhism, too, sets its face

against all animal slaughter and the use of 'Sheep-skin, Deer-skin, and Goat-skin,' which were originally forbidden as coverlets, were only permitted in foreign countries, where the prohibition might be an impediment to the free dissemination of Buddhism. It may thence be concluded that some other material was employed for ordinary writing. Cloth, doubtless, formed one of the common substances for writing upon, as we find it even at the present day in the Burman Empire; and M. Burnouf gives a story from the *Divyu Avadana*, of the Nepal works, to the effect that Bimbisàra sent to Rúdrayâna, King of Róruka, a portrait of Gôtama on *cloth*, with the Buddhist formula of refuge written below it.

Though, perhaps, this is one of the Fables which were invented by the Heretics, who had seceded from the Buddhist church, yet the fact that cloth was used in early times as a writing material may be relied upon. And it would seem from the travels of the early Chinese pilgrims, and the mode in which Buddhist doctrines were circulated, that some other material besides cloth was used for the *ordinary* purposes of writing, and this we are expressly told, in reference to the correspondence of Bimbisâra and Pukkusâti, was on *panna* or 'leaf'; and the discoveries in the topes of *Nandâra* and *Hidda* show that the *Tuz* leaf was used for Inscriptions in the Bactro-Pali character. It was, however, not this that was anciently used for writing purposes. Neither was it 'the lotus leaf as smooth as a parrot's breast,' which Kâlidasa in his Sakuntalâ puts in the hands of the chief heroine of the play to write her love-letter on. Nor, indeed, was it the birch-leaf which the same poet in his *Vikramorvasi* places in the hands of *Urvasi* as a suitable material on which to inscribe her epistle. The latter, says Prof. Max Müller, is used in the sense of a "leaf or sheet of paper." And this indicates clearly that Kâlidâsa wrote long after the Buddhist era, and long after the Egyptian papyrus had been known to the Asiatics.

That the leaf, however, which was anciently used by Asiatics for *ordinary writing* was the *Talipot*, or the "ola," appears from the very language of Gôtama Buddha; and the

instrument for writing was the *Panna-Suchìya*, 'leaf-pin,' or *Stylus*. From a Tamil work which Mr. William Ferguson quotes, in his interesting work on the Palmirah Palm, it appears that the 'oldest Hindu author, *Panini*, mentions writing on *ôlas*.' I may also mention what Pliny states, that the most ancient mode of writing was upon the leaf of the Palm tree: and the ola is expressly mentioned as an ordinary writing material in the Buddhist annals.

From an investigation into the question whether the Buddhist doctrines had a written existence from the very commencement of the Buddhist era, I return to the question of the dialect in which they were originally expressed.

Upon the authority of the Tibetan annals, Mons. de Körös names several languages into which the Buddhist Scriptures were early translated, but distinguishes one as Tathagata's "own language." The earliest Pali Grammar of Kachchayana, which is indeed extant in Ceylon as well as in Burmah, also refers us to the "language of Buddha," for the elucidation of which he had compiled the *Sandhikappa*.

The question arises—what was this language? That it was not the Sanskrit is generally believed. That it was not the language of which the Chinese pilgrims speak as the *Fan* is also clear; for, apart from other evidence such as the existence of a dual number in the so-called *Fan* language, the same word Fan is used to designate *Brahmâ*, clearly showing that by it was meant the Sanskrit, or the sacred language of the *Brahmans*. The only other languages that demand attention are, "the language (as it is called) of the northern Buddhists," and the Pali language of the Singhalese.

As to the first, we gather from the writings of a learned Hindu gentleman, and of Mons. Burnouf, 'that the Buddhist literature of Nepal, from which the Sacred Scriptures of Tibet, Tartary, and China have been compiled, is in an ugly Sanskrit dialect, destitute of the niceties of the Sanskrit grammatical forms of declension and conjugation, etc.; that the authors have sacrificed grammar to the exigencies of metre; that it is in a mixed style of prose and *Gàthàs*; that it bears a strong resemblance to the Tantras of the 4th to the 7th

century of the Christian era;—and that it appears to be the production of men to whom the task of compilation was assigned without sufficient materials at their disposal.' In view of these peculiarities, Mons. Burnouf has pronounced the Nepal sacred scriptures to be a 'barbarous Sanskrit, in which the forms of all ages, Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrita, appear to be confounded.' Referring to the difference of language of the different parts of the *Vaipulya*, 'the highly developed Sutras,' the same distinguished Orientalist remarks, that it 'indicates in the clearest manner that there was '*another digest*,' besides the compilations of the three great œcumenical convocations of the Buddhists, and that in his opinion, the Nepal Scriptures comprise a *fourth digest*, which he 'regards as the crude composition of writers to whom the Sanskrit was no longer familiar, and who endeavoured to write in a learned language they ill understood, with the freedom which is imparted by the habitual use of a popular but imperfectly determined dialect.'

This question, as indeed many others of historical character, is solved by the Pâli annals of Ceylon; and here I shall present you a translation from the Dìpàvansa; the value of the information which it imparts cannot be too much overrated.

