

Review By H.H. Prince Chula Chakrabongse

Having had the good fortune to have been partly brought up in the Grand Palace, where I often stayed from time to time over a period of some ten years with my grandmother, the late Queen Saowabha, then the Queen Mother, I was more than delighted to see that for the cremation of the late Prince Rangsit, His Majesty had chosen as his own giftbook a volume of photographs of the Ramayana frescoes in the Chapel Royal of the Emerald Buddha taken by the King himself. As a child I passed countless days of joy in those cloisters looking at the colourful frescoes in which one's childhood heroes and villains so vividly came to life. I was therefore highly elated to find that the frescoes had also won His Majesty's heart.

Altogether thirty-five photographs are reproduced in the book. It is explained that they form only a part of those taken by the King and that the developing and printing in Switzerland had not been entirely successful and consequently several of the photographs had had to be excluded. Not having seen the original photographs, I naturally would not have the presumption to discuss them, and will here deal with the reproductions. The photographs are mostly excellent and recall the spirit and atmosphere of the frescoes, especially when His Majesty chose to concentrate on details rather than to photograph a whole wall. The happiest result to my mind is that of Wall No. 53 showing Hanuman who had swallowed the whole camp of Prince Rama for its protection; our most favourite of monkeys here looks exactly like a bulldog happily asleep. Another close-up of Hanuman (Wall No. 43) brilliantly shows vivid details. Room 45 which gives the details of Hanuman in close

Ramakien frescoes in the cloisters of the Chapel Royal of the Emerald Buddha, photographed by His Majesty the King, with verses by King Chulalongkorn and His friends accompanying the frescoes, and notes giving the origin and venue of the story of Rama in Siam by His Highness Prince Dhani Nivat. 1952.

combat with three ferocious demons has an excellent composition. I also like Room 55 where the white monkey is seen overcoming the demon prince, Maiyaraba, with a great tree trunk.

Where a whole wall is photographed and reproduced the results are less happy and tend to become somewhat blurred; especially when Hanuman is being prepared for burning, he can hardly be properly picked out (Wall No. 36). Let me hasten to add that in photography there are few things as difficult as photographing frescoes. Even the experts work in teams of four or more, with special cameras and complicated lighting as well as spending hours and hours on the task. Thus we can be rightly proud of our Monarch's work. The blocks are extremely good, and I only wonder why the photographs cannot cover a whole page.

Opposite each photograph is printed a poem telling the appropriate story. These poems are from a collection written by the late King Chulalongkorn and his friends for each of the walls and they were inscribed on marble tablets placed near the walls. It is to be regretted that, in the introduction, the year in which these poems were written is not stated.

The second half of the volume is devoted to the most learned and highly comprehensive notes on the Ramayana by His Highness Prince Dhani. The late King Vajiravudh once carried out a similar task in his "The Birth of the Ramayana", but he did not cover such a wide field as the present scholar. Prince Dhani goes right back to trace clearly and simply the spread and separation of the Aryan races, the eastern portion of which came to India whose hero Prince Rama was.

He then differentiates between the ancient and popular recitals of the story of Rama and the classic poetical work of the Rishi Valmiki which known as the Ramayana. He then relates briefly the story of Valmiki's Ramayana based on King Vajiravudh's book which I have already mentioned.

Having shortly traced the entry of the Ramayana into Thailand from its first impact down to the first reign of the Chakri Dynasty, Prince Dhani gives a précis of the story of Rama in poetry as written by the First King (Rama Kierata) as well as discussing contrasts of details with the Ramayana itself. He then goes on to explain that in the version by the Second King, the royal author essentially intended it to be used as a singing accompaniment to the ballet, hence it is a more concise and compact version. We also have the most interesting excerpts of similar scenes from the two versions of royal Father and Son showing contrasting treatment. We then have some lucid comments on the Rama story in further reigns; followed by an account of the Rama story as it appeared in neighbouring countries such as Java, Cambodia and Malaya. The notes conclude with a superb table tracing the descent of the Rama story from India into South East Asia through different routes.

Prince Dhani's notes on the story of Rama are the most learned, complete, and comprehensive which have ever been written on this subject in the Thai language and it is a subject which has profoundly influenced the trend of our art. It is a truly worthy companion to the collection of His Majesty's photographs, and forms a constructive contribution to the knowledge of our inheritance.

Chula Chakrabongse.

Prem Chaya: *The Story of Phra Abhai Mani*, 141 pages,
Chatra Press 1952.

This, as the author modestly describes it, is merely intended as an introduction to the great work of Sunthorn Bhu, telling the story in English, for the 'benefit of those who are unable to read the original'. It is nicely illustrated by the well-known artist Hem Vejakorn. It serves in fact a similar purpose as *Lamb's Tales from Shakespeare* did for the works of the Bard of the Avon, though the original intention in writing may be a little different for Lamb did not intend his work for the 'benefit of those unable to read the original'.

As the famous poet of the original *Phra Abhai Mani* is still comparatively unknown to 'those unable to read the original', a short summary of his story may be here permissible and useful for the due appreciation of the Tale of Prem Chaya.

Phra Abhai Mani and his brother Sri Suvarn are banished by their father, King Sudasna of Ratana, because of Phra Abhai's devotion to the flute to the exclusion of all else that should be learnt by a prospective ruler of a country. His flute-play is, however, unequalled to such an extent that he can charm every hearer to sleep. Walking on a beach one day, they come across three brahmias who are charmed to sleep by the flute-play. Sri Suvarn too is similarly affected. Left alone, he is caught by a giantess of the sea, a *Pisua Samud* as she is known. The latter term, by the way, is a generic name and not, as it seems to be understood in the Tale, a personal one. She carries him off to her cave beneath the oceans makes him her husband somewhat against his will and begets by him a lusty son called Sin Samud.

In due time Phra Abhai and his son are helped to escape across the ocean by a merman with his wife and daughter. The couple deploy the giantess in her pursuit and thereby sacrifice their lives in the effort, while Phra Abhai, borne on the back of the young daughter-mermaid, reaches an island haven where a hermit

lives of whom the *Pisua Samud* is afraid and refrains from approaching. Thus protected, Phra Abhai continues to live on the island and becomes the husband of the young mermaid, who, later on in the story, gives birth to a human child called Sud Sakorn.

King Silaraj of Paleuk comes next on the scene, cruising on a holiday with his beautiful daughter, Suvarnamali. On reaching the hermit's island they find there Phra Abhai, who is attracted to the Princess and leaves the island in company of the royal party. It is now the turn of the *Pisua Samud* to try to recover her husband because he is no longer within the hermit's protection. She succeeds in wrecking the ship but does not secure the husband and dies on another island in the act of pursuit. Meanwhile, Suvarnamali, borne over the waves by Sin Samud whom she now adopts as a son, reaches another island, where they are found by a pirate-ship bent on a voyage of plunder. Having taken them captive on board his ship, the master pirate tries to force Suvarnamali to become his wife. He is foiled in the attempt by Sin Samud and killed. Sin Samud takes possession of the pirate-ship.

