

The Theravāda Lineage

Nikāya Saṅgrahaya or Śāsanāvātāra



The Theravāda Lineage

The Nikāya Saṅgrahaya

or

Sāsanāvatāra

by

Saṅgharāja Dharmakīrti

being

A History of Buddhism in India and Ceylon

translated into English by

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Revised and Edited

(With Introduction, Analytical Summary, and Notes)

by

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Further Revised

by

Ānandajoti Bhikkhu

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Preface

[iii] The Sinhalese text of the “*Nikāya Saṅgrahaya*” was first edited and published by Mr. D. M. de Z. Wickremasinghe in 1890. A second and revised edition, in which I had the honour of taking part, was published by the Government of Ceylon in 1907. On that edition the present translation is based. As a few mistakes still occur in the revised edition, they have either been corrected in this translation or attention has been drawn to them. But this has been done as merely an expression of my own individual opinion, for which my co-workers in the revision are not responsible.

W. F. G.

Colombo, May 1908

Preface to the New Edition

The Nikāya Saṅgrahaya, which was written in the Sinhala language in the 14th century A.D.,¹ treats of the various sects that arose in Buddhism after the passing of its founder as they developed in India and later in Śrī Laṅkā, and how they were dealt with and the religion purified by the kings and great elders of old. Our author being a convinced Theravādin, and a strict adherent of that orthodoxy, who ascended to the leadership of the Saṅgha, carried out such a purification himself, and the book may have been written as a defence of that action, showing how it has historical precedents.

In delineating its main topic, it also covers the succession of kings in Śrī Laṅkā, and how their behaviour was, or was not, in keeping with the protection of the religion, which here indicates the Mahā Vihāra orthodoxy, which until a couple of centuries before had been only one of three main lineages in the country.² This also meant, of course, resisting and keeping out any foreign invaders who were of a different persuasion, and so our author glorifies the kings who were nationalist and orthodox, and blames those who were not.

The title of the original publication was left in Sinhala as Nikāya Saṅgrahaya,³ and did not include a translation. The title means A

¹ [The 20th century after the Buddha].

² [The other two being the Abhayagiri and, later, the Jetavana traditions].

³ [For reasons I cannot explain the translation consistently printed the last word as Saṅgrahawa, though the text and the expected form is Saṅgrahaya. I have corrected it everywhere].

Manual of the (Buddhist) Sects,⁴ but this doesn't convey accurately what the book is about. It is not a manual of the orthodox and heterodox beliefs or ideas, which that title may suggest, but a history of how the orthodox Theravāda lineage was maintained, passed down and eventually achieved supremacy in Śrī Laṅkā. I have chosen the present title, The Theravāda Lineage, based on the alternative title, Śāsanāvātāra, and the contents of the book, as I feel it clarifies what is the main thrust of the work.

This work then is a modified version of the original translation by C. M. Fernando, which is now in the public domain. In Śrī Laṅkā the language of the original text is called Miśra Sinhala (Mixed Sinhala) as it incorporates elements of Sinhala, Pāḷi and Sanskrit, and it is normal in the language to use more than one form for the same person or idea. This mixed nature makes it particularly difficult to render consistently in translation in English.

The original translation used many Sinhala names and terms, and a very outdated, and, in many ways, abnormal form of transliteration. To give an idea of some of the problems in the translation, here is a list of the books of the Tipiṭaka from near the beginning of the book:

Pariji, Paciti, Mahawaga, Suḷuwaga, Pariwāra, Daṃsaṅguṇu,
 Vibhaṅgapawuruṇu, Kathāwastu, Pudgalaprajñapti,
 Dhātukathā, Indriya-yamaka, Mūla-yamaka, Dwikapaṭṭhāna,
 Tikapaṭṭhāna, Dwika-Tikapaṭṭhāna, Dīgha Nikāya, Madhyama
 Nikāya, Saṃyut Nikāya, Aṅguttara Nikāya, and Khuddaka
 Nikāya consisting of Khuddakapāṭha, Dhammapada, Udāna,

⁴ [I am grateful to Prof. Kapila Abhayavamsa for this translation].

Itivuttaka, Sūtranipāta, Vimānavastu, Pretavastu, Theragāthā, Therīgāthā, Jātaka, Nirdeśa, Pratisambhidā, Apadāna, Buddhavaṃsa, Cariyāpiṭaka, &c.

I think some of the Sinhala forms of the names would not be recognised in the Buddhist world at large, and others, which were given in their Sanskrit forms are also not in use when referring to the Pāli books. Besides this, the divisions are not entirely in keeping with the way they are divided now. So in the revised translation I have given them in their Pāli forms and indicate their traditional division, with an additional note on the normal order of the three Piṭakas:

[Vinaya Piṭaka:] Pārājika, Pācittiya, Mahāvagga, Cullavagga, Parivāra.

[Abhidhamma Piṭaka, which is normally placed after the Sutta Piṭaka:] Dhammasaṅgīṇī, Vibhaṅgappakaraṇa, Kathāvatthu, Puggalapaññatti, Dhātukathā, Indriya-yamaka, Mūla-yamaka [both collected under the title Yamaka], Duka-Paṭṭhāna, Tika-Paṭṭhāna, Duka-Tika-Paṭṭhāna [collected under the title Paṭṭhāna].

[Sutta Piṭaka:] Dīgha Nikāya, Majjhima Nikāya, Saṃyutta Nikāya, Aṅguttara Nikāya, and Khuddaka Nikāya consisting of Khuddakapāṭha, Dhammapada, Udāna, Itivuttaka, Suttanipāta, Vimānavatthu, Petavatthu, Theragāthā, Therīgāthā, Jātaka, Niddesa, Paṭisambhidāmagga, Apadāna, Buddhavaṃsa, Cariyāpiṭaka, &c.

A similar problem arises with some of the names and terms, which were given in Sinhala, such as Visā [Pāli: Vesākha], Viśālā [P:

Vesālī], Pæḷalup [P: Pāḷaliputta], asaṅkhyā [P: asaṅkheyya], etc., etc. In this revision I have given them in their more recognisable Pāḷi forms. I have also occasionally corrected spelling mistakes made in the original text, but this has been done quietly and without notice.

I have not normally changed the Sanskrit forms of the names unless they refer specifically to Pāḷi works or words that are more familiar in Pāḷi. So I maintain, for instance, Dharmarakṣita as the name of the author, which in Pāḷi would be Dhammarakkhita, believing that the former would have been the form used by the author himself.

On the other hand well known names, which were given in their Sanskrit forms, such as Śāriputra, Maudgalyāna, Mahā Kāśyapa, etc. while being understandable, have been changed to their contextually more appropriate Pāḷi forms: Sāriputta, Moggallāna, Maha Kassapa.

Sometimes there was an unfortunate choice of word in the English translation, like the use of Church [with the capital C]. As that now reads rather awkwardly, in this revision I have replaced it with the words *tradition* and *Sanḡha* as context required. Other changes of this sort have been indicated in the notes as they occur.

The earlier part of the text was the easiest to revise, but when we come to the medieval history of Śrī Laṅkā it has sometimes been hard to know where to draw the line in the revision: I first tried to back translate many of the lists of names of the kings and elders into Pāḷi, using Mahāvamsa and Cullavamsa as reference points, but this could hardly be done consistently, as the texts differ somewhat in their lineages, and in the names used. So in the end I have mainly kept them in the form they were originally given, and occasionally

inserted the better known Pāḷi names, and added a note acknowledging the original text.

As to the transliteration, the schema used seems to have been very rare. Some of these may be listed here:

What we now normally write as ś, was written as ṣ.

ṣ on the other hand was written as sh.

ṁ was written as circle under n.

e and o were written with a macron over them (this is not wrong, as they are indeed long vowels, but just unnecessary as they are all long anyway).

In certain words we find double dot under h, where we would normally write simple h these days as in Brahma, for instance.

-ṁk- and -ṁg- in the original are normally replaced with -ṅk- and -ṅg-, except when the word is in Sanskrit, and the convention is still to use the former.

Dates in the Analytic Summary were indented into the paragraph. Here they have been placed at the beginning, usually, and sometimes at the end of the paragraph. I have also added explanatory notes, and sometimes clarifications inline in the text. I have included the Latin form of botanical names to enable easy identification. I have inserted the original page numbers to the 1908 edition. To identify these sorts of changes and additions all changes made by me have been placed inside square brackets [].

The first transcription of this text was made by Ven. Khemaratana, who has helped me with numerous projects of this sort. For reasons

that should now be clear his task was very much complicated by the transliteration scheme adopted by the original publishers, and the difficulty of the language involved. I am particularly grateful to him for his perseverance and patience.

The final editing and the revised translation is something of a hybrid, and it is not entirely satisfactory. My aim was to make the work more accessible to a modern readership, but if there are any deficiencies in the present work I am entirely responsible. Any and all corrections and suggestions for improvement are welcome.

Ānandajoti Bhikkhu
August, 2020

Introduction, mainly about Dates

[*Note.* – A.B. stands for Anno Buddhi;⁵ A.C., for Anno Christi.]

[v] The “*Nikāya Saṅgrahaya*” is a history of Buddhism in India and Ceylon, from its rise under Sākya Muni to the twentieth century of its existence. This history was written by Dharmakīrti II,⁶ Chief Hierarch of Ceylon, in the reign of Vīrabāhu II, of whom we shall have occasion to speak hereafter. Dharmakīrti was the greatest scholar of his day in Ceylon, and was one of those rare men of learning and genius whose greatness is for all time and for all climes. His work therefore, necessarily a standard work, is of the utmost importance to us, not only from its interest as a history of religion which it professes to be, but also as an authentic record of events relating to the past. Perhaps it is in this last respect that its main use to us lies at the present day. For it gives the names of all the kings of Ceylon from Vijaya to Vīrabāhu II, calls attention to the principal events in the reigns of those who had most concerned themselves with the welfare of the tradition,⁷ and in the case of memorable occurrences, gives their dates wherever these are known. The value of the work, therefore, for purposes of comparison with other chronicles in connection with investigations into the history and antiquities of Ceylon, is self evident. But its use is not limited to

⁵ As Sans. Buddhah, Pāli Buddhho, will be in Latin Buddhas, I adopt the form above given for the genitive singular, in preference to Buddhæ, which some use, but which, it seems to me, cannot be defended on linguistic analogy.

⁶ [The author’s name is given in the text itself as Dharmarakṣita, which later became Jayabāhu. Dharmakīrti was his title when he became head of the Saṅgha].

⁷ [Text: Church (with a capital C), see my Preface].

investigations connected with this Island alone. The earlier part of the work is full of facts and dates having reference to India, and as throwing light on the history of that country during the Buddhistic period, its aid seems invaluable.

The social evolution of India, which had reached its climax at the time Prince Siddhārtha was born, presents a curious phenomenon to the rest of the world. The country had been civilized for ages; it had long attained a high state of material and intellectual development. Religion was a living force everywhere, and exerted the greatest influence on life; but unlike in other parts of the world, this influence was directed not only to regulate the moral conduct of individuals, but also to regulate the social organization of the community. In this organization [the] caste system was the leading feature, which, [vi] thus sanctioned by religion, was the more baneful in its effects on those who were less favoured. It was a distinct national evil, and had continued to grow until the obvious iniquity of its dispensation came to be felt not only by those who had to suffer for the accident of birth, but even by those who were supposed to benefit by it. The strain on all classes, of society brought on by the rigidity which this artificial and unnatural system had acquired, was getting to be well-nigh intolerable, and it was felt on all hands that some sort of change was necessary. Either the system had to be swept away or its influences had to be so modified as to be least harmful. But the question was, “Who was to lead?” Obviously an ordinary man as leader in such a case would be out of the question. For the matter concerned all classes of the community, and the higher grades of the community cannot be reached by the ordinary man. A prince alone could exert the necessary moral influence and command the respect due, and a prince was required

to take the lead. That prince was found in the scion of the Sākya race, Prince Siddhārtha, who became Gotama Buddha.

The religion of the new teacher was based upon logical principles of right and wrong, and rested on a broad ground of equal justice to all. “As ye sow so shall ye reap” was the keynote of the new religion, and righteousness proceeding from universal benevolence was its leading principle. In its system love was the universal bond which united all humanity, and indeed all sentient beings, together, and no distinction was recognized between man and man beyond that which is implied by the difference of righteousness in degree. Such a doctrine coming at such a time and from such a person, who, to become its propounder, had renounced the splendours of a throne, appealed at once to all orders alike – to the lower by the genuine and active sympathy it extended to them, to the higher by the manifest justice of its principles. Within a short time the religion of the Enlightened One was completely established in the kingdom of Magadha, then the premier kingdom in India, with the king himself as the best follower of the new faith. Wholesale conversions began to take place in all directions, wherever the Buddha visited, and the moral and social regeneration of a vast portion of humanity went on, till in the forty-fifth year of his ministrations the Buddha shook off the trammels of a material existence and attained the blissful state of Nirvāṇa.

Nor did his death stop the progress of the new religion. It continued to spread and extend, bringing new regions under its sway till, two centuries later, we find it propagated [vii] throughout the length and breadth of India under the loving care and patronage of the great

Emperor Aśoka, whose edicts remain up to the present day to attest to his zeal.

But it seems that the country which was to identify itself most closely with the new faith was to be our own Island of Ceylon. Aśoka's son and daughter, who, fired by the zeal of their parent had taken to the yellow robe, selected this Island for the field of their labours, and an easy mission they found in it. Aśoka himself sent over with the ascetic princess a branch of the sacred *Bodhi*-tree under which Buddha had attained omniscience, and this was planted at the royal city of Anurādhapura to endure for millenniums. A few centuries later the text of the Buddhist scriptures, which had continued to be handed down orally, was reduced to writing at Aḷuvihāre in Mātale. Buddhism, from its introduction up to date, has flourished in Ceylon, and in Ceylon its sacred language, Pāli has been cultivated and preserved in its purity.

Shortly after the death of Buddha the first work of his disciples was to hold a Council, and settle the canon. A hundred years later another Council was held under the patronage of King Kālāśoka, who then ruled Magadha, and something over a hundred years still later a Third Council was held under Aśoka the Emperor.

Some critics, including among others such an eminent writer as Major-General Alexander Cunningham, are disposed to regard the Second Council and its patron Kālāśoka as a mere myth. If Kālāśoka was the same as Kaniṣka, their argument becomes intelligible. According to the Chinese pilgrim Hwan Thsang [Xuan Zang], Kaniṣka ascended the throne four hundred years after the Nirvāṇa of Buddha, and according to Tibetan books it was even later.

Therefore, Kaniṣka could not have patronized a Council held three centuries earlier. This proceeds on the assumption that Kaniṣka of the fifth century A.B., and Kālāśoka of the second century A.B. are one and the same person. I have seen nothing to warrant such a conclusion. On the mere ground of probability alone, the idea of a fabrication seems inadmissible. For what can be gained by palming off a Council at such an early date on the authority of which nothing is claimed to rest? Then, again, there is the circumstantiality of detail with which the story is told: how corrupt practices had found their way into the Order, how the orthodox members of the tradition were determined to stamp them out, where the trouble was rife, who the chief actors were, how the royal favour was fought for, and how in the end the right prevailed. Such details in sober writings seldom proceed from imagination.

[viii] But probability is not all. According to the story as given in the *Nikāya Saṅgrahaya*, the abuses which led to this Second Council and the issue of the dispute were the very causes of the cleavage between the Northern and Southern traditions of Buddhism; and we know from the acrimony with which each has ever since regarded the other, as well as from the story of the *Nikāya Saṅgrahaya* and other sources, that from the moment of their separation these traditions were at deadly feud, never thinking together, never making common cause. Yet these two traditions, so completely estranged for twenty centuries past, are agreed on this one point: that early in the second century of the Buddhist era a king by the name of Aśoka did live and reign. The southern tradition calls him Kāla Aśoka (Aśoka the Black), and the northern tradition simply calls him Aśoka.⁸ Here

⁸ See Cunningham, *Inscriptions of Aśoka*, p. viii.

then the two traditions are on common ground with reference to the main fact, and the only possible explanation of their agreement is that Kāla Aśoka was known to the tradition before it separated. It may be objected that the king referred to by the Northern Buddhists is the emperor who lived in the next century. But this objection cannot hold, since in the *Avadāna Śataka*, the northern tradition also speaks of Aśoka of the third century A.B., whom we know to be the emperor, making definite mention of the fact that he ascended the throne two hundred years after the Nirvāṇa of Buddha.⁹ It is therefore clear that Kālāśoka of the kingdom of Magadha was not a mythical personage but a real king. This point being settled, the question with regard to the historicity of the Second Council which turns on it must be considered as settled also. We are now able to construct a table of the kings who reigned in Magadha from the time of Buddha to the end of the empire of Aśoka:

⁹ Cunningham, *Inscriptions of Aśoka*, p, vi.

TABLE¹⁰

Date of Accession	Name of King	Length of Reign	Remarks
<i>Before Nirvāṇa</i>		Years	
60	Bimbisāra	52	Put to death by his son Ajātasattu.
8	Ajātasattu	32	Put to death by his son Udāyibhadda
<i>A.B.</i>			
24	Udāyibhadda	16	Put to death by his son Anuruddha
40 [ix]	Anuruddha Muṇḍa	8	Father and son reigned in succession. The first put to death by the second; the second put to death by his son Nāgadāsa
48	Nāgadāsa	24	Deposed by the populace, which had risen against a parricidal race

¹⁰ Compiled mainly from the accounts of the *Mahāvamsa* and the *Nikāya Saṅgrahawa*.

	<i>The Susunāga Dynasty</i>		
72	Susunāga	18	Minister to the last, raised to the throne by the people.
90	Kālāśoka ¹¹	28	Son
118	Bhadrasena Koraṇḍa Maṅgura Sarvañjaha Jālika Usabhaka Sañjaya Koravya Nandiwardhana Pañcamaka	Reigned in succession 22 years	Sons

¹¹ The tenth completed year of the reign of Kālāśoka was, according to the *Mahāvamsa*, the one hundredth year from the Parinibbāna of the Buddha.

	<i>The Nanda Dynasty</i>		
140	Uggasena Paṇḍuka Paṇḍugata Bhūtapāla Govisa Dasasiddhaka Kevaṭṭaka Dhanapāla	22	Nine brothers. Reigned in the order of their seniority. The last was contemporaneous with Alexander the Great, and is known to Western historians as Dhana Nanda. He was treacherously put to death by his minister Cānakya, who raised Candragupta to the throne.
	<i>The Maurya Dynasty</i>		

162 [x]	Candragupta	24 ¹²	Visited the camp of Alexander the Great on his invasion of India, and there learnt the art of war and the diplomacy which, within a few years, helped him to win his throne. As king he was a contemporary of Seleucus Nicator, with whom he concluded a treaty in 305 B.C.
186	Biṇḍusāra	28	
214	Aśoka the Emperor	41	Crowned after he had reigned 4 years in the year 218 A.B.; reigned from that date 37 years, dying in 255 A.B.

We have now to consider the mutual correspondence between the Buddhist and the Christian eras. According to the Buddhist calendar of Ceylon [Śrī Lanka], Burma [Myanmar], and Siam [Thailand], which form the southern tradition, the current year of the

¹² This is according to Buddhaghosa's preface to the Commentary on the Vinaya Piṭaka. According to the Mahāvamsa it is 34 years; but this is evidently a misreading, as it does not tally with the Mahāvamsa's own account later on, with regard to the year of coronation of Aśoka the Emperor.