'Many individuals, viz. ten thousand Vajjians,[1] sinful *bhikkhus*, who had been expelled by the *Theras*, assembled together; and, having formed another association, held a Council of the *Dhamma*. This is thence called the *Maha Sangiti*.

'The *bhikkus* who held the Mahâ Sangìti reduced the religion into confusion;[2] set aside[3] the first compilation;[4]

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[1] *Wajji*, a portion of Behar in which the Lichchavi princes settled. It is not, however, stated where this Council was held. Doubtless it was at a distance from the principal seat of Government and Buddhism, which at this period was at *Wesali* or modern Allahabad.

[2] *Vilomàn akansu*, 'made to bristle,' 'ruffled,' 'crossed,' 'confused.'

[3] *Bhinditva* 'having broken,' 'split.'

[4] *Sangahan*. From the context, I would render this word 'compilation' and not 'rehearsal.' The acts here related, taken in connection with the original import of the word, can only refer to a *written* and not a *mental* 'collection.'

and made[1] another. They transferred the Suttans from their proper places to others, and perverted the sense and distorted the words[2] of the five *nikayas*. They did so, ignorant of (the difference between) the general discourses, and those (delivered) on particular occasions, and also (between) their natural and implied significations. They expressed[3] in a different sense that which was otherwise declared; and set aside various significations under the unwarranted authority (shadow) of words.[4] They omitted one portion of the *Suttans* and the *Vinaya* of deep import, and substituted[5] (their own) version[6] of them, and the text.[7] They left out the *Parivaran* annotations,[8] six books[9] of the *Abhidhamma*, the *Patisambida*, the *Niddesa* and a portion of the Jatakas,[10] without replacing anything in their stead. They moreover disregarded[11] the nature of nouns, their gender, and (other) accidents[12] as well as the (various) requirements of style;[13] and corrupted them in various ways.'

The above passage clearly indicates that there was a code

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[1] *Akarinsu*, 'made' 'done,' 'effected.' The same word is used in the following sentence wherein I have rendered it 'placed.'

[2] *Dhamma* here means "phraseology" of the Scriptures as opposed to their *Attha* "the sense."

[3] *Thapayinsu*—'they made to stand.'

[4] *Vyanjana*, 'letters,' and in some of the Buddhist writings, 'words' or sentences.

[5] *Patirûpa*, placed 'a figure' or 'counterpart.'

[6] From a comparison of the Ceylon and Nepal versions of the sacred writings, I find the latter has three sections, the *Vypulya*, the *Nidan* and *Upadesa*, all which are additions to the original discourses. Compare the following list taken from *Hodgson's Illustrations* with the list from *Buddhagosa's Atthakatha* [B. R. A. S. J.]. Hodgson says, "The Buddha Scriptures are twelve kinds, known by the following twelve names:—1, Sutra; 2, Geya; 3, Vyákarana; 4, Gátha; 5, Udan; 6, Nidan; 7, Itvukta; 8, Jàtaka; 9, Vaipulya; 10, Adbhuta Dharma; 11, Avadan; and 12, Upadesa."

[7] *Tantin*, 'The Text.'

[8] *Atthuddharan*, "explanatory discourses.'

[9] *Pakarana*, 'Compilation,' 'something made methodically,' 'an original composition.'

[10] The *Jàtakas*, in the Indian versions, are, it is said, less than 550.

[11] The peculiarities here noticed when compared with those of the *Gatha dialect* of the Nepal scriptures—(See Essay thereon by *Babu Rajendralal Mittra* in the Bl. A.S.J. for 1854, p. 604 et seq.). There can be no doubt of the identity between *this fourth code* of the Buddhists and the Nepal version. The differences of style therein illustrated by Mr. Mittra exactly correspond with the defects of composition here described.

[12] *parikkaran*, 'attributes,' 'decoration,' 'accidents.'

[13] *Akappakarani*, also 'decoration,' 'embellishment,' 'niceties' of style or composition.

different from the Orthodox version of the sacred writings, which were authenticated at three different convocations, and that the Nepal version is a modification of that code. It also establishes that the compilation in question was made, not in the *Tantra* period above referred to—not in the age of *Kanishka*—but in the early part of the 2nd century of the Buddhist era.

I shall now pass on to the *Maghadi* language—the remaining subject of this evening's discourse.

The Sanskrit had, it is believed, died out along with Brahmanism about six centuries B.C.[1] At all events, at the time when Buddhism arose, Sanskrit was no longer the vernacular speech of the people. Several dialects (and the Buddhist books speak of eighteen) had been in current use in India. The Pali was, doubtless, one of them, if not the principal Prâkrit language.[2] It was properly the language of *Magadha*. Numerous Pali theological terms, which have peculiar significations clearly distinguishable from those assigned to the same cognate expressions by the Sanskrit Brahmans, taken with numerous other circumstances in the history of Buddhism, prove beyond all doubt that the Pâli was essentially the language of Gôtama, and of Buddhism. We find it retained till the time of *Asoka*, more than two centuries afterwards. The difference between the dialect of the inscriptions and that of the Pali texts, as, for instance, the *Dhammapada*, establishes nothing beyond the fact that the former as a spoken language had undergone changes, whilst the latter, as is evidenced from the *Yedhamma hetuppabava* stanza quoted in the inscriptions, became fixed in Ceylon as the sacred language of the scriptures.[3] The use of the Prâkrit for the

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[1] Prof. Benfey on India, p. 251.