Turning now to Sri Suvarn, the brother of Phra Abhai, who wakes up on the beach to find that his brother has disappeared, with the three brahmins he sets out in search of him by fitting up a boat and scouring the seas. They eventually come to the kingdom of Romachakra, where Sri Suvarn meets and falls in love with the King's daughter, Kesra. After saving Romachakra from a hostile invasion he is rewarded with the hand of his beloved. He is crowned king by her father who retires from sovereign duties. Sri Suvarn continues to live there for ten years and begets a daughter name Arun Rasmi. At this juncture Sin Samud arrives on his pirate-ship. Thinking that it is an enemy bent on plunder, Sri Suvarn goes out to defend his kingdom. After being defeated and captured by the youth, he recognises in his antagonist his own nephew. The latter and his 'mother' are invited to come into the city. After a sojourn there Sin Samud leaves to search for Phra Abhai and Sri Suvarn the uncle with his little daughter Arun Rasmi join him, leaving Kesra and the three brahmins to rule over Romachakra in their absence.

We now turn to Phra Abhai, who is left on that island where he 'fluted' the *Pisua Samud* to death. He is rescued by a fleet of ships under the command of Usren, the betrothed of Suvarnamali and heir to the farang kingdom of Lanka. Obtaining from Phra Abhai news of the shipwreck of his betrothed, he sets out with Phra Abhai in search of her. They come across Sin Samud's ship by mere chance. Phra Abhai, uses his magic flute to put all the fighting elements on both ships to sleep for he knows that here is his son on the pirate-ship. Sin Samud on his part, recognising the sound of his father's flute, jumps overboard and swims to his father. After a while Usren, having slept off the effects of the magic spell of the flute, is persuaded by Phra Abhai to accompany him and his son to the other ship, where Suvarnamali is. A parley takes place between the interested parties. Phra Abhai, bound by gratitude to his rescuer, Usren, is willing to withdraw his claim in Usren's favour. Sin Samud, however, is adamant in not surrendering the lady to his father's rival and is prepared to defend her against the farang. The negotiations having come to naught, Usren leaves the parley and starts fighting from his ship. Suvarnamali takes an active part in helping her adopted son to fight Usren, who is eventually captured. Phra Abhai intercedes on his behalf and he is released and sent back to his own quarters. At nightfall, however, Usren resumes fighting, and, being seriously wounded, sets sail in flight.

Having disposed of a rival the whole party sail straight for Paleuk, the home of Suvarnamali, who, in determining upon such a course of the journey, has the intention of seeing her mother, the Queen for Silaraj, who is up to now in ignorance of her husband's death. In due time Phra Abhai marries Suvarnamali here. Sri Suvarn with Sin Samud and Arun Rasmi return to visit Ratana but stop at Romachakra where his wife and her parents, the former King and Queen, are still living,

Turning again to Usren, who was wounded in the night battle, we find him now recovered and again setting out with his aged father to seek revenge. At Paleuk he is again defeated and captured.

Phra Abhai again pleads and gains for his rival honourable treatment. Though still a captive, he retains a defiant attitude, saying. . . "I came here to destroy you. I did not think I should be defeated. But since this has come to pass, do not expect me to make friends with my enemy. I am a man and a warrior, I am not afraid to die and therefore will bow to no one. Kill or quarter me if you wish. I will be reborn to plague you." Although Phra Abhai is for mercy, it is Valee, a minor wife of his, who decides his fate by taunting him with arguments till his anger rises to such a pitch that he becomes seized with convulsions from which he dies. His ghost nevertheless avenge his death by tormenting the woman till she too dies of fright. Usren's aged father, though managing to reach home, succumbs to his wounds. His daughter, Laweng, as sole inheritor of the kingdom, is invited to rule and to carry on the feud with the enemy. In order to please her, a would-be suitor, Laman, Prince of the Tamils, invades Paleuk, gets defeated and banished to a desert island where he dies of languishment. A picture of Laweng, seized from Laman's person, falls into the hands of Phra Abhai who raves after the Lady because the picture has been bewitched by Laman's ghost. Phra Abhai loses his reason.

We are now switched to the young son of Phra Abhai by the mermaid, who has been named Sud Sakorn. The lad has been brought up by the hermit on that island where his father left the young mermaid. He has acquired knowledge to wield supernatural prowess through a mystic walking stick. With this stick he has caught and tamed for use as a mount a horse with the head of a dragon which can gallop at a great pace over land as well as water. He names it Nilamangkorn, that is 'the black dragon'. With the mount and the mystic stick he sets out to look for his father of whom he is told by the hermit. In his wanderings he meets with various adventures which give him experience of life, including an encounter with a wily fakir and with the man-eating butterflies of gigantic size on the high seas. On his way too he is detained through kindness by a King Suriyothai of Karavek whose little daughter,

Saovakonth, becomes his inseparable companion in the quest after his father. He then reaches Paleuk, where he helps the Queen Suvarnamali, at this time regent for her husband who is mentally afflicted, to defend the city against a combination of armies of Laweng's suitors and eventually meets his father during the campaign.

Sri Suvarn and Sin Samud, who had been at Ratana, now hear of the peril that is threatening Phra Abhai. They consequently come to his help. They meet Sud Sakorn, with the help of whose magic Phra Abhai is restored to his senses as soon as Laweng's bewitched picture is destroyed.

With the family thus reunited and happy, Phra Abhai now leads an assault on the army of Lanka and its eight allies which are still besieging Paleuk. No definite result is attained when evening falls. The next day Phra Abhai makes a general advance which takes the enemy by surprise and makes him fly into the sea.

The present volume of Prem Chaya's tale ends here. It is therefore to be presumed that another one is to appear.

