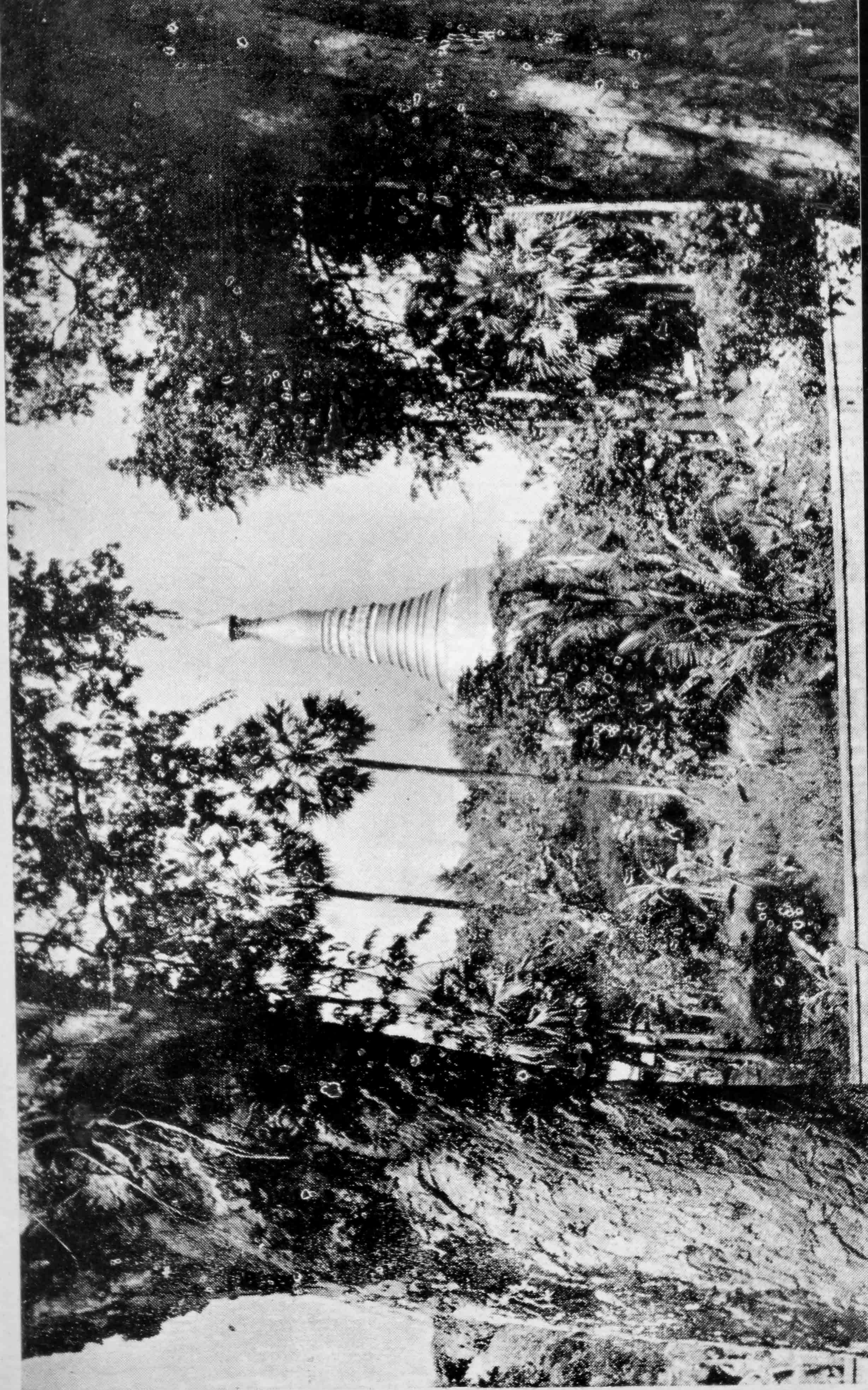




S B W E D A G O R



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FOREWORD

BY THE RT. REV. GEORGE WEST, M.M.