[2] If "the Maharashtri," as stated by Râma Tarkavagisa, "is the root of other Prakrits"—viz. those which have not been banished from Asia—the Pali presents the most unequivocal proof of its being the parent of all Prakrits, including the Mahârashtri.

[3] Ye dhammà hètuppabhavà
Tèsan hètun Tathàgatò
Aha tèsancha yò nirôdhò
Evan vàdi mahà Samanò.

'Whatever *dhammá* have proceeded from certain causes Tathàgata declares

inscriptions in preference to the Sanskrit, proves most satisfactorily that it was 'the vernacular speech of the people in the same manner that the use of the *local* alphabets is evidence of a design to render the inscriptions accessible to the people.' 'We may therefore (says Prof. Wilson) recognize it as an actually existent form of speech in some part of India, and might admit the testimony of its origin given by the Buddhists themselves—by whom it is always identified with the language of Magadha or Behar.'

The terms *Pali* and *Magadhi* are names which are at the present day indifferently employed in Ceylon, Ava, Siam, and even China, to express the sacred language of the Buddhists, and being confined to those countries, the term *Pali* is not met with in any of the Indian writings.

Mâgadhi is the correct and original name for the Pali. It was not called the *Mâgadhi*, in consequence of the Mission of Asôka, the King of Magadha, to introduce Buddhism into Ceylon. It had received that name before the age of that monarch. It was so called after the ancient name of Behar. It was the appellation for the ancient vernacular language of Magadha. It was the designation for the dialect of the Magadhas.—*Magadhânam bhasâ Mâgadhi.*[1]

(the same, and) the causes of them; and whatever may be their distinction (the same likewise he declares). The *Maha Samana* (is one of) such speech.'

This verse is found rendered in so many different ways (See Journal R. A. S. Great Britain and Ireland, xvi. p. 37 et seq., that I have thought it proper to present the following passage from the *Atthakathà* or the Commentary on the Vinayn text—

Yè dhammà hètuppabhavà—iti; 'hetuppabhavà' nàma panchakkhandhà,—tènassa dukkha sachchan dassèti. *Tesan hetu Tathagato aha*—iti; 'tèsan hètu' nàma samudaya sachchan—tancha Tathàgatò àha iti dassèti. *Tesancha yo nirodho*—iti; tèsan ubhinnampi appavatte niròdhò, tancha Tathàgatò àha iti atthò; tènassa niròdha sachchan dassèti. Magga Sachchan panettha sarùpatò adassitampi nayatò dassitan hòti; niròdhòti uttè tassa sampàpakò maggò vuttòva hoti; atthavà *tesancha yo nirodho-ti* ettha 'tesan yo niròdò *cha*' niròdhupàyòchàti; èvan dvèpi sachchàni dassitani honti. Idani tamè' vatthan patipàdento àha—*Evan vadi maha Samano.*

'*Ye dhamma hetuppabhave—i.e.* by 'those that are born by some cause'—are meant the *panchakkhanda*; whereby the verity of *dukkha* (sorrow) is proclaimed to him [Upatissa]. By *tesan hetu* 'their cause' is meant the verity of *Samudhaya* 'birth.' The same is also pointed out as declared by *Tathagata*. By *tesancha yo nirodho* 'whatever may be their destruction,' is meant the transientness, the indurability of those two (sorrow and birth), which are also said to be declared by *Tathagata*.

[1] *Prakrit Prakasa*, p. 179.

Pali is comparatively a modern name for the *Magadhi.* It has not originated from 'the region called *Pallistan,* the (supposed) land of the Pali—Our *Palestine.*' 'It does not come from *Palitur* in Tyre—the so-called Pali tower or Fort.' It has no historical connection with 'the Palatine hills of Rome.'[1] It was not called after the Pehlve, the dialect of the Sassanian dynasty. It is not derived from '*Palli,* a village,' as we should now-a-days distinguish *gunavari,* 'village,' 'boorish,' from *Urdu,* "the language of the Court."[2] Nor does it indeed *mean* "root," or "original."[3]

Like *àli,* the word *pali* originally signified a 'line,' 'row,' 'range,'[4] and was gradually extended to mean 'Suttan,' from its being like a line,[5] and to signify edicts,[6] or the strings of rules in Budha's discourses or doctrines, which are taken from the Suttans. From thence it became an appellation for the *text* of the Buddhist Scriptures, as in the following passages :—

Therayàchariyà sabbe Pâlin viya tam aggahun. 'All the three preceptors held this compilation in the same estimation as the *text* (of the Pitakattaya).' Thera vàdèhi pàlehi padehi vyanjanihicha. 'In the *Thera discourses* as in the *text* (of

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[1] See the Friend, vi. p. 236.

[2] Prinsep, Bl. As. J. vol. vii. p. 282.