In its framing Sunthorn Bhu's *chef d' oeuvre* was no doubt based upon Ayudhya models like all other cultural activities of the early Bangkok period up to the middle of the XIXth century. That standard framing consists of a metrical narrative for recitation, without division into scenes or acts or even cantos. The *Story of Abhai Mani* must however not be taken to be the stereotyped metrical novel of princely adventures so common in that early Bangkok period, for in its conception it is most original and surpasses the most fantastic of the usual novels of the day with their abundant fantasy. In the first place it is an extravaganza pure and simple, and a marine one at that. All through the story one breathes in sea air and wanders through beaches and desert islands. It is moreover distinctly well characterised, like its contemporary *Inao*, a play by King Rama II. While *Inao* has its setting in court life of the palaces interspersed with the usual royal excursions and royal wars as well as very human dialogues, *Phra Abhai* excels in descriptions of

royalties passing their lives not in courts but among islands and beaches and even in the sea. While *Inao* is full of patrician realism, *Phra Abhai* makes very little attempt at being realistic and revels in the fantastic and unbelievable. Its very hero, Phra Abhai, is a most unconventional hero. Instead of being the brave leader of his people, Phra Abhai hardly ever leads an army with any success, most of the heroic deeds falling to his sons and even his wife; and he is content to play his magic flute. He thus wins wars not by heroism but by magic. The story is full of fantastic characters and episodes which could never have been meant to be possible in real life. The counter-hero, for he can hardly be designated as a villain, is Usren, a 'farang prince of Lanka' characterised as a man of great courage and vindictiveness - the latter being a trait of character which would naturally strike an old fashioned Siamese Buddhist as particularly 'farang'. (I hope my farang readers will forgive me for the statement of a real fact, for the farang of those days are much less liberal than you are now). Sunthorn Bhu however was not altogether ignorant of the people of Ceylon for he admitted the connection between the people of that island with another race which has had relationship with it, the Tamils. It was a prince of the Tamils who sought the hand of the Lanka princess and fought and died on her behalf. As for the Princess who became Queen on account of the succession devolving upon her, she was doubtless modelled upon the gracious lady who had just succeeded to the English Throne at the approximate time when he wrote this part of the romance. Sunthorn Bhu's geography, though making use of real as well as imaginary names was obviously never meant to be serious. It concerns seas and islands for the most part and one thing should be noticed about it is that very many of the imaginary names are connected with gems, for instance the Kingdom of the *Gem*, referring to Phra Abhai's home, Ratana; Paleuk, the Kingdom of the *Crystal*; and the mystic island of the hermit though unnamed in the Tale of Prem Chaya is called in the original *The Marvellous Island of the Gem*. The name of the hero too, Abhai Mani, means the *Fearless Gem*.

What then, it may be asked is the reason for the popularity of this fantasy? While admitting that I am merely recounting and discussing Sunthorn Bhu's poem with a view to the due consummation of Prem Chaya's Tale, and moreover am not at all conversant with the original fantasy, I have yet heard several of his fine passages and I feel I can subscribe to the opinion of his admirers that his versification in *klon* is good, his characterisation very sharp and varied and his human touch most excellent. If his humour and love-scenes are somewhat broad, that was the standard of olden days. Added to these qualities his language was beautiful but simple, more capable of appealing to the taste of a larger circle of readers than the more aesthetic works like *Inao* of Rama II.

Now about the Tale of Prem Chaya. No one indeed can tell the story in English better than the gifted author for it is sheer pleasure to read his English by itself. Like its original, the charm of the Tale lies in the simplicity of its language which flows melodiously into our visionary ears, if such a combination of the sensory organs were permissible. The Tale of Prem Chaya has not, as above noticed, carried the story to its end, but one understands and hopes that more is to follow. Sunthorn Bhu, one understands, excelled in beautiful though simple versification, in characterisation and in giving the human touch. It is hoped that in future 'Tales', our author would give us some renderings in English verse of a few of his fine passages to give readers some idea of it. A mere summary of the unconvincing extravaganza is after all not enough.

A useful feature of the Tale is the biography of the poet at the commencement with a picture from a drawing of him. Bhu was his real name and he received the title of Phra Sunthorn. He was a master of simple diction which appeals to the heart as well as the intellect. His irregular life and character often involved him in trouble resulting in dire poverty, from which he was again and again rescued by royal benefactors. Besides this *chef d'oeuvre* he was the author of many *niras*, or farewell poems, describing voyages in which he again laid emphasis on the beauty of the sea.

D.N.

Reeve, W.D.: *Public Administration in Siam*, published under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs London, 93 pages, 1952.

The author has set out in this little volume to give a general view of modern Siam. As may be expected when one keeps in mind that he was mainly concerned with the Royal Siamese Customs and the Ministry of Finance, in both of which departments of the Government he was an adviser, he has made good use of statistics. One would be inclined, in fact, to say that he has obtained valuable information by relying more on statistics than any other author has done so far. And yet it would be an exaggeration to say that he has written mainly from statistics. His wide observation, his ability to understand the national mentality, his good sense and his sympathy have all combined to bring out this very sensible survey of a country and its administration in which there is hardly more than half a dozen not so important inaccuracies of fact. One feature seems to the reviewer to be worthy of mention in this connection, rather than going into the cause and origin of existing conditions, the author has chosen to give a description of what exists. And that has been done with much sympathy and true understanding.

Summing up the political nature of the administration he says that four points should be borne in mind, namely; (1) the monarchy still exists and there is hardly a single Siamese who demands the inauguration of a republic, so great is the respect still felt towards the King and the Royal Family; (2) the politicians comprise only a handful of people mostly concentrated in the capital; the rest care nothing about politics, the democratic form of government having been imposed on them; (3) there is no major difference between the policies of one government and another, personalities being almost the only issue; and (4) despite political changes, the civil service carries on almost undisturbed.

As for the national rehabilitation, thanks to her natural surplus economy and the prices for her main product (rice), Siam appears well on the way back to her pre-war prosperity.

A short survey follows of the government under the so-called absolute monarchy. The accusation against the "Minister-Princes" that "practically all of them behaved with a considerable arrogance towards their subordinates" would seem to the majority of his readers who are Siamese to be a little too sweeping. But Mr. Reeve gained most of his experience of government work in Siam under the regime which followed.

A minor point which should be corrected is found on page 32. Here it is said that the government decided to abolish titles in 1941. The actual facts were that the cabinet did not seem to be entirely in accord on the problem of titles. It is true that no conferment had taken place since 1932; but those who bore them still retained their titles. What happened in 1941 was that some of the "promoters" of the Revolution of 1932, doubtless instigated by the leading civilian "promoter," influenced their colleagues to renounce their individual titles. The general body of officialdom, for some reason which need not be gone into here, followed suit. Those still retaining titles were mostly pensioned officials and independent citizens. The government then proclaimed that all titles borne by individuals ceased but titles as such were never abolished. Many government employes, including most of the leading military politicians among the "promoters", retained their titular names as surnames or personal names. A few years after, with the change of government, the proclamation was annulled and those demoted by that proclamation resumed their titles. Even those who "voluntarily renounced" theirs now asked to be allowed to be reinstated. The new Constitution of 1948 actually ruled that the monarch had the prerogative of conferring titles and decorations, which prerogative has been added to the revised 1932 Constitution now in use. Though this is a minor point it is of historical interest and should be correctly understood.

In Mr. Reeve's discussion of the general structure of the administration, he points out that one of its defects is the practice of referring too many matters to higher authorities, thus slowing down the work of many departments.