Parinirvāṇa (*i.e.* in 1908 A.C.) is 2451. This would give us 543 B.C., as the easement of the Buddhist era. But we have seen that Aśoka ascended the throne in 214 A.B., and that he reigned 41 years. His reign is thus embraced between the years 214 and 255 A.B.

According to the calendar of Southern Buddhists this period will correspond to 329–288 B.C. But we find that Aśoka in one of his edicts makes mention of five Greek princes who were his contemporaries,¹³ and three of whom began to reign later than 288 B.C. The following are the princes, with the dates of their accession:

[xi]

	Reign, B.C.
Antioka (Antiochus II, of Syria)	291–246
Turamaye (Ptolemy II, Philadelphus of Egypt)	284–246
Antikina (Antigonus Gonatas of Macedonia)	277–243
Maka (Magas of Cyrene)	307–257
Alikasandare (Alexander II of Epirus)	272–254

Now, since *Alikasandare* came to the throne of Epirus in 272 B.C., and he and Aśoka were contemporaries, it is plain that Aśoka could not have been dead by 288 B.C. We have seen from the table [above],

¹³ Shāhbāzgarhi, Khālsi, and Girnār inscriptions.

that Aśoka came to the throne 52 years after the accession of his grandfather Candragupta. Now the date of Candragupta's accession can be fixed by the Christian era within very narrow limits. He made his famous visit to the camp of Alexander the Great in 327 B.C., the year of Alexander's invasion of India, and at that time he was a private man. Alexander died in 323 B.C., and his Indian possessions came to be administered by satraps. All went on well till a Greek officer murdered an Indian prince, which set Indian feeling aflame. Candragupta, who was a bold and ambitious man, now saw his chance. He organized a national movement against the Greeks, and conducted it with such good effect that within a short time he found himself at the head of a State which had thrown off the Greek yoke. This was facilitated, as we may easily suppose, by the struggle for power in Asia proceeding at the time between Alexander's generals Antigonus and Eumenes, which made the Macedonians hold on the Indian provinces extremely weak (B.C. 317). From Candragupta's rise into power, we must allow at least one year to have passed before he was called, as a popular leader, to fill the Magadhese throne. We thus come to the year 316 as very nearly the earliest date assignable to that event. According to our table, this date was the year 162 of the Buddhist era. We therefore find that on historical evidence we shall be correct within a few months of the earliest date possible, if we place the Parinirvāṇa of Buddha in the year $162 + 316 = 478$ B.C.,¹⁴ thus making: a difference of 65 years from the date assigned by the Southern Buddhists. When this error is rectified, all the historical facts known to us at once begin to fall into their [xii]

¹⁴ Compare the same result as arrived at by General Cunningham, in the preface to his *Inscriptions of Aśoka*, where he deals with the subject much more fully.

proper places. Thus, not only does Seleucus Nicator become a contemporary of Candragupta, but all the Greek princes whose names have been already mentioned become the contemporaries of Aśoka; for Aśoka's reign, as we have seen, was from 214 to 255 A.B., and this according to our rectification will be 264 to 223 B.C.

This now enables us to adjust the chronology of Ceylon, which at present seems to be artificial, at a very important period of the national history. We are informed in the *Mahāvamsa* that Devānampiya Tissa and his brothers reigned between them 102 years – a length of time which becomes difficult of belief when we consider that it was all covered by one generation. We may take it as a fact, however, as stated in the *Mahāvamsa*, that Devānampiya Tissa ascended the throne in the eighteenth year of the reign of Aśoka in India, by which seems to be meant the eighteenth year from the emperor's coronation. According to our revision therefore the accession of Devānampiya Tissa to the throne of Ceylon will be in the year 242 B.C. After the last of his brothers had reigned, we find Eḷāra, a high-born Tamil from India, conquering the kingdom and reigning righteously for 44 years, at the end of which time he was still a good and vigorous warrior. Here, too, the artificiality shows itself. It seems therefore that the historian who, in giving dates, had to account for a difference of 65 years according to the accepted era of his tradition, did his best by distributing the difference¹⁵ among the reigns of Devānampiya Tissa and his successors up to Eḷāra, and that the correction must therefore be applied to this period. The period to the end of Eḷāra's reign is 146 years. When corrected therefore it will be $146 - 65 = 81$ years; so

¹⁵ See the distribution of ten years apiece among the brothers.

that this period ends 81 years after the accession of Devānampiya Tissa, *i.e.*, in the year 161 B.C., the year when Duṭṭhagāmaṇi [Duṭṭhagāmaṇi] became sovereign, and when a new era began in the history of the Sinhalese nation. It is from this point downward that we are on firm ground with regard to our chronology by the old equation of the Buddhist era. Up to this point and from the accession of Devānampiya Tissa, the re-adjustment of the chronology can be only conjectural; and up to the accession of Devānampiya Tissa every event has to be shifted forward by 65 years.

But the question may be asked, how it is that the error stops short at Duṭṭhagāmaṇi, and does not run throughout the whole of Sinhalese history, and how it is that a general displacement of dates does not take place, affecting the accuracy [xiii] of Buddhist chronology within our own times? This, however, is only an apparent objection which on analysis vanishes. The fictitious commencement of the era, having been established long ago, there must be some point in its history where people began to refer actual dates to that commencement, and to measure distances of time from it; and reducing these dates to another standard, we have to take into account not the original standard as it should have been used, but that standard as it has been actually used. This use we find to have been established from the commencement of the new era under Duṭṭhagāmaṇi, who, for his national work, may be called the Alfred of Ceylon; and all calculations from that point downward are, therefore, correct by the fictitious equation now obtaining, *viz.*, with a constant of 543 years as the excess over the Christian era. The constant of 478 years only applies where the true date of the Nirvāṇa is required to be fixed, or where our chronology has to be re-adjusted for what may be called our legendary period, *i.e.*, up to the

time of Duṭṭagamuṇu. That chronology, so re-adjusted, will be as follows:

Name of King	Commencement of Reign	
	A.B.	B.C.
Vijaya	0	478
Upatissa (Regent)	38	440
Paṇḍuvasdev	39	439
Abhaya	69	409
Interregnum	89	389
Paṇḍukābhaya	106	372
Muṭasīva	176	302
Devānampiya Tissa	236	242
Uttiya	Eighty-one years for the seven reigns.	

Mahasiva		
Sūra Tissa		
Sena and Guttika		
Asela		
Eḷāra		

Thus, at the end of this period the reign of Duṭugæmuṇu will commence in the year 317 of the Buddhist era as it ought to be, or 382 of that era as it is, being in either case the year 161 before Christian era.

Before quitting the subject of chronology it may be useful to call attention to a point which goes far to account for slight discrepancies in dates found by reckoning from one reign to another. To take a concrete example: the great King Parākramabāhu II of Daṁbadeniya, according to the *Mahāvamsa* ascended the throne in the year 1783 A.B. But the [xiv] *Attanagaḷuvaṁsa*, a work contemporaneous with the event recorded, gives the year 1779 A.B. As the contemporary authority must prevail, the second year must, of course, be accepted as the correct one. Is the *Mahāvamsa* then wrong? The answer is that it is not wrong; only we are wrong in the computation. For it often happens that in computing by the lengths of reigns, or by intervals between other events, the year which forms

the link is counted twice over, once as the end of the first series, and once again as the commencement of the second series. This may be illustrated by a typical case. In the 20th chapter of the *Mahāvamsa* we are informed as follows:

“In the eighteenth year of the reign of Dharmāśoka, the *Bodhi*-tree was planted in the Mahāmeghavana pleasure garden. In the twelfth year of that period, the beloved wife of that monarch, Asandhimittā, who had identified herself with the faith of Buddha, died. In the fourth year from her demise the Rājā Dharmāśoka, under the influence of carnal passions, raised the princess Tissārakkhā to the dignity of queen-consort. In the third year from that date, this young vain creature, who, thought only of the charms of her own person, saying ‘This king neglecting me, lavishes his devotion exclusively on the *Bodhi*-tree,’ attempted to destroy the great ‘Bodhi’ with a thorn of the Maṇḍu-tree. In the fourth year from that occurrence, this highly-gifted monarch Dharmāśoka fulfilled the lot of mortality. These years collectively amount to *thirty-seven*.” Now, a cursory reader will add up all the figures given above and find that the total amounts to 41, and not 37 as stated by the author, and he will think that the author as made a mistake. But if we take care to observe that the first event recorded took place in the eighteenth year of Aśoka’s reign and the second event in twelfth year commencing from that point, we shall find that this twelfth year is the twenty-ninth year of the aggregate series and not the thirtieth, the fourth year from that point the thirty-second of the series, and so on to the end till the last

year is reached which is found to be the thirty-seventh of the total series.¹⁶

Reference has been made to two slightly conflicting dates with regard to the accession of Parākramabāhu II, and it has been shown how the discrepancy may be accounted for. It may be worth mentioning that with regard to this very event Turnour has fallen into a curious error which cannot be so [xv] explained. He places the accession of the king at 1266 A.C. which, by the Buddhist era, will be 1809 – a difference, on the authoritative statement of the *Attanagaḷuvaṃsa* of thirty years. Now the *Nikāya Saṅgrahaya*, after recounting various great events of this king's reign, ends the account by saying that at that date 1,809 years had elapsed since the death of Buddha (p. 23), and it seems to me that Turnour's date is due to a misapprehension. He had evidently seen the date in the *Nikāya Saṅgrahaya* and taken it for the initial year of the reign.

We now pass on to a question of antiquities. It is thought by some that the royal city which stood on the place now marked by the little township of Cotta was in existence as early as the first half of the fourteenth century A.C. Colonel Yule in his "Cathay" states that Koṭṭe Jayawardhanapura, near Colombo, is first mentioned as a royal residence about 1314; and De Marignoli makes reference to Koṭṭe in Ceylon as a place where he had been in 1339. On these two statements the above opinion is based. The statement in "Cathay"

¹⁶ I have shown elsewhere ("Guttila Kāvya Varṇanā," Introduction, p. 7) how recent chronology of Ceylon, in which all our antiquarians, including Mr. Bell, seem to have experienced much perplexity, can be neatly adjusted by attention to the principle here explained.

seems to leave no doubt that the place meant is the present Koṭṭe, since it is near Colombo. Now, how far is the Colonel's statement useful as probative evidence? To answer this question we have to observe that his statement consists of two propositions, viz.: (1) that Jayawardhana Koṭṭe is near Colombo; (2) that it is first mentioned as a royal residence in 1314. The first of these propositions is correct, as we know, and the truth of the second may be accepted on the Colonel's authority. But the point is, was the Colonel aware when he made the first proposition in connection with the second, that he was anticipating a question of identity which was likely to arise? Or did he, merely locate the Jayawardhanapura of the second proposition in a place which he thought was but too well known, as most of us would have done till some time ago? It seems scarcely possible to resist this second conclusion, and if we therefore divest the Colonel's statements of the identification to which he has unconsciously led himself, his statement simply amounts to this: that in the early part of the fourteenth century Jayawardhana Koṭṭe is first mentioned as a royal residence; that a Koṭṭe did exist in those days is shown by the statement of De Marignoli, who visited it in 1339. But what do these statements go to prove? They simply go to show the truthfulness of the *Nikāya Saṅgrahaya*, which says that the city which was built by Alakeśvara towards the end of the fourteenth century was called not Jayawardhanapura but New Jayawardhanapura, plainly in contradistinction to an old city of the same name. It is [xvi] suggested that Alakeśvara only fortified and beautified the old city. Neither can this theory stand. For both in the *Mahāvamsa* and in the *Nikāya Saṅgrahaya* the site selected by Alakeśvara for the new city is called not Old Jayawardhana Koṭṭe, but Daragamuwa, a village.

The mention of the name of Alakeśvara leads us to another question which has formed the subject of much discussion of late. It was believed till very lately that Alakeśvara, who as viceroy, was the most powerful man of his day in Ceylon, attained to the sovereignty under the title of Bhuvanaikabāhu V. This belief was due to a passage in the *Mahāvamsa* which was written within recent times and which plainly bore that construction on the face of it. But it was discovered that the *Nikāya Saṅgrahaya* speaks of Bhuvanaikabāhu V in terms which would go to show that he was Alakeśvara's lord and sovereign, and the passage in the *Mahāvamsa* being then examined, it was found that it also admits of a reading in keeping with that construction. But the question when raised has met with some opposition. The objectors cite some authorities which we will consider later on. First we will glance at the evidence in support of the revised reading: (1) the *Rājāvaliya*, in its account of the Tamil invasion under Ārya Cakravarti of Jaffna, speaks of Bhuvanaikabāhu as king and Alakeśvara as his able general; (2) the translation into Sinhalese of the *Attanaḡaḡuvaṃsa*, in dedicating the translation to the general Satrusinha Kuñjara, says that the general enjoyed the favour of the minister Arthanāyaka, and of his brother the great minister Alakeśvara, *supreme over the Island of Ceylon, Prime Minister* to King Bhuvanaikabāhu V, supreme over the three-fold Sinhala, lord of the nine gems; (3) the *Mayūra Sandeṣa*, a contemporary poem, speaks of the king, Bhuvanaikabāhu, as reigning at Gampola, and of the viceroy Alakeśvara as residing at Rayigama.

All this is positive evidence. There is also negative evidence equally strong. In the *Ganegoḡa Sannasa*, King Bhuvanaikabāhu is spoken of as a scion of the Solar dynasty. With regard to Alakeśvara all

accounts agree that he belonged to a hill tribe of Southern India, known in Ceylon as *Giri-vam̐sa*.

We will now consider the authorities on which those who still hold to the old view rely. They contend (1) that the *Rājaratnākaraya* expressly says that Alakeśvara became king as Bhuvanaikabāhu V; (2) that the *Daḷadā Pūjāvaliya* supports this view; (3) that in the translators preface to the Sinhalese *Attanagaḷuvam̐sa*, Alakeśvara, though called minister in one place, is in a subsequent place called king; (4) that De Couto unmistakably speaks of Alakeśvara as having usurped the sovereignty.

[xvii] A very little examination, however, shows that these arguments are visionary. The supposed statement of the *Rājaratnākaraya* appears in the printed edition of that work.¹⁷ but is absent in the manuscripts. It is therefore presumed to be an interpolation of the editor, who evidently thought of supplying an apparent deficiency, from the *Mahāvam̐sa* as then understood.¹⁸ *Daḷadā Pūjāvaliya*, is an unknown work, and its support, whatever the character of that support may be, scarcely counts for anything. In the preface to the *Attanagaḷuvam̐sa*, Alakeśvara is nowhere spoken of as king. He is described as supreme over the Island of Ceylon, but this is in the course of a panegyric which culminates in the central fact that he was prime minister to King Bhuvanaikabāhu V. As for De Couto, he wrote more than a century later, and his authority can

¹⁷ Colombo 1887.

¹⁸ Since writing the above the revised edition published by the Government of Ceylon has come to hand. In that edition the statement referred to is entirely absent.

be only valuable as showing the folk-tales current in his day. His statement, moreover, has reference to a point of time admittedly subsequent to the reign of Bhuvanaikabāhu V,¹⁹ and cannot therefore touch the question at issue. But even taken for what it is worth, a folk-tale at the distance of a century clearly goes for nothing before authoritative contemporaneous statements such as we have on the other side of the question. We may therefore take it as an established fact that King Bhuvanaikabāhu V, and Alakeśvara were not one and the same person, but that the second was the servant of the first.

But we have not finished with this interesting reign and the period immediately preceding and following its close. To this period, which roughly embraces the last decade of the fourteenth century and the first decade of the fifteenth, belong several interesting historical problems which still await satisfactory solution. For instance, we are informed in the *Nikāya Saṅgrahaya* that in the twentieth year of the reign of King Bhuvanaikabāhu V, that is to say, while the king was presumably still alive and in office (1396 A.C.), his cousin, Prince Vīrabāhu, became king as Vīrabāhu II. The received opinion is that he became king of the central part of Ceylon; but the *Nikāya Saṅgrahaya* does not seem to favour such a restriction, and the question yet remains to be answered whether the word king is here used in a loose sense for regent, [xviii] or whether it is intended to denote a true monarch. But the question does not stand alone, we

¹⁹ De Couto speaks of how Parākramabāhu VI became king. There were seven kings or archons between Bhuvanaikabāhu V and Parākramabāhu VI. See authority cited in “Guttila Kāvya Varṇanā,” Introduction, p. 4. See also succeeding paragraph of this essay.

learn from the *Saddharma Ratnākaraya*, a work written shortly after this period, that Vīrabāhu himself was preceded in his office, whatever the character of that office may have been, by his brother Vīra Alakeśvara, and before him by a son of Alakeśvara the viceroy. It is worthy of note here, too, that the viceroy himself ceases to be mentioned in contemporary records from this period. We also learn from the *Saddharma Ratnākaraya* that Vīrabāhu was followed in his office by two others, before his brother Vīra Alakeśvara returned from India (about 1398 A.C.) and regained his lost power. Within a few years we recognise Vīra Alakeśvara in King Vijayabāhu VI, who is captured by a Chinese general and deported to China. According to the Chinese chronicles, his son Parākramabāhu Āḥpāṇa succeeds him on the throne, and this is supported by the *Saddharma Ratnākaraya*, which says that the successor was a prince of the *Mehenavaravaṃsa* and was Āḥpāṇa. Vijayabāhu was of that *vaṃsa*, and we may fairly presume that his Āḥpāṇa would have been his son. According to the accepted Ceylon history, this successor was Parākramabāhu VI, whose long and glorious reign, covering over half a century, was the brightest period in the national annals nearest to the advent of the Portuguese. But here again contemporaneous accounts seem to unsettle long accepted history. In the *Vutta Mālā*, a Pāli poem composed at this period and highly eulogistic of the sovereign of the day, we read of King Parākramabāhu who held his court at Dædigama. In the *Tisara Sandesa*, a Sinhalese poem, we find the same king addressed in the same capital. In both these works the king is spoken of as the son of Sumitrā Devī. It seems that we may safely conclude that this was the prince of *Mehenavaravaṃsa* who succeeded Vijayabāhu VI, on the throne. For when we come to Parākramabāhu VI we find that he held his court at *Jayawardhanapura*, that he was of the Læmæṇi race, and that his

mother was *Sunetrā Devī*, and not *Sumitrā Devī*; and further, according to the *Saddharma Ratnākaraya*, that he succeeded King Parākramabāhu of the *Mehenavaravaṃsa*.

Attention has been called to these few questions to show what an interesting field of inquiry is here. It is hoped that our scholars will find it worth their while to devote some time and attention, and try to unravel the tangled web in which the history of this period presents itself.

The translation of the *Nikāya Saṅgrahaya*, presented in the following pages was made by Mr C. M. Fernando, Crown Counsel for the Island, with a view to elucidation of historical [xix] points which arose in the Adippola sannas case (D. C., Chilaw, No. 2,954). In the meantime, the Government of Ceylon having approved of a suggestion made by Mr. H. C. P. Bell Archæological Commissioner, for the revision of the Sinhalese text and translation of the *Nikāya Saṅgrahaya* and the *Rājaratnākaraya*, Mr. Simon de Silva, Mudaliyār of the Governor's Gate, Mr. A. Mendis Guṇasekara, Mudaliyār and myself were appointed a Committee to carry out the work. Mr. Fernando was then good enough, at the request of Government, to place his translation at the disposal of the Committee. The text of the *Nikāya Saṅgrahaya*, was revised by the Committee and has been published. But it was found that the rest of the work could be more speedily done if divided among the three members of the Committee, to be executed on their individual responsibility. This arrangement was accordingly adopted, and the present work fell to my lot. I need scarcely say that with the excellent translation of Mr C. M. Fernando, my work has been an easy one. I have, however, carefully revised the whole of the

translation changing where change was necessary, filling up lacunas and giving footnotes where they seemed to be called for. For any mistakes therefore which may be found in the translation I alone am now responsible. The original work is so full of obsolete technical terms in some places, and in some places its language is so archaic, that I scarcely expect to have escaped falling into errors. I have particularly to mention the footnotes on pages 20 and 26, which are given, not by any means as authoritative pronouncements, but merely as suggestions. They are based partly on information I have gathered during my stay in the Kandyan country, and partly on philological interpretation. Our best scholars can offer no help to place their elucidation beyond doubt. Their final decision is therefore left to the reader himself.