[3] Turnour's Mahàvansa, p. xxii, where he merely gives the opinion of the Buddhists; and this is no more correct than the Brahmanical opinion that Prakrita means 'the derived.'—Vide post.

[4] See Abhidhanappadipika, p. 71. It is not a little curious that Mahommedans, between whom and the Buddhists there was no intercourse at the period when their sacred books were written, call the larger portions of the Koran "Sowar" ('Sûra,' sing.), signifying precisely, as the word *Pali* does, 'a row, order, or regular series.' The Arabic Sûra, whether immediately derived from the Sanskrit 'Srèni' or not, is the same in use and import as the *Sura* or *Tora* of the Jews, who also call the fifty-three Sections of the Pentateuch, *Sidarim,* a word of the same signification.

[5] Itaran pana;
Atthànan sûchanatò
Suvuttatò savana totha sûdanatò
Suttànatò sutta sabhà gatocha suttan
suttanti akkhatan.

'The other (which is) the *Suttan,* is called '*Suttan*' from its illustrating the properties (of duties); from its exquisite tenor; from its being productive (of much sense) and from its overflowing (tendency) the protection (which it affords); and *from its being like a string.*'—*Buddhaghosa's Atthakatha.*

[6] Hevancha hevan cha me pàliyo vadetha: 'Thus, thus shall ye cause to be read my *paliyo* or edicts.'—*Prinsep's Asoka Inscrip.*

the Pitakattaya); and in an expression as in a letter.' From thence again *Pali* has become the name of the Màgadhi language in which Buddha delivered his doctrines.

The terms *Pali* and *Magadhi* are names which are at the present day indifferently employed in Ceylon, Ava, Siam, and even China, to express the sacred language of the Buddhists; and being confined to those countries, the term *Pali* is not met with in any of the Indian writings.

The Pali has also received the designation of *Tanti*, 'the string of a lute,' its Sanskrit cognate being *tantri*. From that signification it seems to have been originally applied by the Brahmans to *tantra*, 'a religious treatise teaching peculiar and mystical formulæ and rites for the worship of their deities or the attainment of superhuman power,' or, 'that which is comprised of five subjects, the creation and destruction of the world, the worship of the gods, the attainment of all objects, magical rites for the acquirement of six superhuman faculties and four modes of union with the spirit by meditation.' The Mâgadhas, before their secession from the Brahman Church, probably used the Màgadhì term *tanti* in this sense; but when they embraced the Buddhist faith, they used it to signify the *doctrines* of Gôtama as in the following passages:—(1) Sammà Sambuddhò pi te pitakan Buddha vachanan Tantin àròpentò Màgadhì bàsàyá íva aròpesi—'Buddha who rendered his *tepitaka* words into Tanti (or tantra or doctrines) did so by means of the Magadhí language'—*Vibhanga Atuva.* (2) Tivagga sangahan chatuttinsa suttanta patimanditan chatu satthi bhànavàra parimànan tantin sangáyetva ayan dígha nikày ò nàmà 'ti—'Having rehearsed the *Tanti* (the doctrines) which contain 64 *banavara* embracing 34 *Suttans* composed of 3 classes, (this was) named Dighanikàya'—*Bhodivansa.* From its application to the Buddhist doctrines, *Tanti* has become a name for the sacred language itself of the Buddhists—viz. the *Magadhi* or *Pali.* Thus in Buddhagosa's Atthakatha, 'why was the first convocation held? In order that the *Nidanan* of the *Vinaya pitaka*, the merits of which are conveyed in the *Tanti* (Pali) language,

might be illustrated.' Thus, also, in the *Balavatara* in a part of the passage which answers to the § 58 in the Rev. B. Clough's version, where it is left untranslated.

Evam aññá pi viññeyyà
Sanhità tanti yà hità
Sanhità chita vannànan
Sannidha'byava dhànatò.

That is to say, 'In this wise know the rest of the combinations which are susceptible in the *Tanti* (language). *Sanhita* is the combination of letters without a hiatus.'

The popular tradition amongst the native Pandits of Ceylon is that Pali is a sister dialect of the Sanskrit, having been probably derived from one and the same stem.

In considering this subject we notice that the *Brahmans* regard the *Sanskrit* to be of divine origin, and as a direct revelation from their creator. I am indeed aware that the Brahman notion of the so-called Prâkrits (the Mâgadhi included) being derived from the Sanskrit, has the countenance and support of such eminent men as MM. Burnouf and Lassen: but it is submitted with great deference that this position can no more be satisfactorily proved, than that *Prakrit* means "derived," or that *pakriti*, 'the mother,' is the *daughter*. Be this, however, as it may, the pretensions of the Buddhists are as great as those of the Brahmans. The former claim for the Pali an antiquity so remote that they affirm it to be 'a language the root of all dialects, which was spoken by men and Brahmas at the commencement of the creation, by those who never before heard nor uttered human accents; and also by all Buddhas.'

For the above we have not only the authority of the Payôgasiddhi, but the following from the Vibhanga Atuvâ:

'Tissadatta thera took up the gold broomstick in the Bô compound, and requested to know in which of the eighteen *bhâsas* he should speak? He so (spake) from (a knowledge of those languages) not acquired through inspiration, but by actual study; for being a very wise personage he knew those several dialects by learning—wherefore, being one of (such)

acquirements he so inquired. This is said here (to illustrate) that men acquire a *bhasa* (by study).