Of interest for the administrator is chapter VIII, in which are found mentions of the set-up and functions of some of the more important of the social and administrative services containing points of interest in the design or features uncommon in Western systems of government. The author names six such. They are the legal and judicial system, education, public health, the co-operative movement, the police and provincial gendarmerie and the civil service commission. In describing these services the facts are well stated though inaccuracies of detail occur.

Before going on, however, to these features the author touches on the subject of government controls. No government control exists, he says, which is really oppressive. Prices of things are therefore lower than in Britain, where control exists, by from 20 to 50%. This was in spite of the fact that Britain won, and Siam lost, the war.

In chapter IX, describing the civil service under the absolute monarchy, the author sums up "...though bribery and corruption were far from being unknown, the standard of honesty in the Siamese administration was relatively a high one, at any rate compared with most Asian, many European and many American countries." He goes on to say of the illicit opium trade "...the equivalent of some £3 to £4 million in all was made annually by the illicit opium traffickers. From these huge funds...many officials...were paid a 'retainer' of more than their official salaries just to 'turn a blind eye' to the traffic...in their jurisdictions." The traffic, by the way, was heard of before the days of Mr. Reeve; but, one wonders, was it a feature of the days of the absolute monarchy?

Under "Civil service under the Constitutional Regime" in chapter X, the author mentions features such as the admission of women and the enlargement of the scope of pensions.

Chapter XI deals with the civil service in relation to post-war problems. Of interest is the section setting out the effects of the rice agreement of 1946 which called for the delivery within 12 months of 1,200,000 tons of rice at a price which was about a third of world prices. This resulted in smuggling over the border on the part of traders who thus got tremendous profits. The agreement was then amended and things looked better.

He then goes on to discuss the essentials for honest administration which are thus enumerated: security in office, adequate emoluments, proper supervision and honesty at the top. Mr. Reeve has a few words about bribery and corruption resulting from the war. He sums up as follows:- "The days of 'big-money' smuggling racket is the prime example, are now over. It is hoped corruption, of which the rice—that gradually the inherent decency of the average Siamese will reassert itself and the standards of honesty in the administration will at any rate approach those of pre-war days. There are, indeed, signs of considerable improvement in the last year or so in such departments as the Customs—thanks, in that particular instance perhaps, to placing at its head a completely honest and incorruptible prince as Director-General." Things happen so quickly in present circumstances. One would like to be able to maintain that optimistic spirit.

Of great interest, if not the greatest, is Mr. Reeve's concluding chapter (XII) laying out the merits and defects of the administrative system. Even though a good deal of it is repetitive of former chapters, what is not is highly interesting and in any case it is a clear summary and any repetition can be for that reason understood.

It is true and only fair to say that "under the successive constitutional governments since 1932, great material advances have been made." His citation of road-building is a good example. Admitting the theoretical objection in a democracy to the appoint-

ment to high posts under the administration, of political nominees, the author is practical enough to recognise that it is to a certain extent unavoidable.

In sizing up Siam's material progress since 1932, one cannot help wondering what, in the author's fair and sympathetic judgment, has been the cause of it. Would he attribute it to the removal of the bogey of the absolute monarchy which oppressed the people with the arrogance of its "Minister-Princes" or to the patriotic zeal and self-sacrifice of "promoters" of the New Order? Would he think it possible that the half-century-long effort, started by King Mongkut and continued by his successors until it was definitely agreed by the "High Contracting Parties" in the reign of Prajadhipok a few years prior to 1932, to abolish exterritoriality and its attendant limitations upon the nation's fiscal system, might have had something to do with it? Could the changed trend in world politics whereby the West has ceased those practices which used to be condemned as imperialism, and has adopted a more brotherly attitude toward all men, also have contributed towards the easing of the situation and the resulting material progress?

D.N.

REVIEW

JOURNAL OF EAST ASIATIC STUDIES; Published Quarterly by
The University of Manila, Philippines; Vol. 1--No 3.

Contents: Economic Development in the Philippines by *Thomas R. McHale*; Agriculture Congress for the Philippines by *J.P. Emerson*; Notes on the Archaeological Work of H.R. Van Heekeren in Celebes and Elsewhere (1937-1950) by *H. Otley Beyer*; La Cadre Geologique de la Prehistoire Dans L'Indochine du Sud - Est by *Edmond Saurin*; An Early Mention of the Philippines in Chinese Records by *Wang Tselming*; Pottery Manufacturing in the Island of Masbate and Batan, Philippines by *Wilhelm G. Solheim II*; Some notes on the Mountain Peoples of North Luzon by *Laurence L. Wilson*; Archeology in the Philippines by *Wilhelm G. Solheim II*; Anthropology in the Philippines by *Chales O. Houston, Jr.*; Tales in Lepanto - Igorot or Kankanay as It Is Spoken at Bauco by *Morice Vanoverbergh*, C. I. C. M.

This is a new journal in its first volume. It is attractive in appearance and its material seems to be well organized and presented in a readable manner.

From the table of contents it is apparent that it is intended to present the views of authors on topics of varied and general interest. It is not intended to review the individual papers here but the various articles contain much information of value. The papers on the economic development and agricultural progress of the Philippines set forth certain facts regarding not only the development of the country economically but regarding agriculture which is the basic industry of the Philippines. The articles "Some Notes on the Mountain Peoples of north Luzon" will be of value to those interested in folklore and some of the early stories passed on from generation to generation.

In this number there is an excellent bibliography on foreign relations and foreign policy of the Republic of the Philippines since 1945. This bibliography lists 109 separate articles and papers.

This journal seems to be a worthy undertaking and it should become of general interest to those who are concerned with learning more regarding eastern Asia.

H.H.L.

RECENT SIAMESE PUBLICATIONS

104-6. *Correspondence between the Somdej Princes* (Their Royal Highnesses Princes Nariṣ and Damrong) สำนัสมเด็จ

Vol. VII. published on the occasion of the cremation of the late Phra Asokamontri, 84 pages, 1952.

In JSS, Vol. XXXIX, part 1 (June 1951) we reviewed the first five volumes of this series (nos. 58-62 of the Recent Siamese Publications). Vol. VI, a small one, is not available. Hence this skip to Vol. VII.

The correspondence published here covers the dates from the 23rd November 1935 to the 2nd January 1936. The main topic of correspondence includes the history of the province of Takuapā, in itself a classic example of material for a gazetteer, dealing not only with the town of Takuapā itself but also with its neighbouring territory on the coast of the Indian Ocean. The treatment is comprehensive and include all sorts of information. One is thus able to learn here how the tin industry of Siam arose and was duly administered by the Government; how a very serious rising of Chinese bandit-organisations was checked by a band of the country folk inspired by the respect they felt for the aged abbot of Wat Chalong in the district of Thalān, Bhuket province; how the remains of His late Royal Highness Prince Svasti, then a political exile in Penang, were cremated there; and how the north-eastern provinces (now known by the collective name of Isān provinces) were reorganised in the early days of the Bangkok régime.