W.F.G.

Analytical Summary²⁰

[xxi] The following review is intended to present in a concise form the story of the *Nikāya Saṅgrahaya*, with such comments, observations, and historical details as will make the story clearer and more intelligible. It must be remembered that the work treated of is primarily a history of religion, and that if we glean any extraneous facts from it, these only occur as incidental to the story. In this review therefore the reader must expect to find the thread of the narrative running mainly in the religious connection.

The author at the commencement of his work informs us of the sources of his information. These, he tells us, are old records, his own knowledge of contemporaneous events, and tradition. The old records evidently account for the chronology of the history, which is esteemed as most reliable.

He then begins from eons before by way of introducing us to the personality of the Great Teacher whose religion is to be the subject of his discourse. At a time inconceivably remote, Sumedha, the son and heir of a wealthy Brāhmaṇa family, forsook wealth and the world, and retired into the forest to practise contemplation. Chance brought him before the inspiring presence of Buddha Dīpaṅkara, where, forming the resolution to become a Buddha himself, he received a declaration of the future consummation of his hopes. He it was who in our own age became Gotama Buddha.

²⁰ [In the original publication this section was called the Analytic Survey. It is more of a Summary, though, as the author tells us in the first paragraph, so I have changed the title to better indicate the contents].

Born as a prince of the Sākya clan in Kapilavatthu, a city of Northern India, on the borders of Nepal, Buddha entered on his mission in the thirty-fifth year of his age, and ministering to the spiritual wants of mortals for forty-five years, he at the end of that time attained the supreme beatitude, the bliss of Nirvāṇa.

[B.C. 478] No sooner was the Master dead and gone than his rigid discipline began to find grumblers. This at once moved his disciples to action. They decided to hold a Council and settle the canon, so that what was orthodox might be clearly fixed, and undesirables might be shut out. The Council was held under the patronage of King Ajātasattu of Magadha, in great state, and after seven months the whole text of [xxii] the Buddhist scriptures was settled, and arranged in three sections called Piṭakas or Treasuries. This was the First Buddhist Convocation.

[B.C. 378] We are next given the list of kings who followed Ajātasattu on the throne of Magadha, up to the time of Kālāśoka, the seventh from Ajātasattu. The tenth year of this prince's reign coincides with the completion of the first century from the death of Buddha.

At this time abuses began to appear in the tradition, showing themselves among the monks at Ujjain. This fraternity had invented ten new indulgences, which would have seriously impaired the discipline of the Order. Some of these innovations appear to our lay minds to be of a momentous character. For instance, the Ujjain fraternity declared that it was allowable to use salt preserved in horns, even if it had been once tasted. Then, again, they would stretch a point and touch money with their own hands, instead of by

proxy. These and other practices, each as dangerous as another, created a profound sensation. Though they touched the religion but externally, their revolutionary character required immediate action, and the orthodox leaders were soon in the field. The Ujjain camp, however, had seen the best point of advantage in the royal protection. This they secured, and they were in a fair way to win.

[B.C. 373²¹] But the king's sister was a nun, who was in the right side of the question; and the king having dreamt a dream which somewhat perturbed him, she converted him to a proper view of the situation. The Second Convocation was held, and the heresy was crushed. But though crushed, it was not stamped out. The defeated party made a secession and formed a school of their own, named Mahā Sāṃghika, which was to develop in time into the Mahā Yāna, or the northern Buddhist tradition.

[B.C. 255] Within a period of 100 years the Mahā Sāṃghika school had grown and branched off into seventeen schisms. Of these, the Vajjiputta Nikāya later figures in the history of Ceylon Buddhism (p. 12). It had doctrines and scriptures of its own, though these had no effect on the teachings of the orthodox tradition, which remained uncontaminated for 118 years from the Second Council.

²¹ This date is arrived at from the date of the next Convocation (under Aśoka), held 125 years after, which is made up as follows: 118 years during which the canon remained uncorrupted (p. 7. *infra*), and 7 years during which the religion was in decadence (p.8).

[B.C. 264²²] King Kālāśoka, under whom the Second Council was held, [xxiii] had been followed on the throne by his ten sons, and these by nine princes of the Nanda dynasty. The famous Candragupta then seized the throne and became the founder in Magadha of the royal dynasty of the Mauryas. He was succeeded by his son Biṇḍusāra, and in the year 214 of the Buddhist era Biṇḍusāra's son Aśoka ascended the throne of Magadha, which he soon made the imperial throne of India. Aśoka's dominions were very extensive, and his power strongly consolidated. He was undoubtedly the greatest prince of his age. But it is not alone in his capacity as a monarch that his greatness was conspicuous; whatever he did, wherever he went, he showed himself the first among men. And as in other things, so in religion. Brought up in the Brāhmaṇic faith he was brought casually into contact with Buddhism, and his powerful mind was charmed by the tenets of a creed which not only recognizes reason as the most ennobling gift of man, but actually invites its exercise for the proper investigation and apprehension of religious truth. Aśoka was not long in becoming a convert to Buddhism, and, as may be expected from a man of his wholehearted character, his conversion meant a great deal. He at once placed himself at the head of the Buddhist tradition, the most devout follower and the most enthusiastic promoter of the new faith. Such was the fervour of his religious zeal, and such the depth of his devotion, that, not content with building eighty-four thousand royal monasteries in different parts of India and endowing them, nor with spending a lakh [100,000] daily on doles to the priests, and other acts of charity, he made his son Prince Mahinda and his daughter the

²² For chronological purposes, however, Aśoka's reign is generally reckoned from the year of his installation, A.B. 218 = B.C. 260.

Princess Saṅghamittā, gifts to the faith, so that they might devote their lives to its promotion and glory.

But while Buddhism was on one side gaining a powerful patron, it had been on another side steadily losing ground. Under the name *Tīrthakas* were comprised several sects, known in later times as Jains, representing older religious systems, which in Buddha's days had been bitterly opposed to him. The new religion had spread in spite of them, not by crushing them; and the jealousy and the hatred engendered by its success had by no means undergone diminution. So long as Buddha lived these *Tīrthakas* found themselves helpless, although their prestige was being ruined. They could prevail against any teacher, but against a royal prince whose wisdom was backed up by his high birth, they found fighting useless. But after the death of Buddha, although the tradition found [xxiv] royal patrons, the spell of a protecting royalty had not always been present. The *Tīrthakas* now found their chance. They knew that the Buddhist monks had by their rules of conduct to be mild and patient with the faults of others. So, counterfeiting Buddhist monks themselves, they entered the monasteries and made themselves at home. Being there, they adopted tactics which made the performance of canonical rites pertaining to the purity of cloister life, impossible, with the result that the priesthood became more or less disorganized and religion began to decay.

[B.C. 248²³] Nothing but gradual extinction was in prospect for the new religion, when the powerful aid of the imperial convert Aśoka came, never too soon, to the rescue. The zealous monarch found a

²³ *Mahāvamsa*, ch. V.

zealous organizer in Tissa, the son of Moggali, the greatest name in the Buddhist tradition, next to that of Buddha himself and his immediate disciples. With the effective co-operation of this prince of the tradition, the king called a convocation of monks, and had the scriptures recited for nine months and thoroughly revised. This was the Third Buddhist Council.

The *Tīrthakas* were now expelled from the Saṅgha, but they did not abandon all hope. They found that Buddhism was the popular religion, and that some sort of connection with it was necessary to give them a status. They knew, too, that the Buddhist tradition had had a split in earlier days, and that, although the orthodox hierarchy had turned them out, the Mahā Sāṃghika was still open to them for whatever plans they might yet devise. Though with some differences from the orthodox tradition, the Mahā Sāṃghika had up to now preserved its character as a Buddhist cult. But the *Tīrthakas* under false pretences now sought and obtained admission into its ranks as monks, and after learning all it had to teach, they worked upon it with matter of their own, and subverted not only its doctrines, but also its discipline. The Mahā Sāṃghika school now underwent disruption. Hitherto it had existed as a collective name for seventeen different cults (see p. 6), with more or less related doctrines. This bond was now broken. Some of the branches lost their individuality and sank into others, while some acquired distinctive characters which sharply separated them from the rest. Thus, it came to pass that, as a new product between Buddhism and Jainism, the seventeen branches of the Mahā Sāṃghika now reappeared as nine different sects, of which that of the Vaitulyas is the best known in Ceylon. All these fraternities were laborious workers and produced an [xxv]

extensive literature, the Vaitulyas setting forth their doctrines in a Piṭaka of their own, which was called the Vaitulya Piṭaka.

[B.C. 29] Notwithstanding all these schisms, however, the tenets of the orthodox faith as settled at the Third Council remained in purity for 219 years (p. 10).

We have now arrived at a point in time in the history when it becomes necessary to pause and take a glance at the history of Ceylon. About the time of Buddha, this Island had been inhabited by a semi-barbarous race, of men, whom the Āryans of India, in the pride of their superior civilization, contemptuously called Yakṣas, or goblins. In the year that Buddha died, in fact on the same day as that memorable event, Prince Vijaya, a roving character from Southern Bengal,²⁴ landed on the shores of Ceylon with seven hundred followers, and within a short time made a conquest of the Island. Laṅkā, as the Island was then called, was now rescued from its isolation, and brought in contact with the civilizing influences of India. The king allied himself by marriage with the Court of Madhura, while his followers were favoured with a liberal contingent of high-born maidens from the same country, to be their wives. Thus, with the indigenous population on one side, an Aryan stock from Northern India on the second, and a Dravidian stock from Southern India on the third, we find the beginning of the Sinhalese nation in the meeting of three elements, which in time

²⁴ This is according to the books. But there is more evidence, philological, ethnological, and circumstantial, to believe that he came from the west of Northern India.

combined and produced a race whose long and brilliant history challenges comparison with the best in the world.

Two hundred and thirty-six years had passed from the landing of Vijaya, and five kings had followed him, when Devānampiya Tissa came to the throne of Lañka, destined to make it famous in the history of the religion now revolutionizing life on the continent. At this time the fame of Aśoka as a mighty prince was world-wide, and Devānampiya Tissa lost no time in courting his friendship. The overtures were warmly embraced by the diplomatic Aśoka, and imperial ambassadors were soon in Ceylon to anoint the king of that Island as their master's friend and ally.

[B.C. 242] At the same time as Moggaliputta Tissa, the primate of Aśoka, saw in Ceylon the most promising field for the propagation of the new faith. He was just then sending out missionaries to all parts of Asia, and to Ceylon he paid the special compliment of sending the emperor's own son, the great Thera Mahinda. The mission was from the first a great success. The king and one [xxvi] of the royal ladies, the Princess Anuḷā, became converts, and within a short time the nation followed their example. A branch of the sacred *Bodhi*-tree was sent over by Aśoka, and with its planting at Anurādhapura the lasting symbol was given to the firm establishment of Buddhism in Ceylon.

During the lifetime of Devānampiya Tissa, his brother Mahānāga had established himself in Ruhūṇa, which now became a principality, with Māgama as its capital. On the king's death, another brother, Uttiya, succeeded to the throne at Anurādhapura. In the eighth year of this king's reign Mahinda, the apostle of Buddhism in

Ceylon, died. His name still survives in [the place name] “Mihintale.”²⁵ But the mellowing influences of Buddhism on the king and the country soon began to tell their tale. The pious Buddhists had evidently begun to be wary of professions, however noble, which involved the taking away of life, and thus we find Tamiḷ officers now in the employ of the Sinhalese sovereign, in high places of trust in the army. King Uttiya was followed on the throne by his brother Mahasīva, and he by his brother Sūratissa, a pious man, who was put to death by Sena and Guttika, two foreigners employed as captains of his cavalry, who thereupon usurped the throne. The act of these two traitors and the success with which it was accomplished were the cause of untold evil and much suffering to Ceylon, for many centuries to come; for they excited the avarice of other and more powerful adventurers from India, who from that time forward often tried their fortune in Ceylon.

The two usurpers were put to death by Asela, a prince of the royal house; but very soon an invasion was made in force by Eḷāra, a Tamiḷ nobleman from India, who made himself master of the king’s country. Eḷāra, though a foreigner and a conqueror, ruled as a most just king, as Cnut did in the West more than a millennium later; and he earned the good will and the admiration of his subjects, if not their actual loyalty. He was reigning in peace at Anurādhapura.

A remnant of the Sinhalese power was still surviving in the principality of Ruhuṇa, which we have seen was founded by Mahānāga, the brother of Devānampiya Tissa. Fourth in descent from Mahānāga was Duṭṭagamuṇu [Pāli: Duṭṭhagāmaṇi], who as

²⁵ *Lit.* the plain of Mihiṇḍu or Mahinda.

soon as he attained to his principality, took steps to try conclusions with Eļāra. The contest was long and severe. Eļāra’s power was great, but Duṭugəmuṇu was stern and determined, and Sinhalese patriotism had rallied on his side. The indomitable courage [xxvii] and the dogged perseverance of the Sinhalese prince reduced town after town held by the foreigner, till at last the decisive battle was fought within sight of Anurādhapura. Eļāra was killed, and Duṭugəmuṇu, both as conqueror and representative of the old royal stock, ascended the throne of united Laṅkā. While a great warrior on one side, Duṭugəmuṇu was on the other a devout Buddhist. The remains of the brazen palace at Anurādhapura and of the Mirisavæṭi and Ruvanvæli²⁶ stūpas still attest to his piety and to the greatness of the resources which were at his command. He did much for the religion, and, according to the belief of his times, his soul was actually conveyed on his death by angels to heaven. Yet strangely enough the *Nikāya Saṅgrahaya* makes no pause to give an account of the religious works of his reign, merely mentioning his name among others to be passed over. Perhaps it is to be accounted for by the plan of the work. The author is dealing with the main current of the history of Buddhism, which was still flowing in India, and he takes us over these names to carry us on to that point where the head of the current reaches Ceylon.

[B.C. 137] The great Duṭugəmuṇu was followed by his brother Saddhātissa, and he by his four sons when in the reign of the fourth son, Vaṭṭagāmaṇi, the country was again over-run by a horde of

²⁶ This name should be properly Ruvam-mæli, being the Sinhalese equivalent of the Pāli Suvaṇṇa-māli given in the *Mahāvamsa*. Suvaṇṇamāli Cetiya means “the shrine of golden chains.” So does Ruvam-mæli Sāya.

Tamiḷs under seven leaders. The king, had to seek safety in flight, and five of the Tamiḷs held the reigns of Government in succession for fourteen years. At the end of that time the king regained his own, and reigned in prosperity for twelve years. This period of reign of Vaṭṭagāmaṇi is famous in the Buddhist annals of Ceylon. It was also a stirring time. The king, grateful for his deliverance from the Tamiḷs, founded several religious institutions, the most notable among them being the Abhayagiri Vihāra, which later on begins to occupy a prominent place in history. And in his reign the Buddhist scriptures, which were up to now transmitted orally, were reduced to writing, at the rock temple of Aluvihāra in Mātale. But the most notable religious event of the reign is the split which took place in the Ceylon Buddhist tradition founded by Mahinda.

[B.C. 89] The head priest of Abhayagiri Vihāra, a special favourite of the king, met with the censure of the priests of the Mahā Vihāra, a foundation of Devānampiya Tissa, with whom evidently the ecclesiastical [xxviii] authority resided; and this led to the rupture. Mahadāliyā-tissa, a pupil of the disgraced priest and a man of spirit, broke away from the Theravāda Nikāya (the name for the orthodox tradition of India and Ceylon), and with 500 followers formed at Abhayagiri Vihāra the headquarters of a new sect. This sect within a short time embraced the doctrines of the Vajjiputta Nikāya, one of the seventeen branches of the Mahā Sāṃghika schism (p. 12), and came to be known as the Dharmaruci Nikāya, from an eminent teacher of the name of Dharmaruci of the Vajjiputta sect. This was the first schism in Ceylon.

Twenty-nine sovereigns had followed Vaṭṭagāmaṇi, when in the year A.C. 209²⁷ Vohāratissa came to the throne. In this reign the schismatics of the Dharmaruci sect, who occupied Abhayagiri Vihāra, embraced the Vaitulya Piṭaka, the handiwork of the *Tīrthakas* in the time of Dharmāsoka (p. 12). Vohāratissa, however, was a strong king. He caused the false Piṭaka to be seized and had it consigned to the flames.

[A.C. 252] The sixth king from Vohāratissa was Śrī Saṅghabodhi, a prince in whom the ideal of religious devotion was reached. He made a gift of his head to a poor man in order that the poor man might get wealth [in the form of a reward] from Goṭhābhaya, who had seized the throne; and by this act he became a religious hero for all time. Subsequent sovereigns were proud to assume his name as a mark of honour.

[A.C. 255] But Goṭhābhaya, though the villain of the tragedy just mentioned, proved to be a stern upholder of religion. In the fourth year of his reign the Vaitulya heresy again broke out in the same old place, Abhayagiri Vihāra, which, it will be remembered, was the seat of the Dharmaruci Nikāya. Goṭhābhaya came down strongly upon the heretics. He burned their books, branded the recalcitrant, and expelled them from the country. A section of the fraternity who, under a priest named Sāgala, had kept out of the movement, now removed to Dakkhiṇagiri Vihāra,²⁸ where they came to be known as

²⁷ Compare the date in the *Mahāvamsa* table (English), A.C. 215, and for its discrepancy see my remarks on pp. xiii, and xiv., *supra*. Note also the chronological discrepancies throughout, between this work and the *Mahāvamsa* tables.

²⁸ [Text, here and elsewhere: Dakuṇu Vehera].

the Sāgaliya sect, the name being justified only by the secession, and not from any apparent change of principles from the Dharmarucis.

On the death of Goṭhābhaya, his son Jeṭṭhatissa succeeded to the throne (A.C. 265). He was followed in A.C. 275 by his brother Mahāsenā. In the reign of this king great religious commotions took place. The king was won over by an emissary [xxix] of the heretics, who for reviving the Vaitulya doctrines had been driven into exile in his father's reign, and a violent persecution of the orthodox tradition now took place. The priests were scattered, temples were razed to the ground, and the brazen palace (p, xxvii.), the proudest ornament of the capital, was destroyed. But the persecuted tradition was not without friends. The queen stood for it, and the minister Meghavarṇa Abhaya brought the king to a more reasonable frame of mind. The Malaya and the Ruhūṇa provinces gave shelter and their moral support to the oppressed, and in the end all the makers of the mischief had to suffer. Mahāsenā was not a bad king at heart. He was a staunch friend, and that was his failing. To help his friends he would go out of his way even to the extent of persecuting others. He did much for his country by constructing many tanks and doing other public works. Mahāsenā was not successful in his attempts to suppress the Mahā Vihāra, the first Buddhist foundation in the Island. Yet he succeeded in building within its limits Jetavana Vihāra,²⁹ which now became a seat of the Sāgaliya sect. King Mahāsenā was followed on the throne by his son Kitsirimevan, whose reign was rendered memorable by the arrival in Ceylon of Buddha's tooth-relic from India. Our author has not thought it

²⁹ [Text, here and elsewhere: Denā Vehera].

necessary to chronicle this event – a silence which, considering the importance of the event, is rather remarkable.