Lord Bishop of Rangoon

U Aung Than, the author of this book, is a neighbour of mine, a friend and an erudite scholar. As a neighbour he has conducted friends of mine to the great Pagoda ; as a friend I have come to value him for his great qualities of heart as well as mind ; as a scholar I can safely leave this masterly little volume to speak for itself.

U Aung Than, like every true patriot, wants to preserve what is best in his country's tradition. Men like U Aung Than are a reminder to us that an enduring Burma can be built only on moral and spiritual foundations. Guests of Burma, like myself, are especially grateful to have the facts about this priceless historic Shrine set before us by an authority in so lucid and attractive a form.

Lovers of Burma long for the best in Burma's storied past to be built into the fabric of the country that is being rebuilt to-day.

The Shwedagon pointing her tapering finger to the sky summons Burma to her true destiny.

GEORGE RANGOON.

8th September 1946.

P R E F A C E

One who was born near the Shwedagon, out of sheer familiarity with the sight in his daily rounds, may not feel the existence of such a majestic symbol of the unity of the Buddhist world; but when one goes abroad and comes back home he feels the sight so much that even the silhouette of the golden stupa against the blue sky would draw gladdening tears from his eyes through sheer emotional satisfaction of being back again on his own native soil.

I am one of those who have experienced such feeling and who always take pride in having such a symbol of spiritual unity which touches not only my lone heart but also the hearts of all.

I had on one occasion paid a visit to Japan and there the sight of the snow-capped Fujisan touched me; but it was not the handiwork of human hands nor the masterpiece of artists.

I had on another occasion witnessed the Pyramids of Egypt from the aeroplane which however reminded me of the grandeur of the ancient civilization around the River Nile, but one had to go out of Cairo and visualize the glow of the past against the golden sky above the silvery sands of the historic deserts.

And again I had one memorable opportunity of visiting England by plane over the blue English Channel. I was impressed with the serene weather over the apparent calm of the small island.

From the flight from Gander (New Foundland) to *La Guardia* aerodrome (New York) I had those imperishable impressions photographed in my mind's eye of the skyscrapers (symbols of ultra-modernity) of New York.

But with all my yearnings to go back again to these far far lands nothing has touched me so much as the sight of the Shwedagon with all its glittering glow around the green herbage—with all its national heritage woven around ancient culture on a hillock which had defied the onslaughts of the sea—over two thousand years ago—particularly on my return journey from Calcutta to Rangoon when the inclement weather rocked our plane like a cradle and heaved it over in the air currents along the estuary of the meandering Irrawaddy.

Here is a book which would reveal the secrets and the sacredness of the world-famous stupa—The Great Shwedagon.

TUN PE,

The Hon'ble Minister for Information.

3rd December 1948.



U AUNG THAN,
(The Author)

INTRODUCTION

This is my handiwork, rather my life work because I have been studying the subject since my undergraduate days. Not only have I done "field work" by daily visits to the Pagoda for over a decade but I have been doing research work by delving into the literature on the subject by Burmese and non-Burmese authorities, such as, Pearn's History of Rangoon, Hesketh Bigg's "The Shwedagon Pagoda", etc. Several *Sayadaws* and others who are conversant with matters relating to the Shwedagon have also been contacted. It was not till after the liberation of Rangoon in May 1945 that I contributed an article on this subject to the *Rangoon Liberator* (the precursor of the *New Times of Burma*) which was then run by the Information Department of the CAS(B). The demand for this article spurred me on to publish "The Shwedagon and Guide" in October 1945 in booklet form and 2,000 copies of this publication sold out like hot cakes in the wake of the British liberation of Burma. Meanwhile, my services came to be requisitioned, fairly frequently, by the Trustees of the Shwedagon Pagoda and by the Foreign Office to act as Cicerone and Guide to almost

all distinguished foreigners visiting the Pagoda, and my having to answer their various questions not only about the Pagoda but of the Buddhist religion gave me some idea as to what the non-Burmans visiting the Pagoda would like to know about it. In the midst of a busy life I have collated and emendated my notes on the subject and I have written this enlarged edition as an act of merit. There is a wide demand in foreign countries for books dealing with Burma and the Government of the Union of Burma have done the right thing by printing and publishing this book, with copious illustrations, with a view, I understand, of sending copies to overseas embassies. Any foreigner visiting the Sacred Shrine, with a copy of this book in hand, will not, I hope, feel the absence of a guide. If he finds this account to be of some use to him, my efforts will be amply repaid. May this be the forerunner of other similar publications on Burma' probably on different subjects and lines, which will pave the way for establishing a Tourists Bureau worthy of the Independent Union of Burma.