Vol. VIII. published on the occasion of the cremation of the remains of Thaokae Woranāt Amatyakul, 79 pages, 1952.

This volume continues the history of Takuapā and the tin industry of the Bhuket coast. There are also philological discussions of the words ครัว (k'rua) and วรรณ (čaranam). In this volume begins the long and interesting account of Prince Damrong's trip to Burma

which would appeal to the historian and archeologist. The correspondence in this volume covers the period from the 4th January to the 20th February 1936.

Vol. IX. published on the occasion of the cremation of the remains of Khun Udom-ōsōth (P. Baedyānond), 40 + 10 pages, 1952.

This continues the correspondence from the 22nd February to the 12th March 1936 with ten pages at the end giving prescriptions for old-style Siamese medicine, for the deceased to whom the book is dedicated was a qualified old-style doctor of standing.

The bulk of its 40 pages continues the description of Prince Damrong's tour in Burma. This includes a description of the brass figures of animals as yet unidentified, which are mentioned in the old Ayudhya Annals as having been taken by Burengnaung when he conquered that capital. A detailed description of the Royal Palace of Mandalay is all the more interesting in that since the last war in South-East Asia practically all of that has been destroyed. The Prince was informed by an aged authority in Burma that the Burmese generally were in the habit of burying their dead, exception being permitted in the cases only of royalty and the monks whose remains would be cremated. The information led to the theory enunciated by Prince Naris that he was inclined to believe that the development of the method of disposal of the dead might have taken such a sequence as this:—

1. *Throwing away* the corpse, still practised with greatly improved methods by the Parsees of India;
2. *Burial*, a more aesthetic change from the above;
3. *Cremation*, followed by throwing away the ashes on the burial ground as under the shade of a Bo-tree;
4. *Cremation*, followed by burial of the ashes;
5. *Cremation*, followed by floating the ashes.

Prince Naris drew attention to the fact that this final development might have arisen out of the example of the orthodox Hindus of Banaras, whence came the original Brahmins of Siam. At that sacred town, it is still the custom to throw away the ashes into the Ganges which here bends northwards as if it would flow up to the Himālayas, where orthodox Brahmans locate the abode of Siva. Ashes of royalty used to be floated down from in front of Wat Padumagongā, the last syllable of which name has some relation to the Sacred India River.

107. *The Usages of Life*. พระเพณีเกี่ยวกับชีวิต collected by the Royal Fine Arts Department, 85 pages, 1952.

The collection has been made up of articles by different authors, written at different periods. They are:

Merit-Making by Sthien Bandhuransi and Luang Vichit Vādakār,
Childhood by the late Phya Rājavarānukul,
Ordination by the late Prince Sommot,
Marriage by the late Phya Pājavarānukul.

The Department had planned that the series should be completed by a fifth dealing with *obsequies*, written by the late Phra Carūñ-javanabadh and Luang Visāldarunakór; but Phra Abbhant, the husband of the deceased and chief mourner, felt that this fifth article has been often published on other occasions of cremation and preferred not to include it.

As usual the volume is prefaced by a biography of the deceased to whom it has been dedicated. Mrs. Abbhant was a well-known lady in Bangkok society. She was educated at the Wang Lang School of the American Presbyterian Mission, graduated later in nursing, served in that profession, travelled extensively all over the world with her husband, taught at her old school and just before her death volunteered and received an appointment as an associate judge of the Juvenile Court which was then a new idea about to be launched by the Government. In married life she attended to every

phase of her household duties, had no less than six children, three of her sons having already found permanent callings in life. A facsimile of her last speech in her own handwriting is reproduced which was found at her bedside, the end having come unexpectedly while she was looking through the manuscripts that very morning.

Turning to our subject under review, we find that of the four articles only the first one is fairly modern and up-to-date, the rest having been written during the reign of King Chulalongkôr, and probably in the first half of it.

The first article, on merit-making, defines the term *buñ*, rendered merit, as not merely an abstention from sin but as a positive virtue resulting from the practice of charity, morality and meditation, performed not with a view to profit but for its own sake.

Charity needs no definition, though charity to the Holy Brotherhood is usually governed by proscriptions and formulae which are described at some length. It may be added that not every charitably-minded Buddhist thinks it really necessary to mutter all these formulae when in the act of charity.

Morality has been codified in Buddhism as consisting of precepts, whether it be the usual fivefold, the special eightfold or more. The laity tries to abide where possible by the fivefold code and in some cases observes the eightfold one on certain days. The tenfold set is not, as here stated, for the laity but for the young novitiate. Monks, of course, are bound to observe a much more extensive one.

Bhāvanā, understood by the ignorant populace to consist of the repetition of mystic formulae, is really meditation. The authors define this as being meditation on the virtues of the Buddha, recitation of His teaching and listening to sermons. One is tempted to offer yet another aspect of meditation, that is meditation upon the arguments of Buddhist philosophy, for Buddhism is essentially a philosophy of rationalism.

An additional section under "merit-making" is added, dealing with the usages of merit-making, such as house-warming, obsequies and birthday services of benediction.

The second article on childhood, written by a senior official of the Ministry of Interior in the first half of King Chulalongkôr's reign, could not be taken as elucidating present-day customs but is interesting from the historical point of view. Exigencies of time and expense, combined with the progress of scientific knowledge and even a more rational understanding of the spiritual aspect of life, have greatly modified the usages of childhood. The wearing, for instance, of the knot of hair on the crown of a child's head to protect its *khwañ* and the cutting off of it at puberty, forming one of the most important milestones in a child's life, is now practically obsolete. This generalisation applies similarly to the fourth article by the same nobleman regarding marriage customs though perhaps to a less extent.

The third article though contemporaneous with the above two has not made itself similarly obsolescent, for the rational philosophy of the Buddha has been able to stand the test of time and science to a great extent. A discussion as to why a candidate for monkhood used to be referred to as a *nāg* refutes the popular explanation of a generation ago that it arose from an incident when a serpent-king in human form sought ordination. The late Prince Sommot thought that the term *nāg* or *nāgu* was used in reference to the candidate for ordination in written treatises for such a ceremony; and that it was then applied literally by less well-informed monks in the days of old when the original connotation of the term had been forgotten. The custom of ordination, in fact, has hardly changed with the times at all.

108. Yūph'o, D.: *Praleng, rabeng with mōnkrum and thoed't'oeng*,
 ประเลง ระเบง กับ มโหกรรม และ เถิดเทิง,
 30 pages, 1952.

The title of this little pamphlet refers to a variety of old dances, very rarely seen not only today but even a generation ago, when they were only performed at big Court ceremonies before the King. This applied to all three of them with the exception of the

thoedt' oeng which was a popular dance. The interest in them may be almost said to have arisen from the philological aspect in connection with their names.