'Parents place their children when young either on a cot or a chair, and speak different things and perform different actions. Their words are thus distinctly fixed by the children (on their minds) (thinking) that such was said by him, and such by the other; and in process of time they learn the entire language. If a child born of a *Damila* mother and an *Andhaka* father should first hear his mother speak, he would speak the Damila language; but if he should hear his father first, he would speak the Andhaka. If, however, he should not hear them both, he would speak the Magadhì. If, again, a person in an uninhabited forest, in which no speech (is heard), should intuitively attempt to articulate words, he would speak the very *Mágadhi*. It predominates in all regions (such as) Hell; the Animal kingdom; the *Petta* sphere; the human World; and the World of the *devas*. The remaining eighteen languages, *Otta, Kirátha, Andhaka, Yonaka, Damila, etc.*, undergo changes—but not the *Magadhi*, which alone is stationary, as it is said to be the speech of Brahmas and *Ariyas*. Every Buddha, who rendered his *tepitaka* words into doctrines, did so by means of the very *Magadhi*; and why? Because by doing so it (was) easy to acquire their (true) significations. Moreover, the sense of the words of Buddha which are rendered into doctrines by means of the *Magadhi* language, is conceived in hundreds and thousands of ways by those who have attained the *pati sambidha*, so soon as they reach the ear, or the instant the ear comes in contact with them; but discourses rendered into other languages are acquired with much difficulty.'

Now, it is a fact that 'all rude nations are distinguished by a boastful and turgid vanity.' They cannot speak of their race or of their sacred languages without assigning to them an origin the remotest in the world. In 'a spirit of adulation and hyperbole' they exalt them as high as the object of their adoration and worship. This is peculiarly the case with Eastern nations.

Although such extravagantly high pretensions are by

themselves of no value, yet, when some of these traditions are partially supported by the concurrence of other testimony, such as the high antiquity of the Pali—its refinement—its comparative simplicity both verbally and grammatically—and its relationship to the oldest language of the Brahmans, from which their present dialect has been *Sanskritized*:—we may, by a judicious exercise of our judgment in separating fact from fable, and reality from fiction, receive them, I apprehend, to the extent to which they are confirmed. Thus the traditions of both the Brahmans and the Buddhists in respect of their respective languages may be received, so far as they are proved to be two dialects of high antiquity derived from a source of which scarcely any traces are to be found at the present day.

The Pali according to tradition was brought into Ceylon by our first Monarch Wijaya, shortly after the time of Gôtama; and although Professor Lassen regards this as a question involved in obscurity, yet the name of the "Conqueror" and the designation of many a town, edifice, and mountain—nay, the very name "Tambapanna"[1] given to the Island by Wijaya, and which we find was shortly afterwards used by the Indian Monarch *Asoka* in the rock Inscriptions, would lead to the inference that the Pali was the language of the first colonists.

There is another circumstance which may be here noticed. The birth-place of the first settlers of Ceylon was *Lala*. It is identical with *Lata* or *Lada;* and *Dandi*, the author of Kavyadarsa, says that even in comparatively a modern age, that of the dramas, the language of *Lata* as well as of *Banga* (which latter is only a different pronunciation of Vanga, and merely another name for *Gowda*) was usually the *Prakrit*. His authority goes farther, for he places the language of *Lala* in the same class as that of *Gowda, Surasena, etc.*, and his commentator explains the *'et cetera'* to mean the *Magadhi* (Pali) and *Panchala* (the Zend). Hence all circumstances considered, it is very clear that the *Pali* was the language

[1] See my remarks hereon in the Journal C.B. R.A.S.

of the band from Lala who colonized Ceylon, or rather a modification of it which bore the nearest relation to such languages as the Sûraseni and the *Zend*—at all events, a so-called *Prakrita* dialect; and therefore a language of the *Ariyan* and not of the South-Indian class.

But the best evidence of the fact is that furnished by a comparison of the Singhalese with Pali and other Indian dialects.[1]

I have already,[2] though somewhat doubtfully, intimated my belief that the Singhalese belonged to the northern family of languages. My later researches only tend to confirm that belief, and they enable me moreover to affirm that "the most unequivocal testimony" to which Prof. Spiegel and Sir Emerson Tennent refer, tends to but one conclusion, viz. that 'that the Singhalese as it is spoken at the present day, and still more strikingly as it exists as a written language in the literature of this Island, *presents no affinity* to the Dekhanese group of languages.' It is, however impossible to do justice to the subject within the circumscribed limits of a Lecture of one hour's duration, and I must therefore return to the subject.

It would appear from both the Singhalese and Tibetan annals that even in the lifetime of Buddha, there were many dialects prevalent in India. As already observed, eighteen dialects are spoken of in the *Vibhanga Atuva;* and preference is of course given to the *Mágadhi.* The orthodox version of the Buddhist Scriptures, written in the last-mentioned dialect, was doubtless brought by Mahindu [in 307 B.C.] to Ceylon, where it has since remained unchanged, as its phraseology abundantly testifies.