[A.C. 432³⁰] Kitsirimevan had been followed by three kings when Mahānāma came to the throne. His, too, is a famous reign. In it, the great Commentator Buddhaghosa came over from India and wrote in Pāli the commentaries on the Buddhist scriptures, which had been composed in Sinhalese by Mahinda.³¹ With the death of Mahānāma the old dynasty of Sinhalese kings founded by Vijaya comes to an end.

Mahānāma unfortunately had formed a Tamiḷ connection, which, again, was the precursor of much evil to the country. Soththisena was the son of the king by a Tamiḷ mistress, and on the king's death he ascended the throne. But he was promptly assassinated, and two kings had reigned one year each when a Tamiḷ invasion soon came. Paṇḍu became the founder of a dynasty which reigned for twenty-seven years, counting six princes in the succession.

Dhātusena, a young Buddhist monk who had disrobed himself to become his country's champion, fought the Tamiḷs, killed their princes one after another, and founded a new Sinhalese dynasty. He is represented in the *Mahāvamsa* as a [xxx] Maurya by descent, this being probably suggested by the similarity of his fortune to that of

³⁰ *Mahāvamsa* tables.

³¹ [Saying “composed” makes it sound like Mahinda himself was the commentator, but the usual view he is he translated pre-existent commentaries, although he may have also added to them].

Candragupta, who founded the Maurya dynasty of India (see pp. xi. and xxiii.).

[A.C. 453] Six kings had followed Dhātusena when Aṃbaheṛaṇa Salamevan came to the throne. In his reign a fresh attempt was made to revive the Vaitulya doctrines, the movement again originating at the old centre of disturbance, the Abhayagiri Vihāra, now active for the fourth time. But it was very little of a success. Some members of the Jetavana fraternity, the less informed ones, were won over, it is true. But all intelligent men held aloof, and in the absence of influential support, the cause gradually sank into insignificance.

We see no more of the excitement of schisms and heresies, and the orthodox faith now prevails in the land in its even tenor for at least two centuries. Then we come to the reign of Matvaḷasen,³² who ascended the throne A.C. 819. This king was so unfortunate as to embrace the doctrines of the Vājiriyas [Vajrayāna] (p. 18), and in consequence became so unpopular with his subjects that they apparently forsook him during a Tamiḷ invasion, and he had to flee to Polonnaruwa, where he died.³³

[A.C. 838] The next king, Muṅgayinsen (Sena II), was a very vigorous monarch. He more than wiped out the disgrace of the late

³² This is Sena I, of the *Mahāvamsa*, whose date of accession is given in the table (English translation) as A.C. 846, a difference from the date here given of twenty-seven years.

³³ According to the *Mahāvamsa*, he submitted to the terms of the invader, and returning to the capital reigned in peace. The *Mahāvamsa* makes no mention of the king's apostacy from the tradition, but says that he died at Polonnaruwa. – *Mahāvamsa*, ch. L.

invasion and the humiliation of his uncle by a conquest of Madhura, where all that the Sinhalese had lost was recovered. At this time Buddhism in Ceylon was represented by four different Nikāyas or divisions: the old Theravāda Nikāya, representing the pristine tradition and having its chief centre at the Mahā Vihāra; the Dharmaruci Nikāya, which differed little from it except in the ten indulgences, and the spurious doctrines supporting them, and which was originally established at Abhayagiri Vihāra (p. 12); the Sāgaliya Nikāya, which had branched off from the Dharmaruci, and which occupied the Dakkhiṇagiri Vihāra and the Jetavana (pp. 13, 16): and the Vaitulya Vāda, pure heresy manufactured by the *Tīrthakas*, which had its adherents both at Abhayagiri Vihāra and the Jetavana. The first having always existed as the state tradition, the king now made the other three formulate their ritual, and enjoined their strict [xxxii] conformity to religion. This may be considered as the deathblow to the survival of the three new Nikāyas. It is true they thereby received a constitution, but it was a constitution which deprived them of their expansibility and the power to adapt themselves to the changeful fortunes of their struggle. From this time forth, therefore, they begin to decay, and they linger on till the time of Parākramabāhu the Great, when that mighty monarch bids them cease and they are heard of no more.

Side by side with these new Nikāyas there had also been introduced into Ceylon at this time a fourth Nikāya, the badge of which was as novel as it was picturesque. This was the blue robe, which distinguished its brethren from all the rest. Their creed is represented as highly erotic and bacchanalian in character, their god being love, and wine the chief excitant of devotion. Evidently they were a religious sect who favoured marriage and more liberal ways

of living in their ranks, and their picture has been overdrawn for us by their more austere religious opponents. This sect, however, was violently persecuted in India, and came into no prominence in Ceylon. It only receives passing notice at the hands of our historian.

We now pass over a period of 125 years till we come to the reign of Mahinda V. This king was a weak monarch, who, not paying sufficient attention to his revenue, found himself with an empty treasury and the pay of his troops in arrears. The troops revolted, and the king sought safety in flight to Ruhuna (A.C. 974). Within a short time the country was going through the throes of the worst foreign invasion and conquest it had ever yet witnessed. The king of Colā, who had broken the power of the rival kingdom of Pāṇḍi and was aiming at a southern empire, found the time very opportune for directing his attention to Ceylon. He accordingly sent over an army, which, meeting with little or no organized resistance, had little else to do than oppress, destroy, and plunder according to their way. The temples and relic shrines received the chief attention of these vandals. These were broken into and despoiled of their treasures, consisting of gold, silver, and gems of enormous value. The king and all the regalia were taken and carried away to Colā, and Ceylon now became a province of the Colian kingdom (A.C. 978), so to remain till it was recovered by Vijayabāhu I in A.C. 1064. Religion had declined exceedingly during the eighty-six years of the Tamil occupation, so much so that Vijayabāhu found it difficult to get together five ordained priests to form a chapter for religious purposes. His first care [xxxii] was to send presents to Rāmañña³⁴

³⁴ This was the early name for the whole of Burma except the Shan States. But on a great part of the country being conquered by the people now

and get from that country twenty elders and books to help the revival of the tradition. Chapters were now formed and many monks ordained, and within a short time the tradition was fully restored. This was the first time that Ceylon had applied to a foreign country for religious aid. From Ceylon religion in Burma had been assisted in early days; Burma now repaid the debt.

Vijayabāhu had fought the Tamiḷs seventeen years before he took his seat on the throne, and from that date he reigned fifty-five years. The total length of his actual reign was therefore seventy-two years. He died in A.C. 1119, in the eighty-seventh year of his age. On his death Ceylon became a prey to internecine conflict among members of the royal family, and so continued until the accession of Parākramabāhu the Great in A.C. 1153³⁵ (p. 20).

This king was the greatest, the mightiest, the most illustrious son of Laṅkā. With its wonderful elasticity and richness of natural resources, the Island had within less than a century recovered from

represented by the Burmese, the name shrunk to the remainder, which was represented by the country of Pegu. Pegu, however, was itself conquered and brought into a subject position, when the name reverted to its original significance. Here it is used in this first and last sense, as meaning the country of Burma. Compare *Mahāvamsa*, chapters LX and LXXX, where the king of Rāmañña is spoken of as the king of Arimaddanapura. Arimaddanapura was Pugān, the present Pagan, the ancient capital of Burma.

³⁵ This must be understood to be the date that Parākramabāhu became virtual master of the king's country by conquest. He, however, did not assume the sovereignty till the death of his kinsman Gajabāhu II, nine years later. Compare the date assigned to the fourth year of his reign, p. 21, *infra*.

all the effects of the late Colian occupation. It had not only recovered, it had even grown in power; and this in spite of a long and bloody civil war, by which Parākramabāhu had literally cut his way to the throne. No sooner had he consolidated his power at home than he thought of a vigorous foreign policy, by which the late odds in favour of the Colians might be reversed on their own soil, and the honour of Ceylon made to shine again in all its glory. Having been offered an affront by the king of Burma, he sent one army to bring that prince to his senses; and in pursuance of his policy he sent another army to operate in South India against the king of Colā, who, still dominated that part of the continent. Within a short time Parākramabāhu was not only king, but also an emperor. Burma paid [xxxiii] him tribute, and the late great Colians were using coins bearing his superscription. The village of Paṇḍu Vijayaka, in which a colony of Brāhmaṇas was planted in honour of the emperor, probably still exists in Southern India to attest to the glory of his name and the power of the Sinhalese arms.

After gaining such distinction in worldly matters, Parākramabāhu was not likely to have been satisfied unless he proved also a benefactor to the faith. He beautified his capital Polonnaruwa with grand vihāras, monastic schools, &c., the ruins of which still attest to their magnificence. But the most memorable act of his reign connected with religion is the inquisition into the tradition. By this act all nonconformists, whether Dharmaruci, Sāgaliya, or Vaitulya, were now finally expelled, and the three colleges brought into harmony. By the three colleges we are to understand here the Mahā Vihāra, the Bhagiri Nikāya, and the Jetavana; and by harmony it seems we are to understand conformity on the part of the latter two colleges with the doctrines of the first, which represented the

orthodoxy of the tradition. The Theravāda Nikāya established during the time of Devānampiya Tissa thus finally triumphed, and though it has several times since been revived from Burma and Siam, it has never again been disturbed in Ceylon.

From this point the *Nikāya Saṅgrahaya* ceases to be of much interest as a history of religion, though it becomes considerably interesting as a record of general history. Hereafter convocation, though of endless importance to those concerned, becomes in our view a very tame affair, intended only to reform abuses within the Order itself; but to compensate for this, men and events now appear to us on the horizon of a period which we can view from our own times, and this heightens our interest in them.

[A.C. 1202] The ninth sovereign from Parākramabāhu the Great was Queen Kalyāṇavatī, in whose reign took place an event which has had far-reaching effects on the history, the social life, and the national character of the Sinhalese. Hitherto the Sinhalese were a united nation, who, if they sometimes bent before a storm of foreign invasion, raised their heads again in due season, when they saw to it that the stain on the national shield should be washed in crimson pools in the enemy's own country. Though a small nation inhabiting a small country, they held their own against all odds, and even rose to imperial eminence among their rivals. But in the absence of foreign enemies internal discord had now appeared in the land, and a woman being at the head of the nation, her [xxxiv] minister, Ayasmanta, thought that the best safety of the throne was in a division of the people, with such barriers set as would prevent a coalescence. Thus the worst curse of any nation, caste, was introduced.

[A.C. 1215] Kalyāṇavatī had been followed by six equally weak sovereigns, when the last and perhaps the most ferocious Tamil invasion took place. Māgha, a prince from Kāliṅga, with twenty thousand followers at his back, repeated on a more extended scale the vandalism of the Colians in Ceylon, adding to it cruelty of the most wanton and inhuman character. Temples and relic shrines were again despoiled and demolished; books were wantonly destroyed; houses plundered; men, women, and children treated with appalling cruelty. But, again, it was the same old story. Māgha became king of Ceylon as Kāliṅga Vijayabāhu, and had been joined by another adventurer, Jayabāhu, with an additional twenty thousand followers. But a national leader soon appeared in Prince Vijayabāhu of Daṃbadeniya, a scion of the old Śrī Saṅghabodhi stock, who, enthusiastically supported by the nation, found himself strong enough not only to check the usurper, but to have himself installed as king. In the next reign the Kāliṅgas and their allied Tamils were evacuating the Island with all their ill-gotten wealth, when they were intercepted at Kalāvæwa and put to the sword [A.C. 1225].

But the *Nikāya Saṅgrahaya* finds the invasion of Māgha chiefly interesting on account of the terror it spread among the priesthood, who fled helter-skelter in all directions. King Vijayabāhu at Daṃbadeniya, as the national sovereign, found it his duty to afford them shelter and protection in his dominions, where, after he had established them, he held a convocation to purify the Saṅgha (p. 22).

[A.C. 1236] Glorious as the son and successor of Vijayabāhu was (Parākramabāhu II), he himself was not free from molestation. With the disappearance of the Kāliṅgas a new enemy now appeared on the scene, one Candrabhanu, a Malay prince, who for a long time

continued to be a thorn in the side of the king of Ceylon. But within the last reign the Island had again recovered the full vigour of its greatness, and Candrabhanu was only able to waste himself in futile attempts. Parākramabāhu, who took a great interest in the religion, as his father had done, held a great convocation to purify the Saṅgha; and we now read for the first time of the existence of two sects within the Saṅgha,³⁶ [xxxv] which act together in the greatest harmony (p.23).³⁷ [A.C. 1266]

[A.C. 1347] Our story now takes us over a period of eighty odd years till we come to the reign of Bhuvanaikabāhu IV, who held his court at Gampola. In this reign the king's minister Senālaṅkādhikāra Senevirat, himself descended from a royal stock, built the Laṅkātilaka Vihāra, and with the authority of the king held an inquisition into the Saṅgha (p.24).

[A.C. 1356] Bhuvanaikabāhu was succeeded by Parākramabāhu V, and he by Wickramabāhu III. We have now come to comparatively modern times, and to a reign in which there appears in the history of Ceylon a man who perhaps makes the greatest figure in the latter days of the Sinhalese Monarchy. Niśśaṅka Alakeśvara, or, as he was known in Tamiḷ, Alagaikkonar, was a nobleman belonging to a hill tribe of Southern India, who was allied by marriage to Senālaṅkādhikāra Senevirat, the minister of Bhuvanaikabāhu IV.

³⁶ [It refers to the village dwellers, gāmvāsī, and the forest dwellers, ārañṇavāsī].

³⁷ It would seem that these two sects only differed in the degree of rigour of their religious life, while they agreed on all doctrinal matters. As monastic orders they belonged to the same tradition as revived from Rāmañña under Vijayabāhu I. (pp xxxi.–ii., supra).

Under Vikramabāhu III he occupied a high position as governor of a province, of which Perādeniya was the capital, and had already distinguished himself as a strong officer of the Crown. [A.C. 1369] Towards the close of that reign he, acting in the name of the king, held an inquisition into the Saṅgha and purged it of all offenders (p. 27). In the next reign, that of Bhuvanaikabāhu V, [A.C. 1371] we find him as the king's Viceroy of the low-country, with his seat of government at Rayigama. At this time the small kingdom of Jaffna had grown in power, and had even seized opportunities to establish its authority in certain seaports and other places of the Sinhalese country, where duty and toll were levied in the name of the Tamiḷ king. Alakeśvara's haughty spirit could not brook this superior authority of a petty prince. He accordingly laid his plans to meet it. As the most important centres of the Tamiḷ authority were within his own province he knew that the issue of the struggle, when it came, would be decided there. His first care therefore was to build a strong fortification from which military operations could be conducted. This fortification, which was a great city with rampart and moat and all defensive war-like appliances, was called New Jayawardhanapura, of which the site is now marked by the township of Koṭṭe. Having completed his preparations he threw the gage to the king of Jaffna [xxxvi] by hanging his officers. War immediately broke out, and the Jaffnese with an immense force invaded the offending territory by sea and land. Alakeśvara, however, was as great a general as he was a statesman. He met the invading force at every point, and cut it off with immense slaughter. When the campaign ended, Jaffna, even with aid from India, had been thoroughly beaten, and Alakeśvara had become the greatest man in Ceylon. The space devoted to him and his achievements in the

Nikāya Saṅgrahaya attests sufficiently to the importance of the place he now filled in the nation.

Alakeśvara was a sincere and devoted Buddhist, and built many vihāras, to accumulate merit (p. 27).³⁸ The harmony of the Saṅgha established by him in A.C. 1369 continued up to the fifteenth year of the reign of Bhuvanaikabāhu V, [A.C. 1386] when the *Nikāya Saṅgrahaya* came to be written and necessarily ended according to its original plan (p. 1). But a continuation takes place at the hands of the same author ten years later, which is presumably intended to be an appendix, and so explains the apparent historical gap at the point of resumption. Though the pervading personality where the story last broke off was that of Niśśaṅka Alakeśvara, we now hear no more of him. We see instead much apparent confusion and some degree of anarchy in the political situation. In the twentieth year of the reign of Bhuvanaikabāhu V, Prince Vīrabāhu, a cousin of that monarch, becomes king of Ceylon as Vīrabāhu II. He proves to be a very popular sovereign, a great monarch, and a good ruler. But with our author, the new king's principal point is his piety. We will not yield to a latent feeling of suspicion that this piety may have been induced in the king as much by political reasons as by a religious disposition. We will only say that the king's elder brother thought he had a better claim to the royal dignity, and was seeking aid from South Indian courts while Vīrabāhu was winning golden opinions from his tradition. He devoted his principal son to the service of the

³⁸ Mr. P. Arunāchalam, C.C.S., in his beautiful "Sketches of the History of Ceylon" (*Ceylon National Review*, vol 1, p. 68), is inclined to believe that Alakeśvara was of Brāhmanic faith. The religious acts of the great viceroy, as in the *Nikāya Saṅgrahaya*, however, leave little room for such a supposition.

tradition as a member of the Saṅgha, and he purified the Saṅgha by holding an inquisition. We apparently see part of his reward in the continuation of a chronicle which had ended five years before he came into power.

W. F. G.

The Theravāda Lineage

Nikāya Saṅgrahaya

or

Sāsanāvatāra

[1] Hail! May long life, health, and prosperity attend the King, the Ministers, and other men of piety and brilliant fame, the lights of the illustrious Laṅkā, who are engaged in the work of protecting the religion and the world, themselves walking in the path of law and virtue. With these good wishes conveyed with love, the chief elder Jayabāhu, formerly known as the elder Devarakṣita, composes this work, *Nikāya Saṅgrahaya*, as a brief record of the history of the religion, from the death of the Noble Victor of Sin to the fifteenth year of the reign of Bhuvanaikabāhu V. For this purpose he avails himself of the writings of the well disciplined elders of old, as well as of his own knowledge of contemporaneous events, together with what he has heard. The story is one connected with the faith. Therefore it should be heard with reverent attention.

Our Lord Buddha Gotama, once upon a time, in virtue of previous merit, was born as the ascetic Sumedha of great Wisdom.³⁹ He happened to come before Buddha Dīpaṅkara, and this brought the bliss of Nirvāṇa within his reach. But out of compassion for the world, he preferred to forego it; and forming the resolution of becoming a Buddha himself, he received the “declaration”⁴⁰ (of the future consummation of his hopes), and re-entering the *samsāra*⁴¹

³⁹ [The name Sumedha itself means true or great wisdom].

⁴⁰ [P: Vyākaraṇa].

⁴¹ Metempsychosis.

began to exert himself in the accumulation of the necessary merit. In this process he received renewed “declarations” from every Buddha that was born, each of whom he saw. In this way he schooled himself, and by the practice of the ten noble virtues accumulated merit for a period of four *asaṅkheyyas*⁴² and one hundred thousand cycles⁴³ of years. At the end of this period, his candidature fully matured, he was born in the heaven Tusita. There the gods and Brahmas of ten thousand worlds came to him and prayed him, now that the time had come, to become Buddha. [2] He then looked into the five great “details;”⁴⁴ and being begotten by King Suddhodana of the city of Kapilavastu, he was conceived in the womb of the queen Mahā Māyā. King Suddhodana, pure in descent on both sides, was a scion of the Solar race, which counted seven hundred and seven thousand seven hundred and ninety-seven princes in a direct line from King Mahā Sammata; and he was one of the three hundred and thirty-four thousand five hundred and ninety-one princes of the line who had been called to the royal state.

