

## BOOK REVIEWS

Charles David Sheldon, *The Rise of the Merchant Class in Tokugawa Japan, 1600-1868*. J.J. Augustin, Locust Valley, New York, 1958. 206 pages, including index.

The betrothal of a commoner to Crown Prince Akihito, whose father began his rule as an absolute monarch, provoked far less surprise to students of Japanese history than to those more familiar with European monarchical behavior. The merger of the Imperial dynasty with the great commercial house of Shoda is no more unexpected to the scholar than is the economic resurgence of post-war Japan. Such events are quite compatible with the trend of developments in Nippon over the last four hundred years. In this book, which he modestly terms an "introductory survey," Dr. Sheldon describes and analyzes a substantial segment of this trend and opens the door to one of the more meaningful and fascinating chapters of pre-Meiji Japan.

This book is long overdue. For while its subject is one of major significance it has been considered by only some two dozen Western scholars and by none of them in any complete sense. On the Japanese side the growth of the merchant class has provided a theme for scholarly research and writing almost from the inception of the Tokugawa Shogunate, but too little of this has been available to Western scholarship.

One could say unqualifiedly that the rise of the commercial groups during the *Tenka Taihei* period was the most distinguishing feature of the more than two and one half centuries of Tokugawa hermitage. In the writer's hands this phenomenon remains in context without losing either perspective or emphasis. This is by no means an easy task. Japanese economic historians are sharply divided in their opinions on this subject. Although the apocryphal must be boiled off with care, there is no lack of facts. The real differences lie in interpretation, and Dr. Sheldon handles very neatly such contentious questions as whether or not Japanese industrial capital was a conversion of earlier commercial capital, or whether the economic foundations of the Meiji period rested principally upon the *chorin* of Osaka and Edo (Tokyo) or upon

their upstart provincial competitors of the Nineteenth Century. He does not allow speculation to side-track him from his basic purpose of examining the historical growth of Japanese commercial interests during this period as against nine criteria. The result is a tight, coherent narrative which does not neglect any of the major implications.

It is hardly strange that the merchant, occupying by Sixteenth Century law the bottom of the Confucian hierarchy, should become so dominant a force during the Tokugawa era. It would have been inconceivable had this not taken place. The civil wars of the Yoshino period, following the brief imperial restoration of Daigo II, the gradual collapse of Ashikaga authority, and the century of almost uninterrupted internecine strife after the Onin War resulted in complete political disintegration. The national unification that followed, begun by Nobunaga and completed by Tokugawa Ieyasu, left the latter as virtual ruler of the entire land. It also left him with a number of powerful *daimyo*, who in feudal tradition were great landholders and gentlemen-warriors. These chief samurai and their lesser noble vassals had dominated Japan since the Kamakura period. Hideyoshi, Ieyasu's liege lord, had tried to curb samurai power through the attrition of a foreign war. The founder of the Tokugawa line, however, held his *daimyo* under control through hostages, and through required travel and construction which kept them insolvent. The "Great Peace" he initiated turned warriors into rice farmers who were burdened with feudal obligations and restrictions and continually short of cash.

Samurai could not engage in trade and retain the privileges of nobility. Yet as the transition from a rice economy to a money economy began, commerce loomed as essential to the Japanese economy, particularly after foreign trade was forbidden in 1624. Merchants were taken under samurai protection, and in some cases, such as those which involved the founders of the Mitsui and Sumitomo fortunes, samurai cheerfully gave up their positions at the top of the social ladder to become brewers, pawnbrokers and ironmongers.

It is not surprising that in samurai fashion the commercial class developed a merchant's code based upon those principles of loyalty and apprenticeship dear to Japanese feudal concepts. Appropriately, the code was rooted in commerce rather than in war, and while warriors languished for lack of an opportunity to apply their trade, businessmen were tested regularly through absence of adequate legal status, jealousy of the nobility, unusual hazards of commerce, and a rapacious governmental bureaucracy. Rising to the double challenge of a need for their services and a fat profit, hedged with considerable risk, the merchants ended the first century of the Edo era as the most powerful economic force in the country.