AUNG THAN,

*Secretary to the Union Govt. of Burma,
Ministry of Information.*

22nd August 1948.

INTRODUCTION TO SECOND EDITION

I am glad to be still in the land of the living and be of assistance in revising the first edition, and vetting the proof of the second edition, of this publication, which has obviously gone out of print and been in great demand.

Any foreigner coming to Burma and going away without visiting the golden Shwedagon would be missing the chance of his lifetime of seeing at close range one of the “Wonders of the World.” May this little book be of some use in guiding him round the sacred shrine. “Seeing is believing.”

AUNG THAN,
T.P.C., B.A., B.C.S. (*Retired*),
Administrative Officer,
Directorate of Health Services.
Burma, Rangoon.

16th January 1957.

REMARKS OF VISITORS

I am grateful to the Trustees for showing me their magnificent Pagoda.

May Truth, Peace and Harmony ultimately prevail in this distracted world of ours !

SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

25th July 1946.

* * *

“ Sabbe Sankara Anicca.” Forms need constant renewal. Only the Dhamma is eternal.

CHRISTMAS HUMPHREYS,

President of the Buddhist Society, London.

18th October 1946.

* * *

The Siamese delegates to the Inter-Asian Relations Conference have the good fortune to come and pay homage to this Shwedagon Pagoda. They are very much delighted to see that Buddhism is much alive in this country and they also feel that Buddhism is the sure foundation of the world peace.

PHYA ANUMAN RACHATHON.

15th April 1947.

* * *

The Financial Mission from the United Kingdom have to-day been shown round this Pagoda and have found much to stimulate their interest and admiration. It will always remain a

vivid picture in their memory, and one of their outstanding impressions of their visit to Burma.

J. I. C. CROMBIE.
N. E. YOUNG.
A. DIBDIN.
G. DAVEY.
S. A. CHARLES.
MARY TOOMBS,

19th April 1947.

* * *

ယနေ့အိန္ဒိယပြည်မှ၊ ဥပဒေအကြံပေးအရာရှိ ဆာ ဘီ၊ အင် (န)၊ ရောင်း (န) ဘုရားသို့ လာရောက် ဘူးမျှော်ရာတွင်၊ ကျွန်တော် လည်းလိုက်ပါလာ၍၊ ရွှေတိဂုဏ်ဘုရား စေတီတော် ဘဏ္ဍာထိန်းအဖွဲ့ လူကြီးမင်းများက၊ ကုန်းတော်ပေါ်ရှိ ဘုရား၏ အတ္ထုပ္ပတ္တိတို့ကို၊ ပြောပြ လိုက်ပြသည့်အတွက် ကြားနာမှတ်သားရသဖြင့်၊ အဖွဲ့ကိုကျေးဇူးတင်ပါ ကြောင်း။ ရှေ့အသို့၌၊ မြန်မာပြည်သည်လည်း၊ လွတ်လပ်သောအချုပ် အခြာ အာဏာပိုင်ဖြစ်လာသောအခါ၊ ဤကုန်းတော်နှင့် မြတ်စွာဘုရား ကိုယ်စားတော်၊ စေတီတော်ကြီးတို့ကို ယခုထက်တိုး၍ ပြုစုနိုင်ကြလိမ့်မည် ဖြစ်သဖြင့်၊ သာသနာတော်ကြီးသည် မကြာမြင့်မှီ နေ၊ လ သဘွယ်ထွန်း လင်းမည်ဟုဒိဋ္ဌယုံကြည်ပါကြောင်း။

S. S. THAIKE,
ညောင်ရွှေစော်ဘွားကြီး။

၁၉၄၇ ခု၊ ဩဂုတ်လ ၃၀ ရက်။

* * *

Thanks to the courtesy of the Trustees of the Pagoda and of U Aung Than I had a most interesting hour this morning going round this celebrated Pagoda. At one of the shrines, where

I was told wishes come true, I secretly formed the wish that our respective countries, India and Burma, may come closer together in the near future.