Although a dead language, the Pali has been carefully cultivated in Ceylon. From the period it became the sacred language of the Singhalese, Kings and Princes have encouraged its study; nobles and statesmen have vied with each other to excel in its composition; and laymen and priests have produced some of the most elegant works in it. The

[1] A paper on the subject will be shortly published as an Appendix to this Lecture.

[2] See my Introduction to the Sidathsangara.

names of Batuwantudâve, Hikkaduwe, Lankâgoda, Dodanpahala, Valâne, Bentota, Kahâve, and Sumangala, amongst a host of others, are indeed familiar to Pali scholars, as those of the learned who are *even now* able to produce compositions by no means inferior to those of a Buddhagôsa or a Parakkrama, though, like the modern Sanskrit, certainly more artificial than the more ancient writings. Not only in Ceylon, but in the Burman Empire are there scholars who excel in Pali. Of the writings, especially, of the present King of Siam, I cannot speak but in the highest terms of admiration. There, as in Ceylon, the Pali is most assiduously cultivated amongst the priesthood. But, as is not the case in Ceylon, whole libraries are there replaced annually by new ones, after they have undergone the careful inspection of learned men.

Mr. Hardy states that the high state of cultivation to which the Pali language was carried, and the great attention that has been paid to it in Ceylon, may be inferred from the fact that a list of works in the possession of the Singhalese, which he found during his residence in this Island, included thirty-five works on Pali Grammar, some of them being of considerable extent.[1] And what is still more remarkable, the Singhalese, which had been formed out of the Pali, was eagerly, though ineffectually, sought to be "*set aside*" for the language of Gôtama. It is expressly stated by the author of the Mahavansa (459–477 A.D.) that in that work, the object aimed at, is the *setting aside* of the Singhalese language, in which the former history was composed.[2] Again the design of the Pali version of the Singhalese *Daladâvansa* (1196–1200 A.D.) is said to be the same.[3]

In the proportion, however, in which Pali has been cultivated and enriched in Ceylon, has it declined in Asia[4] and with it the religion which was taught through its medium.

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[1] Eastern Monachism, pp. 191, 2.
[2] Introduction to the Mahawansa.
[3] See Beng. A.S. Journal.
[4] The modern Mâgadhì differs essentially from the Pali. In those respects in which it differs from the Pali it approaches the Prakrit, or the sacred language of the Jainas.

The shock which Buddhism received in those countries in which it most flourished (when such works as the *Kalpa Sutra* and *Lalita Vistàra* began to make their appearance) must have been great indeed to render necessary as we have already seen the special mission of a Buddhagosa to Ceylon. His translations were so much admired that in very early times they found their way from Ceylon to Burmah, the only country, we believe, where they are still preserved in the integrity of our originals. Not only these but our historical works, it seems, had in early times been applied for, and obtained by the Burmese; and we find from a valuable collection of Pâli books brought down in 1812, by the learned Nadoris de Silva, Modliar, from that country, that they had preserved even the commentary on the Mahawansa with comparatively greater accuracy than ourselves. Fortunate indeed it was for Ceylon that the Burman Empire had borrowed Lanka's Pali books, for when the literature of this Island was nearly annihilated by the cruelties of some of our Malabar Monarchs (and we had indeed amongst them many an Edward III. who laid his ruthless hands on the literary and religious archives of the nation), the repositories of Siam and Amarapora failed not to supply our deficiencies, and to furnish us with the means for placing our Pali Literature at least upon a respectable footing.

The number of Pali books on Buddhism far exceeds the Lexical and Grammatical works; and it is remarkable that the Pali Literature of the Singhalese is not deficient in other branches of Oriental Sciences. It presents a proud array of extensive volumes on Prosody, Rhetoric, Medicine, History, etc. Of all these, however, the historical works possess an all-absorbing interest. For I may safely assert that no Country in the East can boast of so correct a history of its own affairs and those of Asia generally, as Ceylon. The Phœnicians, who, as you are aware, had influenced the civilization of a very large portion of the human race by their great inventions and discoveries, by their colonies established in every quarter of the globe, and above all by the extensive commerce which they had carried on—have

left nothing behind, except the alphabet which they had invented. The Persians, a very interesting and a very ancient race of people, and to whom we naturally look for historic information, have little beyond their *Zendavasta*, two chapters of which contain some traditions of their own. The Hindus, a people who had a literature of their own from a period long before the Singhalese became a nation, have no historical records, and their scanty 'fragmentary historical recollections,' which have been embodied with their religious works, such as the *Puranas*, present themselves in the language of a *prophecy*, and upon their basis no trustworthy chronological calculations can be made.[1] In the Vedas again, which are perhaps older than any Ceylonese Buddhist writings, and which are supposed to 'furnish the only sure foundation on which a knowledge of ancient and modern India can be built up'[2]—there is a lamentable lack of historic sense: which has ever been one of the most remarkable characteristics of the Indian mind.[3]

The Chinese, who boast of a descent from times remoter than the days of Adam, have no historical writings which can throw the smallest particle of light upon the affairs of the East.