Dr. Sheldon handles this first century and its finale in the Genroku period with competence and perception. He skillfully unravels the skein of commercial practice and clearly traces primary and secondary developments in growing mercantile might. The impact of this new, if classless, class upon samurai culture is not neglected. In fact, he devotes an entire chapter to the conflicting ideas of scholars retained by samurai lords and merchant princes. While there is no mention of Sakuma Shozan or Yoshida Shoin in these accounts, this cannot be considered an omission with respect to the author's basic criteria. Dr. Sheldon indicates that the merchant class was provided with a small window on the world through the limited Dutch and Chinese trade at Nagasaki and through a few travelers abroad who returned to Nippon prior to the edict of 1636 which forbade Japanese to leave their homeland. However, the limited foreign trade of the pre-Tokugawa era had no real significance in the subsequent rise of the merchant class, and those later Nineteenth Century scholars favoring foreign trade for Japan belong in another context. Yamagata Banto, Honda Toshiaki and Sato Shin'en are duly mentioned with respect to foreign trade, but, as the author points out, their views on this subject were carefully kept from the governing *Bakufu*.

In the post-Genroku period the writer favors the historical thesis of city (merchant) versus country (feudal) in a shifting struggle that ended in the failure of the Tempo reforms in 1843, and began the history of the Meiji Restoration. In this analysis

Dr. Sheldon clearly shows that national economic forces were on the side of the *chonin* so long as mercantile groups retained their vigor. In a number of cases the feudal reforms actually worked to the advantage of commercial circles. Of great importance was the legal chartering by Shogun Yoshimune of the *nakama*. Thus, by having lawful status given to their guilds and trade associations, the merchants received what they had desired for over a century—official recognition.

The feudal reforms were doomed to failure at the start. Even in so static a society as the Edo era, regression can have no more than a limited life. Besides, the reform movements were a living proof of the ineffectiveness of the *Bakufu* bureaucracy. Their main purpose was to relieve bankrupt national treasuries caused by overspending and inefficient management. As long as the reforms succeeded and the merchants bowed to enforced loans and to cancellation of existing debts the deadlock remained. It was broken, as was the authority of the *Bakufu*, when the reform decrees could not be enforced.

The writer shows that the merchant class broke the Shogunate, but he does not credit the *chonin* with the restoration of the Emperor. The merchant class in Tokugawa Japan was as much a part of Shogunate society as the *Bakufu* itself. After the failure of the Tempo reforms most of the merchant princes of Edo and Osaka found they lacked the ability and the foresight to handle competently growing national economic problems and the increasing agitation for foreign trade. In both of these aspects their provincial rivals showed greater skill and acumen. In many cases provincial merchants had become allied with samurai who had finally reached the conclusion that trade was preferable to slow economic strangulation.

Dr. Sheldon's work is a first-class scholarly contribution and is unqualifiedly recommended. The reader is left with a number of queries but these are primarily speculative and never due to oversight. In this sense the book is a highly satisfactory intellectual smorgasbord; while the appetite is momentarily satisfied, it is whetted toward further exploration of some of the intriguing dishes offered.

*E. Grant Meade*

Brooks Wright, *Interpreter of Buddhism to the West: Sir Edwin Arnold*. Bookman Associates, Inc., New York, 1957. 187 pages.

Many copies of Sir Edwin Arnold's poem on the life of Buddha, *The Light of Asia*, are still extant in Thailand. It was published in 1879, and the author sent a copy to the King of Siam through the Siamese Minister in London; in December of that year Sir Edwin received from His Majesty the Order of the White Elephant. "The royal letter which accompanied the award implied that Arnold's interpretation of Buddhism was not strictly orthodox, but expressed gratitude for 'having made a European Buddhist speak beautifully in the most widespread language of the world.'"

The author of this captivating biography is a professor of English in City College, New York, and the son of Professor C.H.C. Wright of Harvard University. The orientation of the book is indicated by the title. The traits and interests of Edwin Arnold (1832-1904) are shown in the context of Victorian England and the intellectual ferment of that period. This background explains in part the popularity of his poetry.

As a young and brilliant student at Oxford, Edwin Arnold won the Newdigate prize in 1852 with a poem on *The Feast of Belshazzar*. This literary effort, of unusual merit, revealed his ornate style and his keen interest in the Orient. In 1858-1859, while he was principal of the government college at Poona, he studied the Indian classics and acquired some proficiency in Sanskrit and Marathi. Illness in his family caused him to return to England in 1860, and in the summer of that year he joined the staff of the London *Daily Telegraph*. Thereafter he served as an editor or a feature writer of this newspaper for forty years. He was a journalist by temperament, alert to new trends and developments, and in his writings he was fluent and colorful. His literary output, both in prose and in poetry, was enormous. He associated with leaders in

science, art, and politics. He found time to acquire twelve languages and to travel widely. In 1877 he received the order of Companion of the Star of India, and in 1888 he was knighted. The poet laureateship might have been granted him upon the death of Tennyson in 1892 had it not been for Gladstone's opposition.

