

he was first called, came to Colombo from his native town Matara, (where his brother was High Priest of the temple) at the early stage of eighteen years. With his limited means he started a commission business in a small way, supplying eatables and other merchandise to the people of Kandy and neighboring districts. He acted at the same time as an express agent for forwarding goods along the line of his business. He soon acquired the reputation of a reliable man, which formed the basis of a new enterprise in building up a furniture business. The beginning of his new venture was hard for he had many rivals, but most of them failed, and he succeeded not only in maintaining himself, but also in making his firm the best known all over the whole island. He started a manufactory of his own, improving the traditional methods of manufacture, invented new designs, and established business connections first with the Straits, then with Japan, and finally with Great Britain and the United States. In time he amassed a fortune which made him one of the wealthiest business men of the island.

A predominant feature of the late Mudaliyar's life was his devotion to his faith. He was a staunch Buddhist, and the founder of the Maligakande Vidyodya College. It was on his invitation that High Priest Sumangala came down and settled at Maligakande, taking sole charge of the institution. He was, moreover, a large-hearted, open-handed man. His left hand knew not what his right hand gave, but he was ever giving. The poor, the sick and the needy found in him a ready and a cheerful benefactor. His munificence, in spite of himself, eventually came to the notice of the Government, and he was honored with the rank of Mudaliyar—an honor he richly deserved.

The Anagarika Dharmapala is his eldest son. His second and third sons, Simon and Edmund Hewavitarne, are in charge of the business built up so laboriously by their father, the traditions of which they creditably maintain: while the youngest son, Dr. Hewavitarne, has just returned from Europe and set up in private practice.

The Mudaliyar was cremated, according to Buddhist rites, in the presence of 150 yellow-robed Buddhist monks, among them being the Right Rev. Jinavaravansa, briefly called the Prince Priest, who is a brother of the King of Siam, and renounced the world for the sake of devoting himself to a religious life.

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### THE REFLECTIONS OF A JAPANESE SUICIDE.\*

BY HARRIS LEARNER LATHAM, A.M., S.T.M.

I am done. I have lived these one and twenty years in this world and among all my acquaintances I have found friends but one or two who see the meaning of my words and sympathize with the anguish of my soul. I have sought to know the secret of existence, to solve the riddle of life and discover my destiny. Among the philosophers I find only discontent and discordant opinions. The teachers who have pretended to guide me are unanchored buoys; their voices are but fog horns sounding only in clear weather.

\* The young man to which I have reference committed suicide some two years or so ago by throwing himself over the falls at Nikko. His reasons for so doing were mentioned in a farewell letter which he composed. It was brief but contained the gist of what I have in my sketch. The facts appeared in the English and Japanese newspapers of the day. Any one who read these accounts will recognize the allusions at once. I do not wish to claim too much for what I write as I am relying entirely on memory.

I have visited the shrines of my native land in days gone by; I have listened with open-mouthed wonder and reverence to the tales of ancient heroes told me by my aged parents. But these are all fables; I believe in them no more. They have failed me. I am a lone wanderer. I am in despair.

I once thought that before my mind would unroll the panorama of the universe, if only I should search for the highest view-point. But I see only a short way before me and that dimly. From the dusty bones of past generations arises a stifling pestilential odor which all but overcomes me. I know I have turned my back on my native land but what else should I do, since I am undone. I thought to see a world of beauty and what did my eyes fall upon? Blasts, frosts, conflagrations, thefts, murders, hangmen, vultures and hell. Is life for forty or more years thus to be?

Nature tells me in hollow, tantalizing tones, Yes. But there is one stronger who hurls back with the spirit of Yamato—Nay. Never will I yield to be imprisoned with such as these. I once thought a life full of achievement was within my reach. But they say fate is over me; that I can gain no help in prayer, that the gods of my native land are dead. What days are these on which I have fallen? I will not be the sport of blind forces. I can conquer them even though it be in death.

There are sights that might gladden my eyes, but they are denied me. They are reserved for craven-hearted souls who are content to tread the common thoroughfares of men. There are battles to be won but by those who are poisoned by human ambition and care not for the soul of things.

Such are most men. I was not born for such low existence as this. My soul is preparing for a loftier flight; meanwhile its spreading wings are stained with blood as they hopelessly beat on the prison-house of this human existence. I cannot bide my time. I know not what lies beyond. The grave is dark, clammy and cold, cheerless and hopeless; yet 'tis no worse than here. Perchance beyond the grave I may descry another land. Or maybe my soul freed from fleshly fetters will launch forth on a sea of eternal light and merge into the great All. I know not. Maybe the pause of my heart-beat will terminate all. If so I complain not. I see no way. Yet I must have relief. I can compel this world to give me one boon whether it will or not. This boon I now appropriate.

Therefore to all I say farewell. Ye men of fleshly souls, I am not one of you. I bid you farewell.

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### BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTES.

COURSES OF STUDY. Edited by *John M. Robertson*. London: Watts, 1904.  
Pp. viii, 516.

This book adds one more to the constantly increasing number of books about books, but among the literary guide posts this fills an important place of its own. Its aim is not to provide bibliographies, or specifications of the best books, but to assist private students to acquire knowledge in any or all branches of liberal culture. In compiling the courses the editor has had very generous aid from specialists in the various branches.

The book was prepared under the auspices of the Rational Press Association of London, and it seemed to the editor that a systematic compilation