After a period of ten months, he that was to be Buddha was born, at the pleasure garden Lumbinī, on Tuesday, the full moon day of [3] the month of Vesākha, on the completion of the fifteenth *Poya* [Full Moon] of the day, under the asterism Visākha. When grown up to man’s estate, he married the Princess Yasodharā; and with her, surrounded by forty thousand ladies in attendance, he lived in princely state like the king of the gods, in three palaces alternately,

⁴² [Immeasurable periods].

⁴³ [Kappa].

⁴⁴ The five great details are: the time for the birth of the Buddha-to-be; the part of the world where he is to be born; the country; the clan; and the woman who is to be his mother.

known as Ramma, Suramma, and Subha. While living this life of luxury, he happened to see four different sights, typical of life on earth, which determined him to take a step which was final. Mounting his good horse Kanthaka, he cut himself off from home and the world, and, at the age of twenty-nine, adopted the life of an ascetic. He then practised various austerities for six years. Afterwards, on a fair morning, he accepted a savoury dish of rice boiled in milk, from Sujātā, the daughter of a merchant-prince, and passed the day-time in a grove of *sal*⁴⁵ trees. In the evening, he accepted eight handfuls of *kusa*⁴⁶ grass offered to him by a Brāhmaṇa named Sotthiya, and having spread these at the foot of the *Bodhi*-tree,⁴⁷ he seated himself on a diamond throne, fourteen cubits high, which sprang from the ground. Thus seated, with his back to the tree, with his legs crossed, and his determination taken in four irrevocable respects, he under that tree conquered Māra and his host, and on the full moon day of Vesākha, under the asterism Visākha, became Buddha the Enlightened, in the sixteenth year of the reign of King Bimbisāra of the kingdom of Magadha, and in the thirty-fifth year of his own age.

After the lapse of seven weeks (from that great day), the Lord Buddha accepted an invitation from Brahma, and preached the “Wheel of the Law”⁴⁸ at the park of Isipatana; and from that day forward he applied himself to the good of the world for forty-five years.

⁴⁵ [Latin: *Shorea robusta*].

⁴⁶ [*Desmostachya cynosuroides*].

⁴⁷ [Assattha, *Ficus religiosa*].

⁴⁸ [Now known as the *Dhammacakkappavattanasutta*, SN 56.11].

In the eighth year of King Ajātasattu of Magadha, on Tuesday, the full moon day of the month of Vesākha, under the asterism Visākha, at the city of Kusināra and in the park Upavattana of the Malla princes, he laid himself on a bed prepared between two *sal*⁴⁹ trees, and at dawn of the said day attained the bliss of Nirvāṇa, which leaves nothing behind.

On the seventh day after the attainment of Nirvāṇa by Lord Buddha, some of his disciples, who had not yet risen above human frailties, began to cry on hearing of the Master's death. Then a monk, who had taken the robes in old age, whose name was *bhadda*⁵⁰ (good) but whose disposition was *abhadra* (evil), showed himself full of rejoicing, and addressed the mourners as follows: "Friends, regret not; and cease your weeping. This old priest used to call good evil, and to give us trouble. Now that he is gone, we are left our own masters. You will do better to rejoice rather than be sorry at your liberation; for our will is now our own and as we please so can we act and move."

These words having reached the ears of the Venerable Mahā Kassapa, the third great disciple of Lord Buddha, he resolved that in future the order should not be left open to such undesirable persons; and with the object of holding a General Council, he, with about five hundred followers who had subdued their passions, went to the city of Rājagaha, and apprised the king Ajātasattu of the object of their visit.

⁴⁹ [*Shorea robusta*].

⁵⁰ [In the texts his name is given as Subaddha].

The king thereupon caused a spacious pavilion to be erected before the cave Sattapaṇṇa on the side of the mountain Vebhāra which lies close to the city of Rājagaha, and had it adorned to appear like unto a meeting hall of the gods. Its ground was strewn with various kinds of flowers, and the canopy above shone with many stars of silver and gold. In the middle of the hall was a raised seat gorgeously decorated, with a white umbrella spread over it. This was the *Dhammāsana*, the sacred seat of honour; and around this were five hundred ordinary seats. The five hundred seats were taken by the five hundred sanctified ones, who had reached the utmost bounds of the threefold knowledge and eight-fold knowledge, and had attained the four-fold perception, and who held in their minds the full text of the Three Piṭakas to the minutest detail. The seat of honour was taken by the Venerable Mahā Kassapa, who was chief over seven hundred thousand elders of subdued passions, who were themselves chiefs of other communities. Around the pavilion were drawn up, in close formation, the troops of the four-fold army, to wit, fighters on elephants, cavalry, charioteers, and foot-soldiers. These mounted guard.

The Council held its sittings for seven months continuously and at the end of that time the full text of the scriptures had been recited before the Council, and agreed upon. The [4] sacred canon was now divided into, and arranged in, three sections called the *Piṭakas* or Treasuries, the Three Piṭakas being respectively the Vinaya Piṭaka, the Abhidhamma Piṭaka, and the Sutta Piṭaka. These embraced eighty-four thousand doctrinal topics in two hundred and seventy-

five thousand and two hundred and fifty sections. The following are the books of the Three Piṭakas:⁵¹

[Vinaya Piṭaka:] Pārājika, Pācittiya, Mahāvagga, Cullavagga, Parivāra.

[Abhidhamma Piṭaka, which is normally placed after the Sutta Piṭaka:] Dhammasaṅgīṇī, Vibhaṅgappakaraṇa, Kathāvatthu, Puggalapaññatti, Dhātukathā, Indriya-yamaka, Mūla-yamaka [both collected under the title Yamaka], Duka-Paṭṭhāna, Tika-Paṭṭhāna, Duka-Tika-Paṭṭhāna [collected under the title Paṭṭhāna].

[Sutta Piṭaka:] Dīgha Nikāya, Majjhima Nikāya, Saṃyutta Nikāya, Aṅguttara Nikāya, and Khuddaka Nikāya consisting of Khuddakapāṭha, Dhammapada, Udāna, Itivuttaka, Suttanipāta, Vimānavatthu, Petavatthu, Theragāthā, Therīgāthā, Jātaka, Niddesa, Paṭisambhidāmagga, Apadāna, Buddhavaṃsa, Cariyāpiṭaka, &c.

The progress of the Great Council was throughout the cause of general rejoicing, even on the part of Nature herself: rain descended from heaven redolent of celestial perfumes; the earth danced with joy, giving rise to sonorous vibrations: the seven walls of rock encircling the world revolved in unbounded ecstasy. All the world rejoiced, and happiness was everywhere.

Owing to the work thus accomplished by the Great Council, the line of the great elders Sāriputta, Moggallāna, Mahā Kassapa, &c., was firmly established to endure for five thousand years; and to this line,

⁵¹ [For the original text of this list see my Preface].

which was henceforth denominated the Theravāda⁵² Nikāya, the care of the faith was entrusted. The following stanza commemorates the occasion:

*Sādhukāraṇṇi dadantīva sāsanaṭṭhiti kāraṇā,
Saṅgītipariyosāne akampittha mahāmahī.*

At the conclusion of the recital (of the text of the Scriptures), the great earth (overjoyed) by the establishment of the faith, oscillated, as if in applause.

After King Ajātasattu and his successors Udāyibhadda, Anuruddha, Muṇḍa, Nāgadāsaka, and Susunāga, there came to the throne at the city of Pāṭaliputta a king by the name of Kālāsoka, the seventh from Ajātasattu. Up to the tenth year of King Kālāsoka there had elapsed one hundred years from the Nirvāṇa of our Buddha.

At this time the Vajjian monks, residing at the Mahāvana monastery in the city of Vesālī, had invented, in pursuance of their own caprice, ten new indulgences, such as the indulgence of salt preserved in horns, the indulgence of the two-inch alternative, the indulgence of gold, silver, &c., and thus accepting gold, silver, &c., upset the rules of discipline, and caused schism in the religion.

[5] Then a great therā named Yasa, having heard of these things and made due inquiry concerning them, convened a meeting of about

⁵² [Text: Theriya, here and elsewhere].

one million and two hundred thousands of the great *Arahants*,⁵³ and in the midst of them, causing the great elder Revata to call in question the ten indulgences, and the great elder named Sabbakāmī to make answer, declared the ten indulgences to be contrary to the canon. He next started for the Mahāvana monastery in the town of Vesālī, accompanied by a retinue of great monks, with the resolution to “crush the holders of false doctrines and cause the true doctrines to flourish.”

Thereupon the Vajjian monks of ill-conduct went before the king Kālāśoka, and stating various things said to him:

“O great king! a great elder named Yasa is coming with a large body of monks to the Mahāvana monastery where we reside. We pray thee stop them all.” The king having heard those words, and being ignorant of the difference of conduct between moral monks and immoral monks, yielded to their mournful and pathetic appeal, and sent men with orders not to allow the body of monks headed by the great elder Yasa to enter his kingdom. The men having missed the proper road, went in a different direction, through the influence of the gods. On the night of that very day, the king, sleeping in his bed, dreamt that he had gone to the hell Lohakumbhi [Copper Pot hell], in his very body of flesh and bone, and was being boiled there; and having awoke, he remained without sleep till morning. On the second day he saw his elder sister, who was a sanctified nun, and told

⁵³ Sanctified monks possessing superhuman powers, such as the power of travelling through void space, &c. [In the orthodox view, however, not all *Arahants* possess these powers].

her what had happened. The nun then cited this stanza uttered by the Buddha:

*Alajjīnaṃ balaṃ datvā hāpeti vinayaṃ mama,
Jīvanto yeva jātosī gambhīrā Lohakumbhiyā.*

The purport of which is as follows:

Should any one in this world, whether he be a layman or a monk or any other, encourage ill-conducted and sinful monks, make my rules of discipline nugatory, and thus subvert my law, which operates throughout a hundred thousand *crores* [billions] of worlds, he will be positively born in hell; and even while he lives here, will be like one who has departed (this world) in his own human body and been born in the hell Lohakumbhī, which is very deep, full of molten fluid, and aglow with burning fire.

“Therefore, O great king!” said the nun, “abandon those ill-conducted Vajjian monks, encourage monks of proper conduct, and helping the religion of Buddha, which is to last five thousand years, gather funds of merit, so that you may [6] enjoy mundane and celestial happiness during the whole period of a kalpa.”⁵⁴ After giving this advice, the nun departed; and on that very day King Kālāśoka went to the great city of Vesālī and expelled from the church ten thousand corrupt monks who had invented the ten

⁵⁴ A kalpa is a period of time from the full formation of the world to the commencement of its destruction. According to Hindu mythology, it is one day of Brahma, equal in the reckoning of mortals to 432 millions of years.

indulgences in question. He then caused about seven hundred sanctified monks, including the elder Sabbakāmī and the great elder Yasa, out of about twelve *lacs*⁵⁵ of sanctified monks who had assembled at that place, to sit in convocation at the monastery of Vāḷukārāma in the great city of Vesālī, and re-divide into “Pīṭakas,” “Nikāyas,” &c., all the doctrines and laws of discipline named “Theravāda”. Bringing this doctrinal rehearsal to a close in eight months, he maintained the Buddhist religion. Hence was said:

*Ettāvatā dasasahassa sapāpabhikkhū
Niddhūya dhūtadasavatthumalam akāmsu,
Yan-te sunimmalayasena Yasena saddhiṃ
Saṅgītim-ujjhitamalā api dassitā sā.*⁵⁶

The convocation which they, who had rid themselves of impurities, held in conjunction with the elder Yasa of purest renown, after excommunicating ten thousand corrupt mendicants and exploding their ten indulgences, has thus been described.

Then the corrupt monks, about ten thousand in number, who were picked out and excommunicated by the great elders of the second convocation, getting no help from the religion, went to a bordering country in search of supporters, and having there got the adherence of a petty prince who was unable to discriminate between the true doctrines and the false ones, they, in defiance of the Theravāda,

⁵⁵ [A *lac* is 100,000, and is commonly used as a counting measure in Indian cultures, 12 *lacs* therefore means 1,200,000].

⁵⁶ Quotation from the “Mahābodhivaṃsa.”

conferred among themselves, saying: “Let us also rehearse the doctrines,” and, forming themselves into a fraternity of teachers called “Mahā Sāṃghika,” reversed the true doctrines by interpolating new and strange texts, without thought of their inconsistencies with the main text, and inventing commentaries agreeable to their purposes.

Within 100 years from that time they, like a clot of gum exuded from the great victorious *Bodhi*-tree, gradually grew into seventeen schisms, named Mahā-Sāṃghika, Gokulika, Ekabbohārika, Prajñāptivādi, Bāhulika, Cetiya-vādi, Mahimsāsaka, Vajjiputta, Dharmottarika, Bhadrāyānika, Channāgārika, [7] Sammittika, Sarvārthavādi, Dharmaguptika, Kāśyapi, Saṅkappi, and Sūtravādi. Notwithstanding this, the doctrines of the Three Piṭakas existed without corruption for 118 years from the second rehearsal. King Kālāśoka was followed by twenty-one kings, as follows: The ten brothers Bhadrasena, Koraṇḍa, Maṅgura, Sarvañjaha, Jālika, Usabhaka, Sañjaya, Koravya, Nandivardhana, Pañcamaka; the nine princes of the Nanda dynasty, Uggasenānanda, Paṇḍukananda, Paṇḍugatinanda, Bhūtapālananda, Raṭṭhapālananda, Govisāṇananda, Dasasiddhakananda, Kevaṭṭananda, Dhanapālananda; then Candagutta and Biṇḍusāra. After these, a great king arose by name Dharmāśoka, possessed of great power arising from merit and of prowess and universal command, like unto a *cintāmaṇi*,⁵⁷ setting up the umbrella of universal dominion over the face of Jambudvīpa of ten thousand *yojanas*. He was anointed in the 218th year after the Nirvāṇa of Buddha, and extending his fame and power to the ends of

⁵⁷ [Text: *situmiṇa*]. The *situmiṇa* is a miraculous gem, having the power of conferring on a person whatever he may wish for.

the earth as bounded by the seas, and for one *yojana* above and one *yojana* below the earth, and surrounding himself with 84,000 princes and a great army, he, like unto the king of the gods, was enjoying the felicity of the royal state. This king caused to be built in the capital cities of Jambudvīpa⁵⁸ 84,000 grand monasteries befitting royal munificence, adorned with relic shrines, courtyards, *Bodhi*-trees, image houses, preaching halls, palaces, covered walks, ornamental gateways, lotus ponds, flower gardens, orchards, &c.; and, standing in the midst of ninety *lacs* [9 million] of nuns free from human passion and of eighty *crores* [billion] of monks, including the great *Arahats* who had assembled in Aśokārāma on the festive day when the relic shrines were crowned with pinnacles, and viewing easily the whole surface of Jambudvīpa as bounded by the seas, by the help of the great world-unfolding miracle named “Lokavivaraṇa”⁵⁹ performed by those great *Arahats*, and seeing the manner that high festival was being held in all the monasteries, he that day tasted the sweets of great joy and delight. Then as his family-gift to the faith, he made his principal son, Prince Mahinda, twenty years old, and the princess Saṅghamittā, eighteen years old, enter the priesthood; and spending wealth to the extent of five *lacs* [500,000] a day, he contributed to the advancement and glorification of the *faith*.

At this time the infidel ascetics known as *Tīrthakas* had come to profess the *faith* for the sake of gain and honour; and they were going about making an imposture of their own [8] false creed as the

⁵⁸ An ancient name for India. This is the name in general use in Buddhist books. [This is the name given here, but elsewhere (f.i. pg. 12) in the translation the Sinhala form Daṁbadiva is used. Everywhere I have standardised this to Jambudvīpa].

⁵⁹ [Lit: the opening, or uncovering, of the worlds].

right law of discipline, and extolling it greatly. These ascetics, not being admitted to the priesthood, would themselves shave themselves, and, putting on the yellow robe, they would enter the various monasteries, where taking up their abode they would introduce themselves into the assembly of monks who were performing rites relating to confession and termination of the sabbath.⁶⁰ Although rebuked by the monks for non-conformity with the rules of the canon, &c., they would pay no heed to observances conformable to religion, but go about preaching false beliefs of various kinds. As a result, it came about that there was no performance of the rites of confession and of termination of the sabbath (both essential to maintain the integrity of the unity among the pious monks) for a whole period of seven years, and the religion began to decay exceedingly. The great King Dharmāsoka, having heard of this state of things, went to the great Elder Moggaliputta-Tissa who had come down from the heaven of the Brahmas, and staying in his monastery for seven days and learning all the differences of religious doctrine, caused all the great monks of the whole of Jumbudvīpa to be summoned by the help of two demons [*yakkhas*] and to assemble at the monastery of Aśokārāma, built in the city of Pāṭaliputta in his name. And making those who entertained similar beliefs stand separately in groups. and ascertaining the differences of the beliefs, he purified the religion by expelling from it about sixty thousand crafty, dishonest, deceitful, avaricious, and artful *Tīrthakas*, who lived in the garb of monks and entertained the heresies of Sassatavāda, Ekacca-sassatavāda,

⁶⁰ [Text: *Pohopavuruṇu*, which means the *uposatha* day that *pavāraṇa*, the invitation, is held. I.e. the termination of the rains retreat, not of the sabbath (*uposatha*) as translated here].

Antānantika, Amarāvikkhepika, Adhicca Samuppannika, Saññivāda, Asaññivada, Nevasaññināsaññivāda, Ucchedavāda, Diṭṭhadhammanibbāṇavāda, &c. He then set guards all round the monastery and caused the pious monks who professed the pure doctrine to perform religious rites of confession together; and he also caused about one thousand *Arahats*, chosen out of about sixty *lacs* [6,000,000] of sanctified monks who had assembled there, to hold under the presidency of the Elder Moggaliputta-Tissa the third rehearsal of doctrines, which was concluded in nine months; and he made the power of the well-conducted monks predominant, and kept up the Buddhist religion. Hence was said:

*Yā saṅghitthiyasahassanisāgatā tam
Dulladdhighoratimiram vinihacca sammā,
Sā Tissatheraravinā gamitā vikāsam
Saṅgūticārunalinī api dassitā me.⁶¹*

[9] The convocation which did glow under the Elder Moggaliputta-Tissa, like unto a beautiful lotus pond when blown by the sun, after the horrible darkness of false belief ushered in by the night-like sixty thousand *Tīrthakas* had been completely dispelled, has (thus) been described by me.