The author heard from old authorities that the *praleng* might have been a survival of an original practice of sending out costumed dancers of the *khôn* or *lakôn* from behind the curtained back of the stage to sweep and generally clean up the area where a performance of the dance was to take place. Hence in either hand of a *praleng*-dancer, dressed as a human-being but wearing a mask, we see bundles of peacock feathers made to resemble a sweeping broom. Mr. Yūpho thinks moreover that the etymology of the word *praleng* might have had some connection with the Sanskrit word *pūrvarāṅga*, also a sort of introduction to the performance of a play. The *praleng* is accompanied by certain prescribed themes of music from the *pī ph āt* which are also the ones prescribed for the movement of celestial characters. The themes are such as the *k'omvien* or the *klom*. No verbal recitation or song accompanied this dance, until King Mongkut composed verses which have since been sung in accompaniment to the dance.

The *rabeng* and *mônkrum* are parts of entertainments performed at state ceremonies of the more grandiose kind. They used to be performed on parts of the ground in front of the royal pavilion, though (as far as the reviewer can remember) nobody took much trouble in looking at them since there were many other dances and performances going on at the same time. The gist of the story governing the dance is that a company of celestial beings are proceeding to pay their respect to the god Siva on Mount Kailās and are stopped on the peacock-riding their way there by Phra Kāl, i.e. fate personified. The author ventures the opinion that this personage should be not Phra Kāl but Skanda, whose traditional mount was a peacock. The *rabeng* is more commonly known as the *O' la pō*, which term just means something like "Hey, sirrahs," referring of course to the address of Phra Kāl to the celestial beings.

Associated with the *rabeng* are the *mōnkrum* and the *Burmans* ('*kulā*') *beating with their sticks* (*kulā tīmai*).

The *thoedt' oeng* is different from the above for its more plebian nature. The dancers are dressed in Burmese fashion and use the long drum so prevalent in Chiangmai and neighbouring districts which show the influence of former Burmese suzerainty. It is accompanied by a sort of singing.

109. *Twelve Operas* สิบสองเรื่องอุปรากร published under the auspices of the music section in the Royal Fine Arts Department. 129 pages, 18 illustrations, 1952.

Of late the Music Section has been giving to the Bangkok public symphony concerts as well as open-air popular concerts. The former are entirely western and for the open-air concerts Siamese music alternates with the western. As the latter are comparatively new to the public of Bangkok, the programmes have always included full descriptive summaries of the pieces performed.

The present volume is a development of the writing of these programmes and consists of the more generally known western operas which are usually found in the repertoires of operatic centres all over the world. They are: *Der fliegende Holländer*, *Rigoletto*, *Ie Trovatore*, *La Traviata*, *Aida*, *Faust*, *Samson et Dalila*, *Carmen*, *I Pagliacci*, *Madame Butterfly*, *La Tosca* and *La Bohème*. The only operas which have ever been performed in Bangkok in their entirety are *I Pagliacci* and *Cavalleria Rusticana*, but that was some time ago. Nevertheless, the collection might have included *Cavalleria Rusticana* which is not less popular than any of these twelve.

110. Phrompichitr, P.: *Buddhist Art: Thai Design preliminary part* พุทธศิลป์สถาปัตยกรรมภาคต้น Profusely illustrated, 107 pages, 1952.

This is in fact a bilingual publication, the English portion of which is rather badly written. The main purport, according to the

author's foreword, may be summed up as the bequest of his precious knowledge to future generations, especially when "Thai design is getting more and more popular with Europeans and Americans".

In dealing with the method of study the author points out "that learning straight and curved lines is comparable to performing physical exercises at a fixed spot. Later stages in the practice are comparable to more complicated movements like walking and running. With advancing knowledge, the students acquire discernment and learn to think creatively."

Designs are the most important of the stages of learning, though no definite order of the stages is laid down. Examples of designs follow.

Then comes the lesson proper. It is naturally illustrated in profusion. A point should be noted here in connection with roof-design. The public usually interprets the extremities of gable-ends as a snake motive. It is really an "acroterion shaped like a swan's tail" and is known in Siamese as the *hānghongs*.

Among the illustrations there are, besides the lines and curves, beautiful designs of modern Siamese art from the hand of the late Prince Naris and of the author. They are worth attention and they well demonstrate the fact that national art is not dying.

111. Krasaesindhu, W.: *The Wailings of Śrī Prājña*. กำสรวลศรีปราชญ์ 237 pages, 1952.

This forms the first of the series to be known as *Collections of Thai Literature* issued under the aegis of one who is known by his pen-name of Tamrā na Mūangtai. The *Wailings of Śrī Prājña* is a wellknown classic, which has become the pattern of many other classics such as the *Nirūś Narind* of the Bangkok period of history. The date of the *Wailings* is, however, debatable. It has been ascribed by some to a very early date in the XV century, and by others to various dates in the XVII or even the XVIII. The manu-

ment he banished the poet to Nakôn Śri Dharmarāj, where he again incurred the wrath of the Governor by carrying on a similar love-affair with a lady of the Governor's harem with the consequence that he was punished with the extreme penalty prescribed by law. The King later missed the poet and sent for him, only to learn that he had been executed by the Governor whom the King duly punished for what seemed to him an excessive penalty. Krasaesindhu cites another authority, which is none other than the *Statement of the monastery-seeking monarch* mentioned above.

So much for the authorities cited by the author. They are not, however, generally accepted as entirely authentic in the world of learning. Oral tradition nevertheless is widely spread which gives a more or less identical story. The main features of the story may, therefore, be accepted.

Krasaesindhu's theory as to there having been only one Śri Prājña who wrote this poem seems to be acceptable, although his dating is open to question. He has fixed it in the year of his banishment by Phra Petrājā in 1692 or possibly a year's difference. He has assembled other proofs, such as the fact that the poem mentions various buildings in the Royal Palace built by Phra Petrājā when he reigned, and also the fact that a mode of female-coiffure mentioned in the poem finds confirmation in the *Relation* of la Loubère who was in Ayudhya in the reign of Phra Petrājā. As regard the first of these facts, there could of course be some contention that the poet might have written his work, at any time after the year of banishment. The second fact merely proves that the poem was not written *before* the reign of Phra Petrājā. A similar deduction holds good also with regard to the third. For the supporter of the idea of keeping to what the *Statement of the Ayudhyan* says, namely that the banishment took place in the reign of "the Tiger", all the above contentions would how good.

Why then did Krasaesindhu maintain with certainty that the poem should be dated in 1692 in the reign of Phra Petrājā? Besides the evidence above cited, he also adduces the fact that the lady Śri Čulālaks, mentioned in the poem as his lady-love, was the sister

according to history, of Phra Petrājā, who would have all the more reason to resent the love affair. That of course is very natural and understandable, but it has no authentic historical proof. Other proofs are also given but they too hardly stand the test stated above.