In the 1870's, men of liberal views in England responded to the broad outlook of Hegelian philosophy, the rationalizing spirit and scientific viewpoint of the Age of Enlightenment, and to the art and philosophy of Asia. The English public welcomed books on the East following the proclamation of Queen Victoria as Empress of India in 1877.

In 1879 Arnold published *The Light of Asia*, a long narrative poem with an Indian background setting forth the life and teachings of Gautama the Buddha. For source material he was chiefly dependent upon Samuel Beal's English translation of a Chinese text of the *Abhinishkramana* Sutra, the Rev. T.S. Hardy's *A Manual of Buddhism*, and Max Muller's translation of the Dhammapada, together with some parables of Buddha-gosha. The novelty and timeliness of this subject quickly gained world-wide recognition for the author. Invitations to visit the East poured in upon him, and in 1885 he set out on a tour of India.

The Buddh Gaya episode can best be appreciated by those Thai officials recently commissioned to erect a temple in the Thai style at this Buddhist shrine. In 1885 Arnold found only a few Sivaite worshippers there, the ancient temple sadly dilapidated, and the premises in the control of a Hindu Mahant. In Ceylon, where Arnold interviewed the abbot of a Buddhist monastery at Pandura, he gave to the abbot a few Bodhi leaves from Buddh Gaya, and suggested that the shrine be placed in Buddhist hands and restored. The Ceylonese monks took up the idea at once. On their behalf Arnold wrote to the Viceroy of India and to other high officials. All were friendly to the idea,

providing it could "be accomplished cheaply and without offending the Hindus." During the subsequent negotiations the Mahant kept raising the price and finally refused to part with the shrine under any terms. What followed makes fascinating reading. In brief, Arnold continued his efforts until 1900 when, blind and paralyzed, he could do nothing more. The Mahant spent over a million rupees in fighting court orders, and Buddh Gaya remained in Hindu control until 1953.

Arnold wrote a series of poems which were translations and adaptations of Sanskrit classics, the most important being the *Gita Govinda*, the *Katha Upanishad*, and the *Bhagavad Gita*. Mahatma Gandhi first read the *Bhagavad Gita* in this version. "Today it is the only one of Arnold's poems that is still regularly read and the one on which his future reputation must rest."

Having studied Turkish, Arabic, and Persian, Arnold wrote three long poems based on Islamic literature. The most important, *Pearls of the Faith*, consisted of a rhymed discourse of a legend connected with each of the ninety-nine names or attributes of Allah.

As early as 1878, Arnold contemplated writing a narrative poem on the life of Christ, to be called *The Light of the World*. He accomplished this in 1890 while staying at Azabu, Japan. It was not a success, although, according to the biographer, the style was an improvement over that of *The Light of Asia*. "Everyone felt competent to criticise it," because of its omissions and additions. For example, he depicted the three Magi who visited the infant Jesus as Indian Buddhists. Moreover, by 1890 English taste was veering away from this type of religious poetry.

As a result of his stay in Japan, Arnold published three books on the Japanese, one of them a play, *Adzuma* (1893), based on a Japanese legend. Although it was in some ways his masterpiece he could find no one to stage it. In 1954 this same legend and plot appeared in the cinema, *The Gate of Hell*.

His second wife, Fanny, an American, died in 1889. In 1892, while in Japan, Sir Edwin Arnold at the age of sixty married a young woman, Tama Kurokawa. They returned to England, and after his death in 1904 she survived him by more than fifty years.

What was his religion?

He was an eclectic. In the opinion of his biographer, "Arnold is best remembered as the author of *The Light of Asia*, but *The Light of the World* is the most complete exposition of his religious views. In this poem we see him as a man "deeply religious and magnificently unorthodox." "By 1889 he had worked out for himself a full-scale synthesis of Buddhism, Christianity, and Victorian science."

*K.E. Wells*

Vaidya, P.L., *Bauddhāgamārthasamgraha*. Nirayāsāgara, Press, Bombay, 1958. 314 pages.

This work is one of a pair of collections of extracts from the Sacred Books, one, of the Jainas published some time previously, and the other—this one—of the Buddhists. The extracts are culled from the Pāli as well as the Sanskrit. The majority are Pāli, though they have been published in Devanagari characters for the convenience of Indian students.

