

**THE MAHA-BODHI  
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**BRITAIN'S FIRST BUDDHIST TEMPLE.**

Bikkhu Ananda Metteyya, the first Buddhist monk who has visited this country, landed at the Royal Albert Docks on Wednesday. By birth he is a Scotsman, Mr. Allan Bennett MacGregor.

To welcome him were several English and Burmese Buddhists resident in London, who had waited patiently on the dock-side, with the banner of the order furled, for the s.s. "Ava," from Rangoon, to come into sight.

Directly the "Ava" passed the pierhead the flag was unfurled, displaying in the breeze the Buddhist cross and the thirty-two points of life. On deck could be descried a number of Burmese men and women, who were saluted in their native tongue from the dock-side. But Bikkhu Ananda Metteyya was nowhere to be seen.

A representative of the Over-Seas *Daily Mail* went aboard and was introduced to the interesting visitor by Major Rost, Hon. Treasurer of the Buddhist Society in this country. He sat in one corner, clad in the yellow robe of his order, which is in three pieces, the whole being fastened by a yellow cord about his waist. With his head clean-shaven and his feet bare, he looked deathly pale, as he nervously fitted a cigarette into an amber holder; dropped it; took up his beads and again nervously fingered them.

Averting his eyes, he said in a low voice, in which the Scottish accent was noticeable, "Ask me what you desire to know and I will answer."

"As regards my object in visiting this country, it is to spread the tenets of Buddhism and let them be known in the West. Buddhism is not opposed to Christianity or to any religion. It goes further than any religion or creed."

"Accompanying me are twenty-three disciples and Buddhists, three of whom are women: Mrs. Hla Oung, who pays all expenses of the visit; Mrs. Bah Oung; and Mrs. Hpa, the wife of a Burmese judge."

"My personal belongings are such as you see—a filter, a razor, the three parts of my robe, and my begging-bowl, in conformity with the rules of my order. I am very fatigued by the voyage."

Meanwhile, the Burmese ladies had landed. They were followed by the disciples. Last came the monk, shivering in the cold night wind which swept the dock-side. As he passed the women assembled out of curiosity to see him he meekly averted his eyes, for he is not permitted to look at women, and pulled his fluttering yellow robe closer. He walked slowly, half bent, to the motor-car in waiting to take him to Barnes.

Thus landed Mr. Allan Bennett MacGregor, graduate of Cambridge University and late assistant to Dr. Dyer—the first Buddhist monk to visit these shores.

Anything more unlike the atmosphere or surroundings of the places of worship at Rangoon or Kandy could not be imagined than the first Buddhist temple to be established in Great Britain.

It is one minute's walk from Barnes Common, at 101, Elm Grove-road, which contains a double row of red-brick villas rented at about £50 a year, with the usual painted railings and tiled path.

The temple is in the front bedroom, and its windows are screened from the street and the light of day by green chintz.

There for the next six months will dwell Bikkhu Ananda Metteyya, and thither will go the 100 Buddhists in this country, with many sympathizers, for meditation, instruction, and guidance.

Major E. R. Rost, Hon. Treasurer of the Society, in an interview, gave the following details of the work and aims of the Buddhist Society in this country:—

"Of the ninety-five Buddhists in Great Britain and Ireland, the great part are in London. To be a member of the Buddhist Society it is necessary to be a Buddhist. In the society are Lord Mexborough, the Hon. Eric Collier, Sir C. N. E. E. iot, Professor E. J. Mills, F. R. S., Professor and Mrs. Rhys Davids, and other well-known public men and women.

"The gospel of Gautama Buddha is to enable men to lead a healthy, joyous life. The eightfold truth of the faith is: Right Conduct, Right Livelihood, Right Speech, Right Views, Right Aspirations, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right Meditation.

"Our ethical system prohibits intoxicating liquors, and places all men and women on the same footing. The spread of Buddhist tenets would undoubtedly tend to do away with the injurious distinctions of sex that prevail in the West.

"The work is spreading. At Leipzig there is a most useful centre, and also good work is being done by that at Budapest. Henceforward the work in the West will radiate from the new headquarters of the international movement in London.—[*D. Mail*, April 24th.]