Then the *Tīrthakas*, who had been expelled from the religion receiving no help from it, departed, and burning with rage they assembled at Nālanda near Rajagaha. There they took counsel together, saying: “We should make a breach between the doctrine

⁶¹ Quotation from the “Mahābodhivaṃsa.”

and the discipline of Śākya monks, so as to make it difficult for the people to comprehend the religion. But without knowing the niceties of the religion it is not possible to do so. Therefore by some means we must again become monks.” They then returned, and not being able to secure admission to the Theravāda Nikāya, went to the members of the seventeen fraternities, the Mahā-Sāṃghika, &c., which had been rejected by it, and entering the priesthood without letting it be discovered that they were *Tīrthakas*, and hearing and reading the Three Piṭakas, they reversed and subverted the same. Afterwards they went to the city of Kosambī, and concerted ways and means for keeping doctrine and discipline apart. And after two hundred and thirty-five years from the Nirvāṇa of Buddha they separated into six divisions, and residing in six places formed themselves into the nine fraternities Hemavata, Rājagiri, Siddhārtha, Pūrvaśailī, Aparāśailī, Vājiri, Vaitulya, Andhaka, and Anya-Mahā-Sāṃghika. Of these fraternities, the Hemavata heretics fabricated the “Varṇapiṭaka,” giving it a semblance of true doctrine and making it appear as if preached by the Buddha. The Rājagiri heretics composed the “Aṅgulimāla Piṭaka;” the Siddhārthaka heretics the “Gūḍha Vessantara;” the Pūrvaśailī heretics the “Raṭṭhapālagarjita;” the Aparāśailī heretics the “Alavakagarjita;” and the Vajraparvata heretics the “Gūḍha Vinaya.” These last also composed the Tantras⁶² Māyājālatantra, Samājatantra, Mahāsamayatattva, Tattvasaṃgraha, Bhūtacāmara, Vajrāmṛta, Cakrasaṃvara, Dvādaśacakra, Bherukādbuda, Mahāmāyā, Padaniḥkṣepa, Catuṣpiṣṭa, Parāmarda, Marīcudbhava, Sarvabuddha, Sarvaguhyā, Samuccaya, &c., and the Kalpa-śāstras⁶³ Māyāmarīcikalpa, Herambakalpa, Trisamayakalpa,

⁶² Magical and mystical works.

⁶³ Works on ritual.

Rājakaḷpa, Vajragandhāraḷpa, Marīciguhyakaḷpa,
Suddhasamuccayaḷpa, &c..

The Vaitulya heretics composed the “Vaitulya Piṭaka;” the Andhaka heretics the “Ratnakūṭa” and other scientific works; the Anya-Mahā-Sāṃghika heretics the “Akṣarasāri” [10] and other sūtras.⁶⁴ The different methods adopted in these several works are too many to permit of recital here. Although many schisms were caused in this manner, yet the religion of Buddha existed in purity for two hundred and nineteen years from the third convocation.

Out of the works thus composed at this time by the *Tīrthakas* in the guise of monks and made to appear like the true doctrine, the “Varṇapiṭaka” and other imitations of the dharma⁶⁵ remained in Jambudvīpa alone; the Vaitulyavāda, the Vājiriyavāda [Vajrayāna], and the scientific treatises named Ratnakūṭa, &c., reached also the shores of this beautiful Island of Laṅka.

Of the kings who ruled this country, the first was King Vijaya. His reign was followed by the reigns of Upatissa, Paṇḍuvāsa, Abhaya, Paṇḍukābhaya, and Muṭasiva. After these six kings the seventh in hereditary succession was Devanampiyatissa, who became king of this Island in the eighteenth year of King Dharmāśoka of Jambudvīpa, and in the 236th year after the death of Buddha. In his reign the great priest Mahinda, son of King Dharmāśoka, came to Śrī Laṅkā under the asterism Mūla, on the middle *Poya* [Full Moon] day in the month of Poson [May-Jun] of the twelfth year of his

⁶⁴ Discourses.

⁶⁵ The law; the scriptures; the body of law; the canon.

ordination; and in the first year of the reign of King Devanampiyatissa established the religion in this Śrī Laṅkā. In succession to King Devanampiyatissa followed Uttiyaraja, Mahāsīva, Sūratissa, Assarariyo,⁶⁶ Asela, Eḷāra, Mahānaga, Yaḷālatissa, Goḷu Abhā, Kāvāntissa, Duṭṭhagāmaṇi,⁶⁷ Sædætissa, Tultanraja, Læmæṇitissa, Kaludunāraja, and the five Tamiḷs.⁶⁸ After these seventeen kings⁶⁹ Vaṭṭagāmaṇi⁷⁰ succeeded to the throne 439 years 9 months and 10 days after the death of Buddha, and in the fifth month of his reign he met in battle seven Tamiḷ warriors,⁷¹ who were foreign invaders, and receiving defeat at their hands, took refuge in the forest.

At that time 500 *Arahats* who assembled at Alulvihāra in the country of Mātale, under the patronage of a certain chief, [11] recited, and reduced to writing the text of the Three Piṭakas, beginning with the

⁶⁶ *Lit.* captains of the cavalry. These were two South Indian usurpers named Sena and Guttika.

⁶⁷ [Text: Duṭṭugæmunu, here and elsewhere].

⁶⁸ *Viz.*, Pulahattha, Bāhiya, Panayamāra, Piyalamāra, and Dāḥiya, kings of Ceylon in succession B.C. 103–89.

⁶⁹ The seventeen kings are those already named, with the exception of Mahānāga, Yaḷālatissa, Goḷu Abhaya, and Kāvāntissa, whose names in the Sinhalese text are an interpolation, and should be deleted. These were princes of Ruḥuṇa, whose descendant Duṭṭhagāmaṇi became sole king of Ceylon; and the interpolation of their names is probably due to some enterprising scribe with a critical turn of mind, who doubtless thought that the name of Duṭṭhagāmaṇi ought naturally to be preceded by those of his princely ancestors.

⁷⁰ [Text: Vaḷagam Abhā, here and elsewhere].

⁷¹ Seven Tamiḷ warrior-chiefs are meant.

Buddha’s first words. “In many a birth of transmigration,” which he uttered in his felicity while seated on the diamond throne at the root of the *Bodhi*-tree on the day he scattered the hosts of Māra and attained Buddhahood, and ending with the last words. “Oh monks, since all things are impermanent, be diligent,” spoken by him at his final emancipation all that he preached in this interval of 45 years to gods [*devas*], *brahmas*, *nāgas*, *suparṇas*, men, *yakṣas*, *rākṣasas*, *siddhas*, and *vidyādharas* for their edification, the same in the number of letters, words, *granthas*,⁷² and *bhāṇavāras*,⁷³ leaving nothing, adding nothing, free from all heresy, upheld by the three convocations of monks, pure as a stream of the heavenly river, free as a crystal from all impurities, comforting the whole world like a great shower of nectar, great straight path to the three-fold knowledge, and the means for the attainment of all happiness desired by men, the same which had been brought down orally in the succession of the great monks Upāli, Dāsaka, Soṇaka, Siggava, Moggaliputta-Tissa, Mahinda, Iṭṭhiya, Uttiya, Sambala, Bhaddasāla, Ariṭṭha, Tissadatta, Kāḷasumana, Dīghanāma, Dīghasumana, Kāḷasumana, Mahānāga, Buddharakkhita, Tissa, Deva, Sumana, Cūḷanāga, Dhammapālita. Khema, Upatissa, Phussadeva, Sumana, Pupphanāma, Mahāsīva, Upāli, Mahānāga, Abhaya, Tissa, Phussanāma, Cūḷābhaya, Tissa, Cūḷadeva, and Sivasthavira.

Then after the lapse of 14 years and 7 months the great King Vatṭagāmaṇi, having assembled the Sinhalese hosts, destroyed the

⁷² *Granthas*, a certain number of words, being a standard for the measurement of written matter.

⁷³ The next higher standard to a *grantha* in the measurement of written matter. [It is equivalent to 250 x 32 syllables, the latter being the size of a standard Siloka verse].

Tamiḷs and united the kingdom; and having demolished the building of the ascetic called Giri, and uniting his name Abhaya with that of Giri, he built the Vihāra called Abhayagiri, and offered it to a priest named Tissa, who had been of help to him. At this time 217 years 10 months and 10 days had elapsed since the establishment of the religion in Lankā.

Now it happened that the high priest Tissa, who had received the Abhayagiri Vihāra, but was living at Kegalle, was credited by general repute with living in domestic intercourse [was married].⁷⁴ Thereupon the pious priests of the Mahā Vihāra assembled, and were interdicting him, when one of his pupils who was among the assembly, by name Mahādæliyā-Tissa,⁷⁵ obstructed them, saying, “Do not act thus by our High Priest.” [12] The priests then held the obstructor guilty of mixing in misconduct, and expelled him [from] the order.

He then, burning with resentment, left with about five hundred priests, and breaking from the Theravāda Nikāya, went and lived at Abhayagiri Vihāra. There came to him the disciples of Dharmaruci Ācārya of [the] Vajjiputta Nikāya before mentioned, who had found their way into this country from Pallarārāma of Jambudvīpa; and he, accepting their doctrines, joined them and settled down under the title of Dharmaruci Ācārya. From that time those belonging to the Abhayagiri were known as the Dharmaruci Nikāya. Thus a Nikāya called Dharmaruci, of a body of men separated from the Theravāda

⁷⁴ *I.e.* in breach of the rules of retirement strictly enjoined upon monks.

⁷⁵ [His name must mean: Great Cockroach; it is given as Bahalamassutissa (Great Beard Tissa) in Mhv XXXIII, 96].

Nikāya, was established in Bhāgiri Vihāra, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Vaṭṭagāmaṇi and 454 years after the death of Buddha.

Then followed these 29 sovereigns in succession: Mahādæliyā-Tissa, Coranāga, Kuḍātissa, Balatsiva, Vaṭuka, Bælatissa, Nilīyapurohita, Vāsuki,⁷⁶ Anuḷā, Makalantissa, Bhātiya, Mahādæliyā, Amaṇḍagæmuṇu, Kiṇihiridaḷa, Kuḍā Abhaya, Sīvali, Eḷunnā, Saṇḍamuhūṇu, Yasasiḷu Subhabalatā, Væhæp, Vaknæhætissa, Gajabāhu, Mahaḷunā, Bhātiyatissa, Cūlatissa, Kuhunnā, Kuḍānā, Kuḍāsirinā. After them the king named Vyavahāratissa, well versed in the law and religion, became king of this country 752 years 4 months and 10 days after the death of Buddha.

In the days of this king, the priests of Abhayagiri of the Dharmaruci sect adopted the Vaitulyan Piṭaka, which certain infidel Brāhmaṇas called Vaitulyas, who had assumed the garb of monks for the purpose of destroying the religion, had composed in the time of the above-named Dharmāśoka Mahārāja, and proclaimed it as the preaching of Buddha. Thereupon the priests of the Theravāda Nikāya having compared it with the authentic text, rejected the Vaitulya doctrines as being opposed to religion. On hearing this news, King Vyavahāratissa sent for the Vaitulya books, and got his

⁷⁶ This name is omitted from the revised edition of the Sinhalese text; but the present editor doubts if the omission can be defended. It is true that the name does not appear in the *Mahāvamsa* account; but the *Nikāya Saṅgrahawa* is an independent work, and must rest on its own authority. Here the author mentions twenty-nine kings, and speaks to the number. With the omission, the number becomes twenty-eight. This is clearly inconsistent. The name is therefore restored in the translation. (See also the First Edition of the Sinhalese Text, p. 12.).

minister named Kapila, a man who had exhaustively studied all branches of knowledge, to inquire into and report on them, and finding that they were not the word of Buddha, burnt them and disgraced the sinful priests who had embraced them. [13] And he caused the true religion of Buddha to shine out in splendour. As the *Mahāvamsa* says:

“Through the instrumentality of the Minister Kapila, suppressing the Vaitulya heresy and causing sin to be disgraced, he (the king) caused the religion to shine in this land.”⁷⁷

Commencing from Vyavahāratissa there passed a succession of six kings, viz., Abhātissa, Sirināga, Vijayiṅdu, Saṅghatissa, and Dæhæmi Sirisaṅgabo.⁷⁸ Then succeeded as the seventh the great King Goṭhābhaya; and in the fourth year of his reign over Śrī Laṅka, the same shameless priests of Abhayagiri of the Dharmaruci sect put forward the Vaitulya teachings again, as the doctrines of Buddha. But one of these, the Mahā Thera Ussiliyātissa, having heard how the priests who had embraced the Vaitulya doctrines in the days of King Vyavahāratissa had suffered disgrace, and thinking it inexpedient that there should be a repetition of this in the days of a judicious king, said: “Let us not unite with them;” and taking with him 300 priests, he left the Dharmaruci Nikāya, and going to Dakkhiṇagiri Vihāra settled there. A Mahā Thera named Sāgala, who was among the number, lived there propounding the religion. From that time his disciples living there were known by the name of

⁷⁷ *Mahāvamsa*, ch. 36.

⁷⁸ The six include Vyavahāratissa, with whom the series commenced.

Sāgaliyas. Thus a sect called Sāgaliya, separated from the Dharmaruci sect, was established in the Dakuṇugiri Vehera, 795 years after the death of Buddha, in the days of Goṭhakābhaya.⁷⁹ Afterward, in the reign of King Mahāsena, it overran the Jetavana Vihāra.

Now, the great King Goṭhakābhaya, having assembled the priests of the five great monasteries,⁸⁰ and made inquisition into this matter, and finding that the Vaitulya doctrines were not the word of Buddha, caused sixty of the sinful priests who had adopted them to be picked out, branded with marks on the body, and expelled [from] the country. He also caused the Vaitulya books to be collected and burnt, and glorified the Buddhist religion.

Then some of the sixty exiled priests went and settled in the town of Kāveripaṭṭinaṃ. At that time a certain young infidel came to Kāveripaṭṭinaṃ from afar, and noticing the favours which the former were receiving from the citizens, received ordination at their hands for the sake of worldly advantage, and settled there and became known as Saṅghamitra. One day, while these priests according to their rules had come to bathe and were disrobing, he perceived the marks on their backs, and inquired about them. [14] They, replied: “The king called Goṭhakābhaya of Laṅkā, at the instigation of the priests of the Mahā Vihāra, caused sixty of us, of the Abhayagiri Vihāra, who had adopted the Vaitulya doctrines, to

⁷⁹ [Text: Goḷu Abhā, here and elsewhere].

⁸⁰ Scil. Mahā Vihāra, Cetiya Vihāra, Thūpārāma, Issarasamaṇa, and Vessagiri Vihāra, founded by Devānampīyatissa. These constituted the orthodox church of Ceylon.

be branded on our bodies and expelled [from] the country.” He asked, “Is there anything I can do for you in the matter?” They said: “If you are clever enough, there is much to be done with our enemies.” “So be it,” said he; “I will see that either the priests of the Mahā Vihāra do adopt the Vaitulya doctrines, or that the Vihāra itself is uprooted and destroyed.” Thereupon he lost no time in coming to Laṅkā, where, having won the favour of Goṭhakābhaya, he became tutor to his sons, Prince Jeṭṭhatissa and Prince Mahāsenā. But seeing that Prince Jeṭṭhatissa was already able to judge for himself, he gave up teaching him, and occupying himself with the younger, Prince Mahāsenā, taught him with a view to make him further his future plans. After a righteous reign of thirteen years the Mahāraja Goṭhakābhaya departed this life.

Thereupon Saṅghamitra, through fear of Prince Jeṭṭhatissa, went to the Coḷā country, and dwelt in the town of Kāvīra. Prince Jeṭṭhatissa became king, and died after a righteous reign of ten years. Hearing of this he (Saṅghamitra) returned to Laṅkā and, taking up his abode in Abhayagiri Vihāra, did his utmost to persuade the priests of the five great Vihāras to adopt the Vaitulya doctrines; but in vain. He then approached his pupil, King Mahāsenā, who had succeeded to the throne 818 years after the death of Buddha, and having after much persuasion won him over, got a royal edict proclaimed by beat of drum in the city, forbidding any one to give alms to the priests of the Mahā Vihāra, on pain of a fine of 100 pieces of money. The priests of the Mahā Vihāra coming to the town and having after three days’ begging received no alms, gathered together at Lohāmahāpāsāda and thus expressed themselves: “Even though we starve we cannot say that heresy is true doctrine. Should we say so, many others would follow us and go to perdition, and the guilt

would be on us. So, even if our lives and asceticism be imperilled, we shall refuse to adopt the Vaitulya doctrines.” Thus saying the orthodox priests of all the temples in the vicinity, including the Mahā Vihāra, Mirisvata Vihāra, and Sīgiriya, left their vihāras and proceeded, some to the province of Ruhuṇa, and some to the Malaya province. Thereupon the friend of sin, Saṅghamitra, with the support of a minister named Soṇa, got the king to uproot and destroy about three hundred and sixty-four colleges and great temples, including [the] Lohāmahāpāsāda, and got their sites ploughed and sown with legumes.⁸¹ At the same time the Dharmaruci sect of the Abhayagiri Vihāra went and occupied Sīgiriya.

[15] To quote the *Mahāvamsa*:

After the destruction of the Mahā Vihāra by the sinful Mahāsenā, the monks of the Dharmaruci sect occupied (the temple of) the Cetiya Rock.

Later on, this King Mahāsenā, under the salutary influence of a trusty minister named Meghavaṇṇābhaya, built anew the Mahā Vihāra, and having sent for the priests who had gone away, supplied them with the four priestly necessities. The lady who was the chief queen of this king, a daughter of the royal Lāmāṇi race, at whose instance the Thūpārāma was being built, got a carpenter to decapitate Saṅghamitra, and having impaled his body she sent for and burnt the Vaitulya books. The citizens too in their rage invaded the house of the minister Soṇa, the supporter of Saṅghamitra, and having overpowered and killed him [they] cast his body into a dung

⁸¹ [Text: *uṇḍu*].

heap. At this time, though Saṅghamitra was dead, King Mahāsenā being unable to discriminate between good and bad priests, in consequence of his association with sinful men, placed his trust in the dishonest Mahā Thera Kohontissa by name, of the Dakkhiṇagiri Vihāra, and began to build for him the Jetavana Vihāra in the garden Jotiya within the grounds of the Mahā Vihāra. The priests of the Mahā Vihāra protested against the construction of vihāras for other sects within their limits. The foolish king, hearkening to the priests of Abhayagiri, ordered that in that case the boundary marks should be rooted up. But the priests resolved not to let this happen, saying that the limits should remain as long as the religion endured; and having concealed seven priests in a tunnel, left the vihāra and went away. Then the priests of Jetavana Vihāra began to root out the boundary marks. Hearing of this a *sāmaṇera* priest of the Situlpavu Vihāra,⁸² possessed of supernatural powers, appeared among the crowd in the form of a *rākṣasa* with an iron club uplifted in his hand, and putting to flight the priests of Jetavana in various directions proceeded towards the city. Hearing of this, King Mahāsenā inquired, “What should be done to appease him?” And being told that he would not cease at this point unless he saw the priests of the Mahā Vihāra, the king ordered that they be searched for and produced without delay.

Then the ministers entrusted with the order of the king brought and displayed the seven priests who had previously concealed themselves in the tunnel. At that moment the *sāmaṇera* priest who had come in the guise of a *rākṣasa* vanished and retired to Situlpavu Vihāra.

⁸² A well known temple in the Ruhūṇa province.

[16] Then the king, unable to uproot the boundary marks, built the Jetavana Vihāra within the limits, and granted the same to Kohontissa Mahā Thera already mentioned. Subsequently a charge was laid before the *Saṅgha* against this priest Tissa that he had committed the extreme offence,⁸³ and upon an inquiry into it being held by one of the king's judicial officers, Dharmika by name, the charge was found to be true, and the Mahā Thera, although against the king's wish, was quietly disrobed. To quote the words of the *Mahāvamsa*:

A charge involving excommunication was brought against the priest Tissa who received the vihāra. The charge which came before the *Saṅgha*, and was well founded, was duly investigated by a minister named Dharmika,⁸⁴ who caused him to be disrobed and expelled, although against the wishes of the king.⁸⁵

Thereupon priests of the Sāgaliya sect came from the Dakkhiṇagiri Vihāra and settled in Jetavana Vihāra; and in the days of King Aṃbahaṇa Salamevan they embraced the Vaitulya doctrines. It was in this wise: After the aforesaid King Mahāsena, and after the reigns of Kītsirimevan Raja, Deṭutissa, Bujas Raja, and Upatissa, a king called Mahānāma reigned over this country. In his reign the commentator called Buddhaghosa, renowned for his great erudition, came to this country from Jambudvīpa, and wrote commentaries on

⁸³ A priest commits the extreme offence if he commits murder, fornication, or theft, or falsely pretends to the higher grades of sanctity.