The treatment of the subject is evidently historical. The book begins nevertheless with incidents which are not generally accepted by critical Buddhists as historical facts, such as the incident in a previous life of the Buddha of his vow to eventually become a Buddha, followed by a eulogy of the Bodhisattva from the Mahāyanist *Lalitavistāra*, going on then to generally accepted historical facts concerning the master's life from the *Mahāvagga* of the *Vinaya Pitaka*, and the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* from the *Suttanta Pitaka*. The extracts then go on in their narration to events after the Master's death; the conception of a Buddhist community consisting of Bhikkhu, Bhikkhuni, Upāsaka, Upāsikā; then exposés of the *Dharma* from the *Tipitaka* Canon as well as later works such as the *Milinda Pañhā* and the Ceylonese *Visuddhimagga*. Then various topics in connection with personalities who have shaped the cause of Buddhism are discussed, such as King Bimbisāra of Magadha and his son and successor, Ajātasatru, as well as Devadatta, Jīvaka the physician, Ambapānī the courtesan, Visākhā the pious, Sujātā, Anāthapindika the pious merchant, and Angulimāla, the murderous robber who turned monk through contact with the Master. The end is brought up by passages describing the formation and maintenance of the Canon of the Tipitaka in which the successive Councils of Revision are set forth in the typical Indian way of narration which differs in important details from the traditional sequence of the Ceylonese that is generally accepted in this country.

The format and technique of publication is perfect.

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## RECENT SIAMESE PUBLICATIONS\*

233. *The Life of the Buddha according to Thai Temple Paintings*, สมุดภาพพุทธจริยาประวัติ ตามภาพบนผนังโบสถ์วิหารในประเทศไทย B.E. 2500. 184 pages.

In its own words, "This volume has been published by the United States Information Service and is presented to the people of Thailand by the people of the United States on the occasion of the observance of the year 2500 of the Buddhist Era." It contains two appreciative messages, one called a salutation from the late Prince Vajirañānavoṃs, Patriarch of the Kingdom and the other called a preface from the President of the Ecclesiastical Council as well as an introduction signed by "K.F.L." Although the obviously competent editor has not signed himself beyond these initials, it would not be difficult to guess his identity, for but few would be able to write such good literary English and at the same time be equipped with a deep knowledge of Buddhism, especially of the Mahāyānist School of Thought.

The format of the work centres round the reproductions of monastic murals, selected from originals not only in Bangkok monasteries but also those of Dhonburi and Ayudhyā. Some of the most interesting of these murals therefore include those of the XVIIIth century which have been restored with care and skill by the artist Rudolf W.E. Hampe, a Berliner who has lived continuously in Siam since 1933, and who is a graduate of the Vereinigte Staatsschule für Freie und Angewandte Kunst of Berlin. The reproductions of murals are so arranged as to illustrate the successive incidents in connection with the life of the Buddha, commencing with the Mahāyānist tradition of his being invited from the heaven of Tusit to be born on earth for the good of

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\* Although most readers have probably not noticed it, we regret to have to refer to our mistake in numbering the items under this heading in the last number of the Journal, JSS XLVI, part 2, where Nos. 209-216 should have been 225-232.

mankind. They lead us on then to a scene of his mother's marriage with Prince Suddhodhana of Kapilavatthu, her conception after dreaming that the gods had brought down to her a white elephant from heaven, then the birth, childhood and youth of Prince Siddhattha, his forsaking the life of a householder for asceticism, his discovery of the truth regarding life more usually called the "Enlightenment," several incidents in his mission of over 4 decades and finally his death and the division of his relics, totalling altogether 65 pictures.

Each of these 65 pictures is accompanied by an explanatory note in Siamese, written by members of the Holy Brotherhood. It is worthy of note that of the 65, 62 are members of the Mahānikāya, 2 from the Dhammayut Reform School, and one from the Viētnām clergy of Siam. There is also an English translation of this text for each reproduction. At the end of the book there is a note about the paintings which is a mine of valuable information on artistic technique. We learn from this note that the paintings are from 180 to 80 years old, though the note admits that it is difficult to determine their age with exactitude. They have been restored with the utmost care and attention to what should have been the original. Reproduction No. 57, for instance, deserves every praise for the work of restoration for, looking at the original which is printed in the note, one would hardly be able to imagine what the missing portions should be. This note, as well as the rest of the subject-matter, is bilingual.

