

# TEACHER AND NATIONALIST

**M**R. Mettananda joined the staff of Ananda College in the 1920's as an assistant teacher when I was Principal there. He was a trained graduate and one of the best qualified teachers on the staff at the time. A very methodical worker, Mr. Mettananda was keen on his work. He was a man of strict principles. He was a vegetarian.

A section of Ananda College was taken to Campbell Place, near the playground, in the early twenties. Sometime after, when the buildings for the Nalanda branch of Ananda were completed, Mr. Mettananda was put in charge. He continued to work there till the end of 1925, when Dr. Malalasekera returned from abroad after training, to be appointed Principal of Nalanda.

Mr. Mettananda returned to Ananda as Vice Principal.

In 1932, I was suddenly instructed by the General Manager of the Buddhist Theosophical Society to help him to reorganise Dharmarajah College, Kandy. I went there leaving Mr. Mettananda to act for me as Principal of Ananda.

Though I intended to remain in Kandy only for a few weeks, I had a lot of work to do there. Dharmarajah needed my presence for a few years and I re-

# Mettananda



mained there till the end of 1936.

## Jubilee

I returned to Ananda during its Golden Jubilee Year since the Anandians,

old boys and well wishers insisted that I should be there to celebrate the important event.

Mr. Mettananda was appointed Dharmarajah as Principal. He did wonderful work there in carrying out very ably the work I had started and did yeoman service in building up the College as the premier Buddhist institution in the hills.

On my resigning as Principal of Ananda College in April 1943, Mr. A. B. Petera was appointed Principal but his stay was very short — just about two years.

In 1945 Mr. Mettananda came back to Ananda as its Principal. With the help of the Old Boys Association, supporters and well wishers of the College, he organised a great building campaign and put up the magnificent buildings, which stand today to the credit of Mr. Mettananda.

## Politics

He retired in 1954 and started taking a great interest in safeguarding the rights of the Buddhists. He was a bitter opponent of what is called Catholic Action. He played a very important part as head of the Bauddha Jatka Bala-

vegeya, in the political field.

His influence seems to have waned in the last

few years and he lived in retirement, more or less. Maybe, he was dissatisfied with politicians whom he tried to influence.

His services to the Buddhists and to the country in general must be recognised by us all.

He was a nationalist and believed that the Sinhala language and Buddhism should take the first place in the country.

He helped to mould the lives of the thousands of students who came under his influence during the long period of service as a teacher.

His pupils will remember him with gratitude and his name will be remembered in the annals of our country.

by P. de S. Kularatne