⁸⁴ [It appears from the *Mahāvamsa*, this was not his name, but his quality, i.e. he was a righteous elder].

⁸⁵ *Mahāvamsa* ch. 37.

the Three Piṭakas (which contained 275,250 granthas) containing 361,750 granthas, and thus glorified the doctrinal texts.

Then there reigned in succession sixteen kings, viz., Sengot Raja, Læmænitissa, Mitsenkaralsora, the six Tamiḷs,⁸⁶ Dāsenkeli, Sīgirikasubu, Mugalan Raja, Kumāradāsa, Kīrttisena, Mædisivu Raja, and Læmæṇi-Upatissa. After them, in the second millennium of the Buddhist era, the King Aṃbaheṛaṇa Salamevan (above referred to) ascended the throne. In the twelfth year of his reign a merchant called Pūrṇa, who had gone from here to the Kāsi country, obtained a book containing the Vaitulya doctrines, and accepting it as the truth, brought it to this country, and presented it to the king. This king, not being qualified as kings of old to discriminate between true doctrines and the false, entered into concert with the priests of Abhayagiri, and placing the book of Vaitulya doctrines at Jetavana Vihāra, ordered the priests to reverence it. Then the priests of the Sāgaliya sect, who had come from Dakkhiṇagiri Vihāra and were living at Jetavana Vihāra, having heard that former kings had disgraced and exiled the priests who had embraced the Vaitulya doctrines, were backward in accepting [17] it. The priests of Abhayagiri, however, tried persuasion and won over the foolish priests of Jetavana Vihāra to observe those doctrines, just as wicked men would deceive children into eating beetles for rose-apple⁸⁷ fruits, which they resemble in colour. But the priests of the Mahā Vihāra and a great many of the intelligent men of Anurādhapura kept them severely at a distance.

⁸⁶ Paṇḍu, Pārinda, Kuḍā Pārinda, Tiritara, Dāṭhiya, and Pīṭhiya.

⁸⁷ [Text: *damba*].

In time⁸⁸ a great priest and teacher named Jotipāla, coming from Jambudvīpa, so exposed the fallacies of the Vaitulya doctrines that in his day they fell into disrepute and died off. The *Cūlavamsa* makes this reference:

At that time a Mahā Thera named Jotipāla had a controversy with the Vaitulya heretics, and crushed them in this Island.⁸⁹

Then, as there were no more converts to the Vaitulya doctrines, the priests of those two colleges won over a person who was residing in the king's household, and having through his influence got an officer who was in their confidence appointed to the post of chief intelligencer, through him placed the Vaitulya books before the king. After his death the priests of the two *Nikāyas*⁹⁰ dismissed pride, and lived in submission to the priests of the Mahā Vihāra.

Thus it will be seen that the Vaitulya doctrines were brought to Laṅkā on three occasions and were burnt to ashes by sincere Buddhist kings, and for a fourth time they were introduced by the merchant called Pūrṇa, 852 years after the introduction of Buddhism into this country and 1,088 years after the death of Buddha, in the days of the King Aṃbahaṇa Salamevan, and were observed by the ignorant people of this land.

⁸⁸ *I.e.*, about 40 years later, in the reign of Aggabodhi I., whose name appears in the next enumeration of kings. – *Mahāvamsa*, ch. 42.

⁸⁹ [*Cūlavamsa*, 42.35].

⁹⁰ *Denā Nakā* and *Bhāgiri Naka*, otherwise *Jetavana Vihāra* and *Bhāgiri Vihāra*, the seats of the two Vaitulya fraternities.

Now, with King Aṃbaheṛaṇa Salamevan, there was a succession of six kings, viz., Dapulusen Raja, Daḷamugalan, Kuḍākitsirimevan, Senevimahanā Raja, and Læmæṇisiṅgānā. After them the king named Agrabodhi ascended the throne. In his day there flourished these twelve illustrious scholars: Sakdāmala, Asakdāmala, Dæmi, Bæbiri, Daḷabiso, Prince Anurut, Prince Daḷagot, Prince Daḷasala, Prince Kitsiri, Prince Puravaḍu. Sūryabāhu, and Kasupkoṭa Ēpā.

Then, commencing from Agrabodhi there followed a succession of twenty-five kings, viz.: Kuḍā Akbo Raja, Saṅghatissa, Læmæniḃoṇā, Asiggāhaka, Sirisaṅgabo, Læmæṇikaṭussara, Daḷupatissa, Pæsuḷukasubu, Dāpuḷa Raja, Læmæṇidaḷupatissa, Pæsuḷudaḷupatissa, Pæsuḷu Sirisaṅgabo, Valpiṭivasudatta, Huṇannaruriyandaḷa, Mahalæpāṇa, Agrabodhi, Suḷukasubu, Pæsuḷu Akbo, Kuḍā Akbo, Salamevanmihindu, Udaya Raja, [18] Somahindu, Mædi Akbo, Kuḍā Dāpulu, and Pæsuḷu Akbo. After them, 1,126 years after the introduction of Buddhism and 1,362 years after the death of Buddha, King Matvaḷasen became ruler of this country. But he was not a man who had associated with men of learning. During his reign an ascetic of the Vajraparvata Nikāya, clad in the robes of a priest, came to this country from Jambudvīpa, and lived in the dwelling called Vīrāṅkura. Having presented fifteen *kalandas* of gold which he had brought, to the cook of the royal household, Girivasæ Sen by name, he got him to sound his praises to the king, who, hearing of his virtues, just as the grasshopper leaps into the fire taking it for gold, went to the ascetic, and being impressed with his secret discourse, which he called a confidential teaching, accepted the false Vājiriya [Vajrayāna] doctrines, and abandoning the true doctrines, such as the Ratanasutta, which shine forth in power extending over a 100,000 *crores* [billions] of worlds, he by reason of his embracing these false

doctrines fled from the place he lived in, and giving up the city to the Tamiḷs went to Polonnaruwa, and died there. It was at this time that the Ratnakūṭa teaching, &c., were introduced into Laṅkā.

After the death of King Matvaḷasen the Mahāraja Muṅgayinsen, who succeeded to the throne of Laṅkā, set out with a Sinhalese army and invaded the kingdom of Pāṇḍi, and having slain and routed the Tamiḷs, recovered the drums of victory and the gem-set bowl which had been captured in the days of King Matvaḷasen, and then returned to Laṅkā. He restored the Lovāmahāpāya, which had been damaged by enemies, and repaired the breaches in its walls; he settled the observances of the three Nikāyas, and made them conform to religion; and placing guards round the coast to prevent the arrival of false priests in Laṅkā, he reigned in righteousness. Thus the *Cūlavamsa*:

Seeing the prevalence of false doctrines in the world, he placed guards round the sea coast for protection.

Nevertheless since the doctrines of Vājjiriya [Vajrayāna] were clandestinely observed as a secret cult, these from the days of Matvaḷasen continued to be kept up by the foolish and the ignorant. The Nīlapaṭadarśanaya having got to be public, also remained. Its history is as follows:

In the days when the aforementioned Kumāradāsa⁹¹ ruled in this country, there reigned a king named Śrīharṣa in Southern Madhura in Jambudvīpa. At that time a wicked priest of the Sammittiya

⁹¹ Page 16.

Nikāya, clever but impious, went to the house of a harlot at night, covering himself with a blue garment, and having slept there, returned at daybreak to the vihāra. His pupils [19] noticing his attire, asked him if that was a proper garment. Then, as many had seen the garment he had on, he lauded it and explained its propriety. The priests who were his devoted followers gave up their robes and donned blue garments. Then this man adopting as the three incomparable gems in the three worlds, vivacious harlots, enlivening drink, and the god of love, and worshipping them, despised the other gems as if they were crystal stone, and composed a work in *Grantha*, called Nīlapaṭadarṣana, *i.e.*, the exposition of the blue robe. Thus says that work:

A favouring damsel is a gem;
A gem is cheering wine.
A gem is Love. These gems I serve.
No crystal gems are mine.

When thus the Nīlapaṭadarṣana began to be promulgated, King Śrīharsa sent for it and perused it.

“Fool, why not drink? Dost thou wish to go to hell? Spirit mixed with a pinch of salt is scarce even in heaven!”

Noticing this incoherent stanza, and realizing that this in sooth is no doctrine but a breach of religion which, if treated with indifference by a ruler such as he was, would lead to the ruin of Buddhism and to the damnation of many men, he determined to protect the religion of Buddha which is to endure for 5,000 years. Pretending to be convinced, he sent for the blue-robed brethren and their books, and

having got them with the books into a house, he made a fire-offering of house and all. A few who escaped on that occasion, like a disease not entirely stamped out, still continued to don the same garments.

After the death of King Muṅgayinsen, the following nineteen kings ruled Śrī Laṅkā, viz.: Udā Raja, Kasup Raja, Pæsuḷukasubu, Dāpuḷu Raja, Kuḍā Dāpuḷu Raja, Udaya Raja, Sen Raja, Udā Maharaja, Pæsulusen Raja, Mædisen Raja, Kuḍāmidel Raja, Salamevan Raja, Mahiṅdu Raja, Vikramabāhu Raja, Mahāle Raja, Vikramapāṇḍi Raja, Jagatpāla, Parākramapāṇḍi, Lokeṣvarasenevi.

After them the Mahārāja named Mahalu Vijayabāhu became king over Śrī Laṅkā, and destroying great numbers of Tamils, who for 88 years had over-run the villages, the towns, and the cities of the Island, brought Śrī Laṅkā under one umbrella. He commenced the ordination of priests for the propagation of religion, and seeing to his chagrin that there could not be found for convocation even five priests who rightly observed the precepts, he sent to foreign parts *lacs* [hundreds of thousands] of pearls and gems and got out from Aramana [Rāmañña, i.e. the Mon country in present day Myanmar] twenty pious elderly priests and books; and having secured ordination for thousands of priests in Laṅkā he disseminated the religion.

[20] Then following Mahalu Vijayabāhu and his three successors Jayabāhu, Vikramabāhu, and Gajabāhu, after the lapse of 1,696 years from the death of Buddha there became king over Śrī Laṅkā the great king Śrī Saṅghabodhi Śrī Parākramabāhu the First, of the

Mahāsammata dynasty of the Royal race,⁹² king of kings, his fame refulgent the wide world over, like circling rays of light. He, accustomed to the regal state and great in the guerdon of past merits, subdued some 364 Vanni districts and became Supreme Lord of the whole Island.⁹³ And in Laṅkā, once the prey to internecine conflicts, he assembled together all the available Sinhalese forces, including 24 *lacs* and 25 thousands [2,425,000] of mercenaries and 9 *lacs* and 95 thousands [995,000] of naval veterans; and selecting 10 per cent of the two forces, he sent over to foreign parts 21 *lacs* and 25,000 [2,125,000] Sinhalese warriors; and having subdued all the kingdoms from Soḷi and Pāṇḍi to Aramana,⁹⁴ established his sway alike over his own and foreign countries.

And with a view to maintain his rule without disturbance in Śrī Laṅkā, he created the following chief offices, viz.: Adhikārā,⁹⁵ Senevirat,⁹⁶ Āpā,⁹⁷ Māpā,⁹⁸ Mahalāna⁹⁹ Maharætina,¹⁰⁰ Anunā,¹⁰¹ Sabhāpatinā,¹⁰² Siṭunā,¹⁰³ Siritlenā,¹⁰⁴ Dulena,¹⁰⁵ Viyatnā,¹⁰⁶

⁹² [This connects him to the Buddha's own lineage].

⁹³ [I.e. he reunited the whole of Śrī Laṅkā].

⁹⁴ [I.e. South India and the Mon country in Myanmar].

⁹⁵ Justiciar.

⁹⁶ Commander-in-chief of the Forces.

⁹⁷ Heir Apparent and Aide-de-camp to the King, and virtually First Viceroy.

⁹⁸ Heir Presumptive and Second Viceroy.

⁹⁹ Secretary of State.

¹⁰⁰ Minister of the Interior.

¹⁰¹ Second Minister of the Interior.

¹⁰² President of the Council.

¹⁰³ Director of Commerce.

Mahavedanā,¹⁰⁷ Mahanæketnā,¹⁰⁸ Dahampasaknā.¹⁰⁹ He also established the eight departments of record, the eight departments of transport, the four departments of the treasury, the eight departments of the elephant industry, and the eighteen thousand villages not included in the services to be rendered in the above departments.¹¹⁰ He ordained that all these institutions should continue uninterrupted, and was passing his days in the enjoyment of great royal state when around the city of Polonnaruwa which is thus celebrated in song:

“The glorious city of Pulatthi [i.e. Polannaruwa], with citizens prosperous and [21] happy, with princes affording protection to all, with beauty in its aspect and every sight to please, with houses tall as ranges of hills – this city great of old, the seat of mighty kings”

(Around this city) he caused to be built the following grand *vihāras*: Pūrvārāma, Dakṣiṇārāma, Paścimārāma, Uttarārāma, Kapilavastu, Isipatana, Kuśinārārāma, Veḷuvanārāma, Jetavanārāma, Laṅkātilaka, Trivaṅka, and Etubadalena. In these he placed in residence several thousand priests of standing.

¹⁰⁴ Chief Legal Adviser.

¹⁰⁵ Under Secretary and Keeper of the Rolls.

¹⁰⁶ Chief Intelligencer.

¹⁰⁷ Chief Medical Officer.

¹⁰⁸ Chief Officer of the Calendar.

¹⁰⁹ Minister of Education.

¹¹⁰ These villages were therefore less fortunate, as they had to serve the State by the mere payment of taxes.

The king also caused to be built 360 sets of cloisters, and named them after his own new titles, such as:

Śatru-Rāja Coḷa-kulāntaka, god of death to the Coḷa race of inimical kings.

Uddhata-Rāja-nirmūla, extirpator of arrogant kings.

Durlabdhī-mathana, suppresser of heresies.

Durnīti-vāraṇa, abrogator of bad laws.

Prakṛtajña, wise with the matter in hand.

Sakala-dig-vijaya, victor of all directions.

Antaścara-śatruvijaya, vanquisher of frontier enemies.

Śaraṇāgata-vajrapañjara, adamant enclosure to those coming for refuge.

Paramantra-bheda-vikrama-pratāpa, confounder of others councils by valour and might.

Akalaṅka, flawless.

Sarva-śatru-śiromaṇi, a crest-gem for all enemies.

Prakriyā-nukriyā-niścaya, decider of moves and countermoves.

Para-rāja-go-dhurjati, god Śiva to other kings, who, to him, are bull-like.¹¹¹

Nṛhari-kairava-rājahaṁsa, the greatest among men, as a royal swan among white lotuses.¹¹²

Paranārī-sahodara, a brother to the wives of other people.

Ari-rāja-veśyā-bhujāṅga, paramour of the mistresses of inimical kings.

¹¹¹ Śiva rides on a bull.

¹¹² He is in the brightest company, but decidedly shines the most.

And providing perpetual maintenance for three thousand and seven hundred ordained priests, he was living a life of health and ease, when he came to hear of the decline of religion during the one thousand to hundred and fifty-four years intervening between the fifteenth year of King Vaṭṭagāmaṇi previously mentioned and the fourth year of his own reign, on account of the sinful priests who had continued to observe as true the Vaitulya and other false doctrines, which had been started by infidels in the manner previously shown, and which, though in disrepute, were still handed down. He thought that if a ruler of such extensive sway as he, hearing of so great [22] a stain on the sublime purity of the Buddhist religion, paid no heed, the Buddhist religion would die out, and many mortals go to perdition. “It is meet,” thought he, “that I should be of service to the religion of Buddha, which is to last 5,000 years,” and with a heart influenced by mercy and directed by wisdom, he considered, “With whose help can I purify the religion thus declining, to enable it to endure without blemish?” Then he went up to the priests of the Mahā Vihāra, whose chief was the Thera Mahā Kāśyapa of the grove of Audumbaragiri, a man helpful to the three-fold faith and possessed of various virtues, such as steadiness, constancy, &c., and informing them of his desires, he sent for many hundreds of sinful, evil-practising priests of the three sects called Dharmaruci, Sāgalika, and Vaitulya, who by their evil practices stain the purity of the Buddhist religion, and having placed them in a marquee, he, standing in his place during the three watches of the whole night, expelled them all, and, purifying the Buddhist religion, brought the three colleges into conformity. On account of the merit of this good act, he was, upon his death, re-born as the god Naradeva, with a *kalpa*'s lifetime, on a golden peak of the Himalayan mountain range, which shines with 84,000 peaks of gold.

The purity of religion thus established at this time continued to be maintained for 36 years from the death of that king, and then again it began to decline as before. After the death of this Parākramabāhu¹¹³ I, there followed fifteen sovereigns in succession, viz: Paṇḍita Vijayabāhu, Kilinkesdāmahindu, Kīrttiniśśaṅka, Vīrabāhu, Vikramabāhu, Coḍagaṅga, Līlāvātī, Sāhasamalla, Kalyāṇavatī, Dhārmāsoka, Æniyaṅga, Līlāvātī, Lokeśvara, Līlāvātī, Parākrama Pāṇḍi. After them the foreign king named Kāliṅga Vijayabāhu, originally known as Māgha, became king of Śrī Lan̄kā. And in the great commotions which took place in the first part of his reign the priests fled from Polonnaruwa and other long established places, leaving the books and other necessaries wherever they chanced to be, and seeking for help arrived at Māyāraṭa. There the king Vijayabāhu Vat-himi supported the priests by giving them the four-fold necessaries of robes, &c. In the Mahā Vihāra which he built, called Vijayasundarārāma after his name, he assembled a great body of priests headed by the Supreme Thera Saṅgharakṣita, who was the pupil of the Supreme Thera Śāriputra and who ruled the church of the day, and the Mahā Thera Medhaṅkara, the hermit of the Dimbulāgala forest, and after much effort settled various disputes which had arisen among the priesthood, and formulated a new code of rules, and did great service to religion. The son of this great king, Kalikāla Paṇḍita Parākramabāhu, versed [23] in all knowledge, like unto the summer sun drying up the mud of enemies, living at Daṁbadeniya, became the Mahārāja of Śrī Lan̄kā; and endowing himself with exceeding royal glory, put an end to troubles arising from enemies, such as Tamiḷs, Malalas, Jāvakas, &c.,¹¹⁴ who

¹¹³ [Text: Pærakum].