Following this note there is a chapter about the descriptions. Then there are the individual notes of each of the reproductions. It is to be regretted that the Siamese notes are often quite badly worded though the English ones are good. One would be led to think that the former are translated from the English notes. The word "influence" in the English is always a stumbling block everywhere it occurs. The Siamese rendering of this word in plates 8 and 34 seem to take it to mean "influential people." Thus in plate 34, the English "European influence is not to be denied" has been rendered as ผู้ใหญ่ในยุโรปจะไม่ปฏิเสธแบบนั้น. Again in No. 42,

where the English runs, "The background is green and better preserved than in other paintings," the Siamese makes no sense, saying "พื้นสีเขียวซึ่งควรรักษาภาพเดิมไว้ดีกว่า". In all these cases the Siamese version must have been bad translations rather than the original notes. Some of the remarks in English should be corrected too. In No. 63, to mention but one place, where the note says "nuns are at the bottom," it should really have been said that they were *bhikkhuni*, a female counterpart of the monk, no longer to be found. Some of the points raised by the writer of the notes are interesting, one of which is, "It is unusual in that the *full* body of the Buddha is shown, instead of only his head protruding above the coils of the snake." As a matter of fact it is usual to portray the full body. The ones which have just the head protruding belong to a pattern invented only as late as the time of King Mongkut, who was of the opinion that this was the more correct attitude according to traditions of the Scripture. It should be added that historians used to say that women of the Bangkok era cut their hair short because of the general flight of Siamese women from Ayudhyā in fear of being molested by bad characters there at the time of the fall of the capital in 1767. Bangkok fashion in fact kept to short hair for over a century till King Rama VI encouraged women in wearing it long. We see, however, some of these paintings portraying long hair, for instance, Nos. 20 and 21, which come from the monasteries of Dusit and Sangkrachai, both of which are in Dhonburi and built or restored in the Post-Ayudhyā era.

Very valuable information is contained in the chapter at the end on the locations of the paintings and the identities of the writers of the descriptions of the murals. These however should be individually attached to each of the reproductions to save the reader from turning the pages to and fro, thus increasing wear and tear as well as loss of time.

These criticisms should not lead readers into thinking that this work is in any way imperfect, for it is a generous pioneer in its field. Such an undertaking involves a general planning

which has been most creditably carried out; it also involves the co-operation of an artist who understands his subject from the technical viewpoint of art as well as from the national conception of Buddhist art and tradition; the co-operation, too, of writers of the descriptions from all over the country, often at long distances; the direction and standardization of the translation of them, and of course resources for the doubtless considerable expense of the publication.

These factors point all the more to the generosity of the sponsors of the work, for which the "People of Thailand" to whom it has been dedicated in the name of the People of the United States are no doubt grateful.

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On the occasion of the cremation of the remains of Her late Royal Highness Kromaluang Dibyaratna, daughter of King Mongkut and a grand aunt of the King in October 1958, there were published several books in dedication to her memory, of which the following (Nos. 234-236) should be mentioned:

234. Kromaluang Dibyaratna: *Letters to her nephew, Prince Paribatra of Nakon Svan*, etc. ตายพระหิตถกรรมหลวงทิพยรัตน  
กิริฎกดิษฐ์  
กิริฎกดิษฐ์ ถวายสมเด็จพระนครสวรรค์  
และบันทึกถวาย  
เสด็จฯ Pračand Press, Bangkok, B.E. 2501, 103 pages.

Though the editorship of this volume is not specified, it is yet possible to guess, though in deference to her or their preference it will not be given here. Whoever the editor or editors may be, every credit is due her or them, for the book is a very readable and instructive one.

The publication commences with a preface, and continues with a biography which is well-written by an intimate, or a few of them; then come the letters which are a mine of information written with great intelligence and perhaps a will to instruct her nephew. Great affection too is evident throughout. It seems a pity that the nephew's replies have not been included.

Then comes a diary written by her niece, the late Princess Suddhādib, Kromaluay Sri Ratnakosind, while accompanying her father, King Chulalongkorn on a trip to Java. In her day the Princess was credited with high intelligence and great charm and beauty. The diary shows us as never before her intellectual background, her power of observation and withal her extreme modesty and unassuming personality. Ladies in those days were not encouraged to make themselves prominent, though on this trip her royal father gave every encouragement to her coming out as the King's daughter in all the social functions of the official trip. From hearsay one gathers that she acquitted herself very well, though nothing, even the quotation of a compliment which she must have received often, has been allowed to appear directly or between the lines. From her writing one gathers that she was able to understand all that passed in those functions. She seemed well at home with international courtesies and social requirements of the first lady of the royal party, which she was because the Queen stayed apart from it nursing her son who was ill much of the time.

The publication is copiously illustrated with photographs of members of the family.