Judging from accounts of their personalities, one would be inclined to think that the monarch who exercised comparative clemency would be Phra Petrājā; whilst the monarch who ordered the extreme penalty for the governor putting Śri Prājña to death could well be his successor, "the Tiger".

In making critical studies of the poem itself from the point of view of diction, Krasaesindhu is in his element. He is not a mere critic of literature but himself a poet of no mean merit, which has been generally recognised in modern literary circles. His philological comments are sane and display wide knowledge and reading.

The *Wailings of Śri Prājña* from its beauty of diction and depth of thought has served as model for many a poem of later days. One of the most frequently imitated ideas of this poem may be thus paraphrased;

"Were I to trust thee to the care of heaven,
 Indra, her Lord, might steal a kiss and take thee to his
 heavenly abode;
 Were I to trust thee to the vigilant earth,
 but His the earth, which cannot Him deny;
 Were I to trust thee to the spacious waters,
 the serpent-king's caress would scorch my heart;
 Who, then, but thine own will can guard thy sweetness ?

In collating the manuscripts for this edition, the author had before him three which belong to his own collection. He has not told us their ages. With these he compared six others from the National Library, facsimiles of three of which are here reproduced. As far as is known, however, they all belong to the Bangkok period.

A useful feature of the book is a map of the Chao Phya river from Ayudhya to the mouth, showing the old course of that waterway and marking the places mentioned in the poem. What should have been added is an alphabetical glossary of the numerous obsolete words and spellings.

112. Vajirañānavoṅgs, Somdech Phra: *Elementary Dharma*. พระโอรส
ธรรมบรรณาการเฉพาะที่เกี่ยวกับนวกโอรส
235 pages, 1949.

Buddhist Lent is an occasion for the layman to assume monastic robes once in his life for a term of over three months according to time-honoured custom. It gives an opportunity to study what we profess to believe under conditions much more conducive to a thorough understanding of the Dharma of the Buddha. In the monastery peace and quiet prevail; and monks both in theory and practice give up all worldly ties. Even a reigning monarch when he assumes monastic robes not only gives up his family but also his sovereign heritage so completely that when the time comes for him to resume the layman's life at the end of Lent he has to be crowned anew. Just so does the ordinary layman and householder give up all his household ties for the duration of his monastic term.

During such a term the new monk, known in monastic parlance as the *Phra buaj mai* or its Pali equivalent of *navakabhikkhu*, studies in accordance with the individual curriculum of the monastery which he has entered. Absolute equality prevails. No right of birth or civil status counts. Only precedence in the Holy Order of the Saṅgha is observed. Even the Patriarch himself, though presiding in administrative matters, must bow down in ceremonial ones before his seniors according to the dates of their ordination. The programme of studies varies according to individual monasteries. At Wat Bovoranives, for instance, the schedule used to be very full. A high official of the Ministry of the Interior once decided to enter the monkhood for the usual term of three months; and, as the story was told, was saying to his friends in the office that he had been

working so hard that he hoped he would thus obtain a three-months' holiday. When he resumed work at the Ministry after the monastic term he was known to have said that while in the monastery he felt it incumbent upon him to work at his Dharma even harder than in the usual routine in the government office.

The present volume is the substance of that part of the curriculum which deals with the Dharma at the monastery mentioned above. This was rearranged as a whole from a series of lectures delivered by His Holiness the Patriarch to the *Phra buaj mai* of 1949, one of whom took it all down in shorthand.

The volume commences by giving definitions and a statement of the object of the custom of taking a term at the monastery. Going on then to the essence of Buddhism, it is stated that the heritage of every Buddhist is the Dharma which the Master indicated as His heir. One should learn to recognise the virtues of the Buddha by analysing the stock collection of epithets describing the Teacher, *itipi So Bhagavā arahāṇi sammā sambuddho* which is more generally known in a condensed formula of salutation thus: *namo T'assa Bhagavato Arahato Sammasambuddhassa*, so often repeated by Buddhists with a reverence similar to that shown by a Christian repeating his *credo*. One should then learn to understand the distinctive features of His teaching and the aims of the Holy Brotherhood of His *sangha*. Then on to the more elementary of the important topics of Buddhist philosophy especially in so far as these are applicable to the daily life of an average householder, as distinct from the rigid principles governing the life of a monk. The book ends with a very short chapter on the history of the development of the Master's teaching, how it has formed the subject of successive deliberations in grand councils of the *sangha* and how it was again and again decided therein that the whole system could not be changed in its essentials. It has thus lived through two and a half millennia and remains still alive and active.

113. Buddhaghosācārya, Somdech Phra: *Compendium of Ethics*
 ประชุมธรรมสมเด็จพระพุทธโฆษาจารย์
 41 pages, 1951.

This collection was published by H.R.H. Princess Vāpī, one of the youngest surviving daughters of the late King Chulālonkōn. As the Princess' name means the lily, the first item in the collection is therefore a translation of the Vārijasutta of the Sa'yutta Nikāya of the Suttanta Pitaka. In fact the lily is brought in merely to form a simile. This is characteristic of the way in which the Buddha popularised His teachings. Thus the Master prefaced His teaching on this subject:

"I do not quarrel with the world, nor does the world quarrel with me. That which wise men of yore maintained to be non-existent that I also confirm.

"What, then, Oh Bhikkhus, do wise men maintain to be true, which I too maintain to be so? That, Oh Bhikkhus, is the impermanency of form and its liability to change, and of all the other sensorial aggregates. This, Oh Bhikkhus, the wise men of yore maintained to be true and I too confirm their pronouncement.

"That there are such things in our world as human nature, "lokadhamma", is my own deduction which has been announced, taught, demonstrated, formulated and made clear by me. Whoever can not digest this, which has been thus formulated and taught by me, is an ignorant man and I am unable to make him wise"

The Buddha then goes on to say that there are grades of ignorance among men. Some like young lilies not yet emerged from the surface of the waters are the worst; some are just beginning to emerge, and others completely above water are likened to wise men. The main object of this discourse was, of course, the way to dispel the different grades of ignorance.

The second item in this compendium is also a translation, from the Aparihānadhammasutta of the Aṅguttara Nikāya, dealing with the sort of person whose standard of ethics never deteriorates.

The third item is a stereotyped explanation of the three knowledges, namely the knowledge of conduct, of the mind and of the intelligence.

The next is a translation of the Ariyamaggasotasutta of the Saṅyutta dealing with qualifications for the first step in the Noble Path of Buddhist philosophy, called the Sotāpanna.

