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ENGLISH BUDDHIST
A MACGREGOR WHO IS NOT A SCOT
A STRANGE INCIDENT

Bhikshu Ananda Metteyya, a Buddhist monk—the first to visit the accident—held a reception in his cabin on the steamship *Ava* at the Albert Docks last night.

He was greeted by old friends—he is an Englishman by birth, long residences and education—as “Allan” but he refused to recognise his baptismal name, which he has renounced for ever. This name in full is Allan Bennett MacGregor. He is not a Scotsman, however, but a Londoner. The last name was adopted in early childhood.

The Bhikshu—the monk’s official title—shivered in his cabin, warm and comfortable though it was. He was smoking asthma cigarettes to drive away the cold and damp of London’s weather. He was lightly clothed in pink robes—with a yellow lining—which were wrapped loosely around his gaunt frame, and his feet were unshod.

Though he is only thirty-five years old his hair is white and is closely shaven. His eyes are large, brilliant, and soulful. He speaks in low unimpassioned tones, but with a musical softness that charms the listener. His face is full of expression. One instinctively gains the impression that he is a man who has suffered long and intensely.

This is what he said to an Express representative who saw him in his cabin last night. “I am the first Buddhist monk to come to England. I have come to teach this country the tenets of Buddhism.

“I cannot go out of doors because of my strange dress, and the impossibility otherwise of keeping inviolate the 272 rules of my order.

“My mission is not opposed to Christianity or any other religion—Buddhism is supplementary and leads to the highest of all.”

The 272 rules referred to mainly concern the “meditation”, which forms an essential part of the Buddhist system. Some of them are strange however. Here are five:—

Celibacy

Holding only eight possessions—three parts of the yellow robe, one begging bowl, one filter, an umbrella, a rosary, and a razor.

Never to eat after noon, and only a vegetarian diet.

Abstenation from dancing, music, and all ceremonies.

Refusal to look on any woman.

Bhikshu Ananda has had a remarkable career. He is a scientist of great attainments, and he has made several wonderful discoveries. He was at one time an assistant in the laboratory of Dr Dyer, the famous analytical chemist.

Seven years ago he went to China hoping to cure a severe attack of asthma. He there came into personal contact with several Buddhists and determined to become a monk.

There was one pathetic incident amid the quiet and distant greetings which the Bhikshu permitted. A lady who had known him in the old days approached—"Allan welcome", she said.

The monk's eyes fell on his rosary. He bowed, and turned quickly away.