In the country of Magadha, so greatly renowned as the birth-place of Buddhism, and the still more interesting language (the Pali) in which it was promulgated—a kingdom, moreover, which dates its origin from the time of the Mahá Bhàrat,[4]—we have no records of a historical character, beyond religious inscriptions, sculptured on stones, and grants of lands engraved on copper plates. These 'unconnected fragments,' beyond serving to fix the dates of particular Kings, furnish us at present with neither History nor matter sufficient to help us to a general Chronology. The Bactrian coins, again, afford us the same kind of information with

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[1] See Prof. Lassen's Indische Alterthumskunde, p. 503.
[2] Essay on the results of the Vedic Researches, by W. D. Whitney, American Oriental J. vol. iii. p. 291.
[3] ib. p. 310.
[4] Elphinstone's History of India.

which the monumental inscriptions furnish us, but little or nothing beyond that. 'The only Sanskrit composition yet discovered in all Asia to which the title of History can with any propriety be applied is the *Râjatarangini*,'[1] a comparatively modern work which was compiled A.D. 1148: and this again does not bear any comparison either in point of the matter it contains, or in the interest which attaches to the subjects it treats upon, with the *Singhalese Historical Records.*

The genuine historic zeal exhibited by the Singhalese from the very time they colonized Ceylon far surpasses that of all other Indian nations.[2]

The love[3] which the Singhalese had for such pursuits was participated by their rulers themselves; and, whilst tradition asserts that some of our early Singhalese Annals from which the Mahâwansa was compiled were the works of some of our monarchs—History records the facts, that 'the national annals were from time to time compiled by royal command;' and that the labours of 'the historians were rewarded by the State with grants of lands.' The interest which our sovereigns took in this part of the national literature was so great indeed, that many a traveller and geographer of the middle ages was peculiarly struck, as 'a trait of the native rulers of Ceylon,' with the fact of the employment by them of persons to compile the national annals. And though comparatively few are the records which the ravages of time and the devastating hand of sectarian opposition have left behind, they, nevertheless, excel in matter and interest all the annals of Asia. 'As *the first* actual writing and

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[1] Prof. H. H. Wilson, Introduction to Ràjatar.

[2] Lassen's Indisch. Alt. vol. ii. pp. 13, 15.

[3] This is inherent in the Singhalese, and it is not a little curious that just as we are writing on the subject, the *Colombo Observer* of 30th August, 1860, puts forth the same views in alluding to a recent examination of the boys of the *Cotta Christian Institution*, as follows, "Then came a very interesting examination of several boys in Roman History. The readiness with which the various questions were answered, and the apparent pleasure the boys took in this study, show that the spirit of their ancestors who composed the Mahâwansa is strong in Singhalese boys of this generation."

the *first well-authenticated* inscriptions in India, are of *Buddhist* origin,'[1] so likewise the first actual chronicle as well as the most authentic history, in the whole of the Eastern hemisphere, may be traced to a CEYLON-BUDDHISTIC source.

Sir James Emerson Tennent[2] says, and says truly, that "the Mahawansa stands at the head of the historical literature of the East, unrivalled by anything extant in Hindostan, the wildness of whose chronology it controls."

When for instance the capacious mind of Sir William Jones seized with avidity the identity of *Chandragupta* and *Sandracottus*, and thence discovered the only key for unlocking the history and chronology of Asia, the annals of Ceylon were not without their use in removing the doubts which were conjured up in the imagination of antiquaries. When the indefatigable labours of a Prinsep enabled him to decipher the rock Inscriptions of *Piyadâsi* or *Devanampiya*, the discovery could not with certainty have been applied either to fix the proper date of the Buddhistic era, or to reduce the chronology of Asia to its proper limits without the aid of the Singhalese records—the Dipâvansa[3] in particular, which identified *Devanampiya* with *Asòka*. When the obscure dialect of the pillar Inscriptions presented philological difficulties, the Ceylon Pali Mahawansa alone served as an "infallible dictionary"[4] for their elucidation. When again the Cashmirean history put forth an extravagant Chronology, Ceylon chronicles alone enabled Mr. Turnour to effect an important and valuable correction to the extent of 794 years, and thereby to adjust the chronology of the East. When lastly the deep penetrating mind of a Burnouf, from an examination into the Nepal version of the Buddhist

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[1] Prof. Max Müller's Sanskrit Literature, p. 520.

[2] History of Ceylon, p. 516.

[3] "Mr. Turnour's Pali authorities will be of essential use in expounding our new discovery, and my only excuse for not having taken the epitome already published as my guide before is, that the identity of *Piadassa* was not then established."—Mr. James Prinsep in the Bengal A. S. J. vol. vi. p. 792, &c.

[4] "On turning to the *infallible Tika* upon our inscriptions afforded by Mr. Turnour's admirable Mahawansa, we find a circumstance recorded which may help us materially to understand the obscure passage."—Prinsep, Bengal A. S. J. vol. vii. p. 262.

Scriptures, conceived the idea of "a fourth digest" of the Buddhists, apart from the compilations of the three convocations, the Singhalese Annals, and above all the *Dîpâwansa* alone, furnished the proof required for establishing the conjecture.