The fifth item enumerates 30 passages relating to deliverance from evil; while the sixth consists of 130 passages on the attainment of happiness. Both of these collections of passages are from the Buddhist Canon; and a blessing on the Princes, to whose munificence the volume owes its publication, from the pen of the Most Reverend monk concludes a characteristic pamphlet of this nature.

114. P'ulsukh, S: *Emperor Asoka* พระเจ้าอโศก
188 pages, 1951.

In the preface written by the Very Rev. Phra Brahmamuni, Director of King Mongkut's Pāli Academy, it is said that the work has been translated by S.P'ulsukh from the English of an unknown author who in turn translated it from the French of Dr A. Burnouf. The latter, of course, translated again from the Sanskrit original discovered by Mr Brian Houghton Hodgson in the library of the Buddhārām in Nepal.

The volume consists of an historical note on the life and personality of the famous world figure, followed by 8 other chapters on the tradition of the Indian Emperor's life as handed down in Mahayanist circles. The Siamese translation is exceptionally well written. The main interest of the book is the fact that it is the first work Siamese on the Mahayanist version of the story of Asoka.

115. Agaviçit: *Dissertations of*. โภทธอัครวิจิตร
110 pages, 1952.

"Agaviçit" is the modified spelling of Viçit Krairiksh's name while serving his term in the monkhood, which he later adopted as one of his personal names in ordinary life. The present volume was published as a dedication to him on the occasion of the cremation of his remains. The essays are on a variety of subjects.

In the first article, *Why I became a monk*, his succinct mind has analysed Buddhism, which is summed up thus; "Therein every one of us has his own line of action. If he behaves well, he is well rewarded; if otherwise, evil consequence is his. One should always try to promote good, avoid evil and cleanse one's mind."

More than seventy of the 110 pages are devoted to a line in the Mss. underlined red has been left out here author was a member of the Commission of Jurists studying the system of juvenile courts in the West. It is a comprehensive study primarily of the British system, its history and methods of approbation, and it goes on to deal with some of the methods prevailing on the continent of Europe. A second article is devoted to the system of the Remand Home.

116. *Buddhism for the Young*, prize. essay for 1952, *The Three Governing Principles*. หนังสือสอนพุทธศาสนาแก่เด็ก อภิไธย อ.
117 pages sexa. 1952.

The late King Prajadhipok took the initiative in 1929 of financing annually the publication of a series of prize-winning essays for teaching Buddhism to the Young. The practice has been successively taken up by His successors on the Throne. The first prize-essay was awarded in 1929 to Princess Poon Diskul who wrote on the subject *Goodness of Religion*.

The preamble to the first prize-essay, from the late King's own pen, is worth quoting:

“Last year on the occasion of the Viśākha festival I had published for presentation a work on the essentials of a Buddhist. The effort seemed to have won approval from all sections of our community and the approval encouraged me to go further by organising a competition for new works on our state religion every year with a view to providing manuals for teaching the young and for popularising Buddhism”

“In Christianity and Islam the tenet of prime importance to be taught from the first is that the Almighty God created the earth and all living beings and that everything is willed by the deity. *Faith* in this must be inculcated. In Buddhism too, in my humble opinion, faith is also important, that is faith in the two distinctive features of our religion, namely evolution and the consequence of action. These beliefs were in fact older than Buddhism itself but were accepted by the Buddha who was aiming at a sort of salvation based on an understanding of these features”

“Belief in the consequence of actions is a fine thing which should be cultivated in the minds of all. I do not mean of course that we should be fatalists, but on the contrary we should try to be good in action which would result in well being. But as they are somewhat difficult to understand perfectly, these theories had better be believed in from the start.

“Man in trouble is apt to put blame on others, whether personal or impersonal—such as his superiors, his government, the mercantile rich, or customs and usages. If none of these can be blamed then he blames the supernatural But whatever agency he puts the blame on, it in any case breeds discomfiture, hatred or boredom. If, on the other hand, he believes in the consequence of action, he will realise that he can only blame himself when in misfortune”

“It is for these reasons that I feel that the young should be taught to believe in the logic of the consequence of action”

It would be beside the point to enumerate all the prize-essays which have been written since 1929. The competition has been kept up to these days, although one wonders what becomes of all these essays after they have won their prizes and got published. The royal intention of serving the school-rooms with manuals for the teaching of the national religion has hardly been taken advantage of, for a survey of textbooks in schools would surely reveal the fact that save the first one, the *Goodness of Religion*, there is hardly any mention of any of the others of the series.

With regard to the volume under review, *The Three principles governing the World* by V. Kantāmra, although somewhat long and extended, is not at all below standard. Defining the three principles, he says that the first one refers to self-governance, meaning that it is the principle whereby self is governed in accordance with Buddhist precepts by self. The second is world-governance, that is governing by the public of the public; and the third is governing of all by the Dhamma, the Buddha's religion or philosophy.

All through the monograph, teaching of the comparatively abstract ideas is carried on in a light and interesting way. A long story is in fact interwoven which brings out the gist of the three principles. An affectionate father converses day by day with his three children on the individual duties of a school-boy and a citizen, on neverdying virtues, on the sound and logical religion of Buddhism, on its three principles of governance which are the main themes of the book, on the exact meaning of each of these principles, and ends up with, a description of what constitutes an ideal citizen.

117. Buddhaghosācārya, Somdec^๕ Phra: *Sermons for the King's Birthday anniversaries*. เทศน์มงคลวิเศษ
258 pages, 1952.

Since the days of King Mongkut, prominent members of the Holy Brotherhood, not necessarily the highest in rank, have been

requested to deliver each year a special sermon to the King on the celebration of His birthday. Many distinguished Church dignitaries have made their names through these sermons. When Prince Vajiranāna, the Supreme Patriarch of the sixth reign, felt that he was getting old he designated as his successor in this task the author of these sermons. He was then a comparatively junior abbot though already incumbent of Wat Debasirin.

Such a sermon begins with an exposition of two or three topics of Buddhist ethics deemed suitable for the occasion, and follows with a stocktaking of the preceding year's work in administration on the part of the King. In this latter part Prince Vajiranāna was wont to administer some very direct counsel and very often enunciated important attitudes in statecraft.

The volume under review consists of 25 such sermons, delivered from 1921 to 1947 with the exception of 1925 when the reigning monarch died before the anniversary of his birth and his successor had already had his for the year. Contrary to his predecessor, Somdech Phra Buddhaghosācārya was more suave and eloquent though naturally not to the extent of being insincere. He was distinguished for his pleasant delivery and a liberal exegesis, showing wide reading and deep scholarship. With the change of regime in 1932 the responsibilities of the sovereign changed in scope and that part of the sermon dealing with statesmanship and administrative accomplishment became rather more involved. No birthday sermon since that time, save the one delivered by the author in the year immediately following that event which was generally appreciated by those who listened to it or read it, has been quite the same whether preached by him or others.

D.N.