235. *Íra Kājavācārn*: a running commentary by King Chulalongkorn on the text (herein published) of an old diary. จดหมายเหตุ... และพระวิจารณ์ *Íraçand Press, Bangkok, B.E. 2501, pp. 1-350, with 37 pages of index.*

Although perhaps this is the third edition of the work since it first came out in 1916, it has never received notice in the pages of our *Journal*. It is therefore reviewed here.

Towards the end of the reign of King Chulalongkorn there was found an old diary of events from 1767 to 1821 (second reign of the Chakri dynasty). Its style was not exactly literary, for besides a variety of spellings for the same words, there were inaccuracies of nomenclature. It was nevertheless noteworthy, for the diarist's well-informed mind and

intelligence were above the average of his or her contemporaries. The author was often carried away by personal enthusiasm to such an extent that one is prone to feel that the unnamed diarist must have been a woman. King Chulalongkorn became interested in this and wrote a running commentary on it with a memorandum on the possibilities of identifying its author, coming finally to the conclusion that this might have been, with every likelihood, the sister of King Rama I, Kromaluaj Narindradevi, colloquially known as "Čaokrok Wat Ęo," that is, The Princess of Wat Ęo, from the fact that she lived near Wat Ęo or Wat Ęra Jetubon. To her also was attributed the invention or perfection of a dish called *khnomčib*, which has become one of the highest tests of Siamese culinary art.

236. Naronvijit, Ęra: *Report on a Siamese Diplomatic Mission to France* in B.E. 2404 in the Fourth reign จดหมายเหตุพระนางกษัตริย์เบ็องไปฝรั่งเศส Ęračand Press, Bangkok, B.E. 2501. 65 pages.

This is the second edition of the work which was first published in 1925, and which formed the 30th volume of the series of History Papers of the National Library. The present edition has been sponsored by the Princess of Nakon Svan. Momrājawoņs Kūkriddhi Prāmoj, who contributes the introduction, points out that the choice of the work is happy in that, being a diplomatic report, its sponsor is one of the family which has been long connected with the diplomatic profession, both her grandfather and father having held successively the portfolio of foreign affairs in the 5th, 6th, and 7th reigns; while the late Princess to whom the publication is dedicated, besides having been born about the time of the despatch of the mission, was a niece of the chief of the mission, who was her maternal uncle. The author of the report, one is tempted to add, was also a Bunnag, and therefore related not only to the chief of the mission but also to the late Princess Dibyaratna and to the Princess of Nakon Svan as well.

The subject matter may be thus summed up. The mission was despatched in B.E. 2400 (1857) to Emperor Napoleon III. It was transported to Europe by a French man-of-war. The personnel of the mission consisted of three diplomats whose staff amounted altogether to 18, with one officer and 9 gentlemen of the Court in charge of the royal presents. The King's autograph to the Emperor was conveyed to the ship with customary pomp and honour, and seen off on the French man-of-war by Čaoprayā Sri Suriyawong, then Minister of War and afterwards Regent of the Kingdom during King Chulalongkorn's minority. Its route was through Singapore, Calle, Aden, and Suez, from whence the party travelled by train to Cairo, rejoining the ship at Alexandria after having been entertained by the Egyptian government. Then they crossed to France, landing at Toulon. Then they went by rail to Marseilles, Lyons and Paris. They were received in audience by the Emperor at Fontainebleau, shown into the residential section of the palace where the Empress received them personally and kissed the young son of the chief delegate. Their sight-seeing in Paris included the Hippodrome, the Mint, the Zoological Gardens, the Tuileries, and the Palace of Versailles with its dependent sections such as the Trianon and le Hameau. The report comes to an abrupt end, nothing else having been recovered.

Prince Damrong pointed out in the preface to the first edition that this report seemed to have been modelled upon that of an earlier mission to Queen Victoria of Great Britain, which included in its personnel the Mom Rājodai who came back to write his famous *nirāś*, a descriptive love-poem setting out the full itinerary of the mission and his own impressions of the personalities its members met and all they saw in Europe. The report under review is, however in the Prince's opinion, hardly up to the literary standard of the other report, which might have been written by the very author of the above-mentioned *Nirāś London*.