Such were, and are, the claims of the Pali literature of this Island upon the attention of the learned in Europe. Yet it is a melancholy fact that for a very long period of time the greatest indifference was manifested in its study by the savans of Europe.

When more than forty years ago Rask wrote, the greatest misconception prevailed amongst Europeans on all Oriental subjects. Eastern languages were not extensively cultivated. A gloom enveloped the science of Comparative Philology. Inaccessible was the path to Eastern history. Even the *Sanskrit*, the language in the highest state of cultivation now-a-days, was then but imperfectly known to the European world. Some considered it a derivative of the *Zend*, and others treated it as a creature of the Pali. Little, if anything, was definitely investigated of the latter. The relation which Sanskrit bore to the Prakrit was imperfectly investigated, and was, at the time Wilson translated *Vickrama* and *Urvasi*, far from being understood; and when the researches of Lassen and Burnouf, 'with that love of novelty and that honorable ambition which greatly distinguished them,' brought to light the Nepal books of Buddhism, even the names of their Pali versions were unknown to Europeans. The distinction between the *Arya* and the *Dekhanese* groups of languages was not well ascertained. The Tamil was supposed to have been an offshoot of the Sanskrit. The *Andhra* merely existed as a book name. Between it and the *Dravida* no relationship was established, much less was the identity of *Dravida* and *Damila* recognized. The Singhalese was not known in Europe.

When, more than thirty years ago, Hodgson announced the discovery of the Nepal Scriptures in a dialect intermediate between the Pali and Sanskrit, and the indefatigable Burnouf commenced their examination, eight years

afterwards—an impression was formed hostile to the real merits of the *Pali* or the Magadhi, and this, far from being removed, was indeed confirmed by the unjust opinion of Colebrooke, one of those patriotic followers of Sir William Jones, who devoted his chief attention to the *Sanskrit* literature—when he pronounced the Pali to be "a dialect used by the vulgar," and identified it with "the *Apabhransa*, a jargon destitute of regular grammar."

This hasty expression of opinion by one so highly esteemed for his deep researches in the Indian literature has not however been without its ill effects. It checked, though for a time, the current of inquiry. It discouraged those who might have otherwise successfully pursued their researches in the Pali. It even damped the energies of the nations of continental Europe, who "are the most diligent cultivators of Oriental languages." Notwithstanding the investigations of Weber, Benfey, Fausböll, Kuhn, and others of whose labours, so far as we know them in this remote part of the globe, we cannot speak but with the highest terms of commendation—the study of the Pali is yet, I apprehend, far from being extensively pursued by Europeans; and the full extent of the progress which that language has made in Ceylon, and its refinement and purity are imperfectly appreciated even by those who have made Philology their favourite study. Whilst numerous grammatical works in the Sanskrit and other Indian dialects have been published from time to time both in India and Europe, not a single treatise on Pali grammar has yet appeared, if we except the translation of *Balavatara* made in Ceylon; and although several Koshas or lexicons have been likewise published of the former, it is indeed a fact that no *Dictionary* of the latter language has yet made its appearance in any part of the world *save Ceylon*, where too, from many local disadvantages, nothing has been effected beyond the *Abhidhanappadipika* and the *Dhâtu Manjûsa* published by the Revd. B. Clough; and a Pali Dictionary (still in MS.) compiled by the Revd. D. J. Gogerly, the Principal of the Wesleyan Mission in Ceylon. When again we perceive that a material advance

has been made by Europeans in the study of the Sanskrit; and the historical, doctrinal and metaphysical works perpetuated in that tongue, have been nearly all translated into European languages, it is indeed not a little to be regretted that in those branches of learning no Pali works have been published (if we except the *Dhammapadam* and *Kammawakya*) beyond the Mahawansa, and various selections from Pali writers, contributed by the Honble. George Turnour, Mr. L. De Zoysa Modliar, and the Revd. D. J. Gogerly.

Amongst all the monuments of Pali literature, the sacred books of Buddha present such a profitable subject of study to the Christian Missionary, on account of the matters therein treated of—which, when thoroughly examined, cannot fail to produce the most valuable materials for the displacement of Buddhism—that one would have naturally thought it had engaged his most earnest attention both in Ceylon and in the Burman Empire. It is however not so. If we except the valuable contribution of the Revd. C. Bennet, of the American Baptist Union, in Burma, entitled the *Malalangara Wattoo*, and the life of Gótama by a Roman Catholic Bishop (I believe Bigandet is his name), there is nothing to recount beyond the labours of the Revd. B. Clough, the Revd. D. J. Gogerly of Ceylon, and the Revd. P. D. Silva of the Wesleyan Mission, to whose valuable researches the public are highly indebted for various Buddhistical tracts in the pages of periodical literature.

It will be thus seen that the merit of *Pali* research belongs to those connected with Ceylon, where the Pali books have been preserved with the reverence accorded to the Buddhist religion. So accurately correct are our books in comparison with the same works on the continent of India, that Mr. Hodgson, who had been long of a different opinion, was latterly compelled to admit—'that the honours of Ceylonese literature and of the Pali language were no longer disputable.'