¹¹⁴ [I.e. Southern Indians, Malays and Jāvans].

had built fortresses in different parts of the Island, viz.: Polonnaruwa, Pulacceri, Koṭasara, Gantaḷā, Kauḍāpulu, Kuruṇḍu. Padimānā, Matugoṇa, Ḍebarapaṭun; Urātoṭa, Gomuḍu, Mīpātoṭa, Mañḍali, and Maṇṇāram; and bringing under his power the whole face of Laṅkā and enjoying royal prosperity, he built magnificent vihāras, in various places, such as Sriwardhanapura, &c., and settling priests in them, provided them with the four-fold requisites, robes, meals, bedding, and refreshments. And hearing of the prevalence of much misconduct, calculated to damage the religion, among men of family who had entered the priesthood and were leading careless lives, and realizing the impropriety of allowing the church, which former kings had with great exertion maintained in purity, to fall into such a condition in his day, he called together the councillors of the two sects of priests under the leadership of the Supreme Thera Aranyaka Medhaṅkara, the chief pupil of the Mahā Thera Buddhavaṃsa Vanaratana of the Dimbulāgala succession, and appearing before the assembly with kindly heart and placing before it the state of the church, he purged it by obtaining the expulsion of those who were guilty of misconduct and were unsuited to the priestly office. He advised that no room be left for those who would be careless hereafter, and got rules formulated for the observance of priests who devote themselves to study or meditation, so that the customary religious observances might be maintained in conformity with discipline, for 5,000 years. And with a view to the perpetuity of the two sects, he constructed a great building, like unto a dwelling in the Brahma world, at the place called Pūṭabhattasela (Paḷābatgala), and settled therein hermit-priests full of virtue, of little worldly desire, and able to undergo the strictest austerities; and he caused [the] Upasampadā Ordination to be given to thousands of priests. Through his younger brother Bhuvanaikabāhu Āḍepā, he secured

instruction for a large number of priests, and glorified the Buddhist religion by greatly increasing its prosperity. At this time 1809 years had elapsed since the death of Buddha.

From the time of the Mahā Thera Buddhaghosa, the commentator, who lived in the reign of King Mahānāma, to this time, there lived the following great priests, doctors of learning, viz.:

Buddhadatta, Dharmapāla, Jotipāla, Kṣema, Dharmasrī, Nanda, Ānanda, Anuruddha, Upatiṣya, Buddharakṣita, Maudgalyāyana; as did also the following great priests from [24] the time of the Supreme Thera Śāriputra of keen intellect, who hearing but once could carry in his mind several thousands of stanzas, viz.:

Sanḅharakṣita, Sumaṅgala, Vāgīsvara, Dharmakīrti, Nāgasena, Ānanda, Vedeha, Buddhapriya, Anavamadarśī. These great priests produced various commentaries and annotations and introductions to numerous doctrinal works, translations, glossaries, editions, &c., and glorified the sublime religion of Buddha,

Similarly the following priests, viz, Ślokasiddhārtha, Sāhityavilgammula, Anuruddha, Dīpaṅkara, Mayūrapāda, Dhārmāsena, and the following lay scholars, viz., Śūrapāda, Dharmakīrtipada, Dhīranāgapāla, Rājamurāri, Kavirājaśekhara, Guruḷudāmi, Āgamacakravarti, Parākrama Paṇḍita, and Agra Paṇḍita, produced religious poems, explanatory translations, and glossaries, and numerous doctrinal treatises. On the foundation of those works succeeding writers have produced religious expositions in accordance with the needs of their times, and made the scriptures of the religion of Buddha resplendent.

After Paṇḍita Parākramabāhu there ruled in succession these seven kings: Bosat Vijayabāhu, Mahā Bhuvanaikabāhu who dwelt in Yāpavu, Parākramabāhu, Vat-himi Bhuvanaikabāhu, Paṇḍita Parākramabāhu, who dwelt at Hastiśailapura, Vaṇṇi Bhuvanaikabāhu, and Vijayabāhu. After them Bhuvanaikabāhu IV became king in the city of Gaṅgasiripura¹¹⁵ on the banks of the Mahawæli-gaṅga, and in the fourth year of his reign 1,894 years had elapsed since the death of Buddha. At that time a certain minister called Senālaṅkādhikāra Senevirat, born of Meheṇavaravaṃsa, sent much wealth, such as pearls and gems, &c., and got a stone image house built at Kāñcipura, a three-storied image house for a standing image (of Buddha) built at Devnuvara, and a large image house, 18 cubits square, at Akbo Vihāra. Likewise he constructed a great vihāra of royal magnificence called Abhinava Laṅkātilaka, beauteous as the Kailāśa mountain, on the top of the Parṇaśaila hill, in the city of Siṅduravāna, his ancestral home, and adding to himself many other meritorious deeds, lived full of faith. Hearing of the prevalence of misconduct endangering religion among men of standing who had entered the priesthood, he brought the fact to the notice of a council of priests of both sects under the leadership of the Supreme Thera Vanaratana of Amaragiri Vāsa,¹¹⁶ and armed with the royal authority made an inquisition into the church, and for a time restored its purity. On the death of Bhuvanaikabāhu Mahārāja there succeeded the king Parākrama. On the latter's death the Mahārāja Vikramabāhu [25] succeeded to the throne in the same city. And in his reign flourished a minister by name Alagakkonāra,

¹¹⁵ Gampola.

¹¹⁶ Devanagala.

Of the lineage of the Girivaṃsa, who became world-renowned for his influence and might.

In this fair Island of Laṅkā, which contains sacred places, such as the city of Kalyāṇī, which is thus described:

With houses, *Bodhi*-trees, grand promenades, pavilions, city walls, halls, image houses, relic shrines, and with attractive bazaars and most beautiful gates and porticoes, the city of Kalyāṇī shines glorious.

Which (city of Kalyāṇī) is surrounded by a rampart like unto the *Cakravāla* rock,¹¹⁷ and contains rows of palatial buildings, white in their mortar and rivalling the Kailāśa rock,¹¹⁸ of one story, two stories, three stories, five stories, &c., beautiful with walls, pillars, and flights of stairs ornamented with various frescoes, which city moreover is resplendent with vihāras, beautiful in their courtyards attached to relic shrines and *Bodhi*-trees, and in their image houses, walks, spacious halls, and rows of gates, – which city furthermore contains a network of broad streets, and in the two main arteries fed by these, throngs of men of various climes – which city lastly is full of wealth of all sorts – in this fair Island of Laṅkā, containing places such as this sacred city of Kalyāṇī, he, the minister aforesaid, finding it expedient that enemies to the country and to the religion should be kept at a distance, selected for the site of a city the village named Dārugrāma situated not far from the harbour of Colombo, in the middle of a lake, and well protected by a surrounding body of

¹¹⁷ A wall of rock which is supposed to surround the habitable globe.

¹¹⁸ A peak of the Himalayas, white with perpetual snow.

water ever full; and, there he set to work his officers, men who looked to the good of others as much as to their own advancement, who were loyal and faithful in his service, who were efficient in discharging whatever duty was entrusted to them, who knew the right thing for the right place, who were clever, intelligent, kind to their subordinates, and obedient to their superiors. Under the supervision in these officers he caused a great moat, very broad and fearfully steep like a precipice, to be sunk round Dārugrāma, and as a solid defence he caused to be erected, bordering the moat a wall of stone. He caused the space at the top of this wall to be decorated like unto a creation of Viśvakarma,¹¹⁹ and protected it by fixing or locating in proper places *idangini*,¹²⁰ *pulimugaṃ*,¹²¹ [26] *bhūmiyantaṭṭu*,¹²² *aṭṭāla*,¹²³ and *vattaveṭṭām*.¹²⁴ He thus caused the fortress famous as New Jayawardhanapura¹²⁵ to be built. On the top of the great rampart of that city he caused to be built separate temples for the protection of the four quarters, dedicated to the four guardian deities Kihiræli-upulvan, Samanboksæl, Vibhīṣaṇa, Skanda-Kumāra, to whom is entrusted the welfare of Śrī Laṅkā. He ordained that constant adoration should be paid to them, accompanied by dancing and singing with beating of drums and music of various sorts; and he caused the city to overflow with abundant prosperity and a teeming population. And in the inner city

¹¹⁹ The architect of the gods.

¹²⁰ Iron spikes.

¹²¹ *Lit.* tiger face. Evidently a trap for the foot, closing like the jaws of a tiger.

¹²² *Lit.* ground antlers; caltrops.

¹²³ Watch towers.

¹²⁴ Secret passages, for offensive and defensive purposes.

¹²⁵ Present Kotte or Cotta.

be stationed himself surrounded by his great armies of Sinhalese and Tamiḷs, lions in bravery, like unto a pictorial representation of the narrative in the Umandāwa, when King Culani Brahmadata with one hundred kings and a great army of eighteen *aksauhinis*¹²⁶ surrounded the city of Miyulu, and the Śrī Mahabodhisattva, Mahauṣada by name, intent on good for mankind, sat without fear or perturbation, and put to flight the hostile army and obtained triumph. And at that time, like unto Māra with his hosts who came with distorted features to the sacred seat under the *Bodhi*-tree, wearing various forms, tearing up both heaven and earth with various kinds of weapons, such as *candra*, *cakra*, &c., so did Āryacakravarti come with a mighty host of Tamiḷs at once by sea and land with warlike purpose, all clad in armour of various hues, bearing weapons, and with *visapēlali*,¹²⁷ *naḍasāla*,¹²⁸ and *mārāsi*¹²⁹ in support. All these he put to flight. And as if to emulate and show how great the glory of Duṭṭhagāmaṇi and other ancient kings was when they destroyed the various Tamiḷ camps at Ambatoṭa, Miyuḡuṇa, Deṇagama, Aturaba, Polvatta, Khāṇu, Tambunna, Kasātoṭa, Satbēkoṭṭa, Gāmaṇigama, Vasiṭṭhagama, Hālakoḷapura, Dīghābhaya, Māgalla, Kumbhabāṇa, Kaṇdamunna, Vijitapura, Girinilnuvara, Mahela, and Anurādhapura, he captured their encampments at Colombo, Wattala, Negombo, and Chilaw, and defeating the mighty hostile hosts who were swarming (in those places), caused his fame and glory to spread in all ten directions.

¹²⁶ See Clough [who in his Sinhala English dictionary defines it thus: a complete army consisting of 109,350 foot, 65,610 horse, 21,870 chariots and 21,870 elephants].

¹²⁷ Poisoned screens.

¹²⁸ Grappling machines.

¹²⁹ Palisades.

He was praised by many a poet in such strains as follows:

There flourishes that valiant lion called Alakeśvara, ever strong in breaking open the frontal knobs of elephants represented in the person of his enemies, and ever in his place on the grand beautiful golden rock of Laṅkā, the home of untold and fascinating wealth.

[27] He was admitted into the circle of the five ranks of princes known as ruler of an island, ruler of a principality, ruler of a province, ruler of a buffer state, and advisory prince; and pleasing the hearts of men with the four moral virtues, almsgiving, affability, promoting the prosperity of others, and loving others as one's self, he caused the ordination of priests for the benefit of future lives, and spending money lavishly in many thousands, constructed mahā vihāras of royal magnificence, such as the Sīṅdurugiri Vihāra, and established cloisters, naming them after his tribal names, such as Kāñchipurapurandara, Girivaṃśaśekhara, Niśśaṅka Alakeśvara, &c. Further he built separate vihāras for the Mahā Saṅgha living in villages and forests in the vicinity of his birthright, the city of Rājagrāma, replete with all the good things requisite in a city, and coveted by a great number of various races. He accumulated great merit by offerings of the four sacerdotal necessities. This Niśśaṅka Alagakkonāra of Amaragiri, minister, who thus lived in faith, hearing of the misdeeds of sinful priests who lived unrestrained lives in various places, and seeking for a remedy in the manner of the cultivators of *ae* paddy, who protect the corn by rooting out the tares and weeds from amongst the corn blades, became aware of how in the olden days pious kings and ministers by force of their commands, with great effort, maintained the religion, and of their deeds and

words at various times from beginning to end in aid of the religion, and brought these facts to the notice of our primate, Śrī Dharmakīrti by name, whose fame and glory were spread over the ten directions, possessed of great virtue and influence, the home and abiding place of a mountain of moral precepts, the lineal representative of the Vanavāsi succession of Palābatgala, and having called together the chapters of the two colleges, he, in the year 1,912 after the death of Buddha, standing in the midst of the priesthood and acting in the name of the king, empowered the pious priests to inquire into the state of religion and to disrobe a number of sinful priests, and (thus) for a time established in peace the maintenance of the religion.

The harmony of the church then established, prevailed unbroken up to the fifteenth year of Bhuvanaikabāhu V. Up to this fifteenth year there had elapsed 1,929 years from the death of our Buddha. Afterward, in the 20th year of that Bhuvanaikabāhu, the cousin-german¹³⁰ of that king, the Āēpā, named Vīrabāhu of the Mehenavara family, came to the throne. [28] True to his name in virtue, knowledge, fame, glory, majesty, prosperity, and in similar excellent qualities, as also in great physical strength and personal prowess, and master of the various kinds of strategical warfare, he overcame all rapacious hostile designs of Tamiḷs, Malalas, Moors, &c., and bringing the whole surface of Laṅkā under one umbrella, enjoyed royal prosperity. With the idea that he should not waste the abundance of wealth, which had accrued to him from the merits of his past lives, he made offerings of rice, flowers, and lamps in the name of Buddha and paid marks of respect to those versed in

¹³⁰ The word used is *suhuru-baḍu*, which means the son of either mother's brother or father's sister. (From the Sanskrit *śvaśurabandhu*).

religion; with love he listened to preaching, and having set apart for the priesthood the revenues of wooded villages, provided them with the four-fold necessities. To some Brāhmaṇas he gifted villages, lands, fields, and wealth; to others clothes, ornaments, and corn; to some Brāhmaṇas and bards he gifted slaves, oxen, buffaloes, horses, elephants, cows, gems, maidens; and to other mendicants he gave food, drink, and clothes, and made them happy.

Thus by the power and majesty of his arm he maintained the precepts of charity and of religion, the only certain means of securing happiness in the two worlds, and covered both this and foreign countries at one and the same time with his glory:

Like unto a mine of gems of virtue, strong as the rock Meru, subduing his enemies, as a lion subdues elephants, to poets the very same as a brilliant sun to lotus flowers, Vīrabāhu, the ādipāda, shines in glory over the whole of Laṅkā.

Endowed with a pure and abundant faith, fond of excessive almsgiving, he gave large villages, oxen, elephants, horses, wealth, and slaves to the sons of the Conqueror (of sin), to Brāhmaṇas, bards, and others, – he, well versed in all knowledge, and with a heart full of charity and kindness.

Though thus are described the special virtues which he naturally possessed, he heard the glories of former kings thus sung:

Having a consciousness of greatness not possessed by other kings, and rivalling the god of wealth in the greatness of his

charities, the king, dear to his subjects and the subject of their praise, rules the three-fold Laṅkā freed from enemies.

Ever he delights the hearts of crowds of suppliants by the taste of charities, just as rutting elephants delight swarms of bees, and he delights himself by their songs of grateful praise.

Hearing these abundant praises, and desirous of emulating the example of those of whom they were sung, and with mind bent upon maintaining in conformity with the times all royal [29] customs connected with religion as they prevailed in the days of the pious potentates of Laṅkā, and constantly engaged in assisting the religion and the word, With his heart set on the Triple Gem¹³¹ and delighting therein, he, with the object of ensuring the protection of the island of Śrī Laṅkā radiant with the splendour of the nine gems and of the three gems, assigned suitable salaries to brave and skilful soldiers, and made them expert with the sword, the javelin, the bow. &c., and by the very equipment of his forces with transport and arms, he struck terror into the hearts of fierce foes, scared away foreign enemies, and established the kingdom in tranquillity. Day by day advancing in happiness and increasing his virtuous desires, he built halls for almsgiving and gave alms to people of various creeds, such as the Paṇḍarangas and others of the Pāsāṇḍa sect, and other mendicants. He gifted in increasing proportions money, corn, clothes, ornaments, beds, and, conveyances to Brāhmaṇas and bards, and delighting their hearts was himself delighted by the clamour of their gratitude.

¹³¹ The Buddhist religion, as consisting of the three gems. Buddha, the Law, and the Order.

Moreover, as by nature he was of a religious disposition, he made great offerings to the priesthood of both colleges, gave them robes from the royal treasury, procured ordination to the sons of noble families, looked and searched for fit persons for the future protection of religion, and appointed them to the offices of *Agatæn*,¹³² *Mahapadavi*,¹³³ &c., and enjoyed happiness and delight by seeing the priesthood on all suitable occasions, and with his innate love of religion dedicated to the order his principal son. While thus living in ever increasing faith in religion, he heard of the prevalence of misdeeds among some bad priests living in the interior, and called together an assembly of the priesthood of the two colleges under the leadership of the second Dharmakīrti Mahā Swāmi, at that time the ruler of the church, the *Anujāta*¹³⁴ pupil of Śrī Dharmakīrti Mahā Swāmi, far famed over all the ten directions and endowed with an abundance of worldly virtues, such as those of protection, of administration, and of observance of precepts, together with the Mahā Thera Maitreya of Galaturamula, a pillar of religion; and according to ancient custom he authorized the pious priests to inquire into and purify the religion by removing the stain of impiety; and he thus glorified the religion of Buddha. At this time there had elapsed 1,939 years since the death of Buddha.

[30] Such was the practice of purifying the religion as adopted by the kings of old, loyal to religion, impartial, and faithful, such as Dharmāśoka:

¹³² *Lit.* “chief place.”

¹³³ *Lit.* “the great office.”

¹³⁴ An *Anujāta* pupil is a pupil taking exactly after his master.

If one removes from the religion of Buddha the stain that has got into it with great and good intent, by the merit of that very act, after many lives in the worlds of the gods, he attains the great and noble bliss of Nirvāṇa.

Thus it will be seen that if a pious and wise great man, on hearing and becoming aware of a stain which has got into the religion of Buddha by reason of wicked priests who are detrimental to their own and others' interests, will, instead of indulging in abuse, fully inquire into the matter, in consonance with doctrine and decorum, and purify the religion by establishing the authority of good and orthodox priests, who are mindful of their own and others' interests, and become helpful to the religion of Buddha, such a person by the influence of that good act, after happiness in many re-births during a very long period in the worlds of gods, will (in the end) reach the most noble city of Nirvāṇa. Keeping in mind these words of the scriptures, it behoves men of influence and leading, with great effort and in manner befitting the times, to remove the stain of impiety which, may have got into the religion of Buddha, so that it may last for 5,000 years, and by the merit born of that good act, to attain the fulfilment of all desire, namely, the bliss of future celestial lives and of Nirvāṇa.

“What is there in this book not heard by us before, or not known to us?

All these things we know.” In this wise you should not think.

What is the use of oil when the lamp is alight?

These words of mine are in the same case.

Dispersing completely the darkness of wicked men by the thousand rays of glory overspread in many directions, and ever delighting the priesthood which contains men of virtue, like the bees and swans in a lotus pond, may great kings shine refulgent over Laṅkā for long periods like the sun in the heavens.

May the doctrines of the Great Sage long endure.

May rulers be steadfast in religion.

May rain fall in season.

May all men become happy by mutual love.

May this religious history, named “*Nikāya Saṅgrahaya*” which is written by the Mahā Thera Jayabāhu, surnamed Devarakṣita, for the purpose of showing how religion prospers [31] under the influence of kings and royal ministers, pious, wise, truth-seeking, and just, endure to the advantage of the religion, so long as the religion endures.

Aforetime when Bhuvanaikabāhu was reigning in the beautiful city of Gaṅgasiripura, a famous priest named Dharmakīrti caused to be built a vihāra called Saddharmatilaka in the village Gaḍalādeṇiya, and lived there a long time.

His pupil, the learned priest named Devarakṣita, known and renowned over the world as Jayabāhu and celebrated as the Mahā Thera Dharmakīrti, attained the rank of Saṅgharāja and glorified the religion. He wrote this brief history of religion in the native tongue with a view to the perpetuity of the religion of the Teacher.

If by writing this pleasing and useful work I have gained any merit, by the force of that merit may men attain the sorrowless Nirvāṇa to which Buddha attained.

May the devas, together with crowds of heavenly nymphs, long enjoy happiness in the celestial worlds.

May the doctrines of Buddha long prevail in the world.

May the rulers of the earth in happiness rule the earth.

End of Nikāya Saṅgrahaya