The contents of the present second edition differ from the first in that, whereas the first had merely the late Prince's preface and a biography of the deceased Luang Sri Saovarudh to whom it was dedicated, this edition has three introductions, the first by the Fine Arts Department, the second by the sponsor of the publication who records her personal devotion to the late Princess, and the third by Momrājawong K. Prāmoj as mentioned above. It has also the text of a memorial sermon in which are aptly detailed the personality and abilities of the late Princess. An interesting feature is the inclusion of a photograph of the painting of the scene when the mission had audience with the French Emperor at Fontainebleau, and a reproduction of the photograph taken of the mission in France. It might have been mentioned in addition that the original of the painting depicting the audience at Fontainebleau now adorns the northern wall of the Audience Hall of Ohakri in the Grand Palace. Another might-have-been is a table of contents, without which the publication will not be as useful as it might have been.

237. In Dedication to *Praya Teparatna Narind: Royal Exhortations, etc.* พระบรมราชาวาท พระบรมราชาธิบาย เรื่อง ดำรงคฤพระราชนิพนธ์ และปาฐกถาเรื่องเงินตราสยามของหลวงบริบาลปริทัศน์ Pračand Press, Bangkok, B.E. 2502. 47 pages.

This publication consists of several items by various writers, with the usual features of a cremation book, such as a biography, a few valedictory notes, a short narrative of the late nobleman's antecedents, starting from Čao Prayā Ratnādhibeś, a Minister of Agriculture under King Chulalongkorn.

Then follows what may be termed as the subject matter, consisting of the famous essay on Unity by King Chulalongkorn (rev. in these columns, JSS XXXVI, 2, pp. 180-2); a royal autograph letter to King (then Crown Prince) Vajiravudh in 1895, exhorting him in his new standing of Heir to the Throne; a royal exhortation again by King Chulalongkorn, given to his

four eldest sons who were sent to Europe for their education in 1885. The book is brought up at the end by the text of a lecture by Luang Boribāl Buribhand on "The Bank-notes of Siam," tracing the history of the successive issues of Bank Notes from the first issue by King Mongkut in 1862 to the issue of 1918 in the sixth reign.

238. Sathienkoses: *Thai seasonal customs* ปรีชาเพ็ญไทย  
เกียรติกมลเทศการ Prācand Press, Bangkok, B.E. 2499. 250 pages.

This publication was sponsored and published by Sanan Bunyasiribhandhu, proprietor of the Prācand Press in dedication to his father, Siew Bunyasiribhandhu on the occasion of the cremation of his remains at Wat Mahābrīdhārām in December 1956. Sathienkoses points out in the preface that these seasonal customs prevail in central Siam. They started as practices carried out from time to time till they became stereotyped into traditions.

Commencing his description with the traditional new year generally observed by the people in most countries of south-east Asia in April, he explains the astronomical significance of Soṅkrānt which has been adopted popularly as the New Year. It is a season of rejoicing, occurring between the 13th and the 15th of April, being perhaps the only festival which is not calculated by the lunar calendar, which is naturally a better guide for the seasons than the solar one among agricultural people. Its calculation has acquired the support of the allegory of Kapila and his daughters which has given it a mythical aspect. A detailed description of the various aspects of this festival is given.

Appended to the chapter on the New Year are festivals of the 6th and the 7th lunar months (roughly May and June), among which the most widely celebrated is the observance of the Viśākha commemorating the coincident date of the birth, enlightenment and death of the Buddha.

The second chapter deals with the Khaovassā, *i.e.*, commencement of the rains, often referred to in English as Buddhist Lent, perhaps on account of the retreat which Buddhist monks are enjoined to go into.

In the third chapter we are told about the Sārada, a festival dedicated to dead ancestors, which the author is inclined to interpret as a sort of a festival of first fruits. One wonders whether the universal idea of the dedication of the first fruits of the season *happened* to coincide with the festival in honour of the dead.

The fourth chapter deals with the conclusion of the rains, celebrated as the end of the monastic retreat when certain gifts are made to the Holy Brotherhood.

Then comes a chapter—the fifth—on the floating of the lamps. In the author's opinion it is a kind of thanksgiving—again—by agricultural communities to the waters for their co-operation in supplying the means whereby they achieve agricultural abundance. Of this festival there have been and still are many other attempts at interpretation.

The sixth chapter is devoted to the once popular festival of the recitation of the Mahājāti, the story of the great birth before the final one of the Buddha. It was the occasion for perhaps the favourite social festival of the year, coming as it did at the end of the harvest season.

It is obvious that our people were an agricultural community.

239. Sathienkoses: *Short Notes about Customs, about the Floating of the Lamps and Benedictory Services* เืองต้นเกษกบ  
ประเพณีต่าง ๆ, เทศกาลลอยกระทง, ประเพณีทำบุญส่งดวงมณฑ  
๕  
เดียงพระ Thaiksem Press, Bangkok, B.E. 2501. 195 pages.

This volume is sponsored by the family of the late Mrs. Sobhon Aksorakič, wife of the popular publisher two decades back, in dedication to her. It consists of short notes about customs, most of which have been incorporated in the volume reviewed above (No. 238). The last chapter, however, occupying nearly a quarter of the book, deals with new material—Benedictory



inculcates self-training and an intelligent valuation of their religion by those who profess it; but it also encourages deeds of charity and kindness. This latter is obviously easier to practise than self-training and intellectualism. Hence its widespread practice. Under modern conditions of living, nevertheless, it is becoming harder to 'make merit' through charity and liberality because the cost of living is steadily rising all over in every community.

The author was a famous Lord Abbot of Wat Mahādhātu who was widely esteemed as a preacher and a disciplinarian besides being a scholar and an able administrator in the Church. He was a Chino-Siamese who had a brilliant career. His treatment of the subject is a popular one, taking in such functions in connection with death as well as with more auspicious occasions, such as a birthday, etc. Contrary to many other works of a similar nature, it sums up what should be known about merit-making, explaining the reasons whereof in a clear and succinct enough manner to render unnecessary wading through hundreds of pages of authoritative texts on the subject.

Since his death there have been two holders of this title, the present holder being the President of the Ecclesiastical Council and Lord Abbot of Wat Beñcamabōpit.

242. King Rama VI: *Prā Ruan* พระรณ and *The Triumph of Right* ธรรมะชนะอธรรม Krishnapakorn Press, Bangkok, B.E. 2502.

The memorial volume dedicated to the late Prā Voravudh consists of many items of no particular general interest save the material of two dramas from the pen of King Rama VI. The first of these is a dialogue-drama on the theme of the ancient hero, Prā Ruan, King of Sukhodaya, with the usual plot which need not be reiterated here. The second is a rare work, not generally known, called *The Triumph of Right*. Though not a work of very high merit, its plot should be given because of its obscurity. Devasatru, the 'enemy of the gods' and his friend Narasatru, 'enemy of men,' invade with their forces the heavenly realm of

the gods out of jealousy and give free rein to plunder and rape. Skanda, god of war, with his colleagues in heaven defend their realm and put the wicked forces to defeat.

243. Pariyatedi, P̄ra : *The Tipitaka in abbreviated translations*. พระไตรปิฎกแปลย่อ Sīvaporn Co. Ltd., Bangkok, B.E. 2501. pp. 1-372.

This volume is of course only a part of a big whole and concerns just the *Dīgha Nikāya* of the *Suttanta Pīṭaka*. That there should be a synopsis of the *Dīgha Nikāya*, which is the most important historically, is obvious. The work has, however, been designated *P̄ra Traipidok plê yò*, which would give the impression of a translation. But the work is not a translation. It is really a succession of abbreviated summaries of the *Dīgha Nikāya*. As a synopsis, however, it should be useful.

The publication came into being as a complimentary memento of the celebration of the sixth cycle of age of the Ven. P̄ra Paññābisāla-Thera, head-abbot of the monastery of Padumavanārām, to which the author belongs.

244. Bodhinanda, S. : *Lectures on the History of Buddhism*. ความบรรยายประวัติศาสตร์พระพุทธศาสนา King Mongkut University Press, Bangkok, B.E. 2500. pp. 1-352.

These lectures, delivered at the King Mongkut University, seem to include a wide range of topics beside the history of Buddhism in the ordinary sense of the word. The first chapter deals with the origin of sects from the time of the Buddha. These differences of opinion became more pronounced with the Master's death. It was therefore deemed advisable to hold the First Council soon afterwards. Successive chapters tell us of further development and later Councils. Among other topics, our history discusses the non-employment by the Buddha of the literary languages of contemporary India, and his preference for a kind of Māgadhi; the mode of reckoning the Buddhist era; and a great deal of matter hitherto untouched in Church histories,

perhaps from the lack of general knowledge by the writers of old. The author of the history under review presents a liberal and intelligent treatment of historical aspects, bringing in external evidences which have since become known, such as the contemporary history of India, the invasion of the Greeks under Alexander the Great, the rise of the Nanda, Maurya, Śuṅga and Kushāna dynasties, the School of thought of Śrāvastī and the consequent development of Mahāyānism. Then he goes on to the spread of the faith to Ceylon in the form of Theravādism and its canon including the *Abhidhamma*.

There is a bibliography at the end; but, as usual, *no index*, which is a great pity, especially when we consider the fact that it is the only book of reference in Siamese on this subject.

D.