B. N. RAU,

Constitutional Adviser, Govt. of India.

30th August 1947.

* * *

The members of the United Kingdom Defence Mission to Burma were shown round the Pagoda on 24th August 1947. We have looked forward since our arrival in Burma to paying this visit not only because the Pagoda is, as a work of art, one of the wonders of the world, but also because of its particular significance as a symbol of Burmese unity.

The peoples of Great Britain and Burma will find mutual understanding easier to achieve if they can share together the appreciation of the world's treasures. We have felt this morning particularly understanding of the aspirations and ideals of a united independent Burma.

JOHN FREEMAN,

*Parliamentary Under Secretary of State,
War Office.*

24th August 1947.

* * *

Accompanied by the following eight members of the Defence Mission—

1. MA OR-GENERAL K. COBLE.
2. CAPTAIN M. O. NOB.
3. BRIGADIER JOHNS (*Financial Adviser, S.E.A., Land Forces*).
4. AIR VICE-MARSHAL A. SANDERSON.
5. MR. H. P. BLYTHE (*Financial Adviser, A.C.F.E.*).
6. CAPTAIN R. CAMPBELL, R.N.

7. MR. A. DIBDIN (*I.E., Burma Office*).

8. MR. J. F. HOSIE (*Secretary, Ministry of Defence*)

* * *

My visit to the Shwedagon Pagoda this morning is the fulfilment of a long-cherished ambition. Ever since I first heard of the Pagoda many years ago, as one of the world's supreme art treasures, I have looked forward to the day when its beauty and interest would change from a dream to a reality. Thanks to the kindness and courtesy of the Trustees of the Pagoda my dream has now come true. The Pagoda, in all its grace and dignity, has witnessed many dramatic events in Burma's long and illustrious history. I am happy to think that it will so soon witness the achievement by Burma of new complete national independence, and the beginning of a new and glorious chapter in the career of a great people. May Britain and Burma always walk together as friends and equals.

LISTOWEL.

GILBERT LAITHWAITE.

A. E. MCGUIRE.

A. RUTTER.

CAPT. BURNS.

MARGARET M. FOWLER.

R. M. HARRIS.

R. W. D. FOWLER.

7th September 1947.

* * *

I have been told of the Shwedagon Pagoda. I have read of the Shwedagon Pagoda. Now I have seen the Shwedagon Pagoda, and that is the best of all.

I am deeply grateful to the Trustees of the Pagoda for their kind welcome to me and my wife and members of my staff.

I regard it as a good omen that one of my first acts after my arrival in Rangoon as the High Commissioner of the United Kingdom has been to visit this wonderful shrine.

JAMES BOWKER.

1st December 1947.

* * *

Its beauty and serenity delights the eye. May I hope that its peaceful atmosphere is maintained to the fullness of time. The memory of this day will be forever in my mind. I have been privileged to walk on the upper platform and I greatly appreciate the kindness of the Trustees that made this possible. This is my last message to Burma: May peace and friendship forever be maintained between Burma and Great Britain. In the years to come if I can be of any help I hope that my friends in this country will not fail to call on me.

HUBERT ELVIN RANCE,

Governor of Burma.

2nd January 1948.

With my love to all Burmese Women.

NOEL RANCE.

* * *

The dignity and splendour of what I have seen this evening I find difficult to express in words. What is even more striking is the atmosphere of peace and tranquillity. A visit to such surrounding is an inspiration and a source of spiritual strength and sustenance. My visit will remain one of the most cherished memories of my life.

ARTHUR HENDERSON.

6th January 1948

We have had a most wonderful experience this lovely morning.

JOSEPHINE K. STANTON.

7th January 1948.

* * *

May Burma experience lasting peace as exemplified by the peace and repose to be found in the magnificent Shwedagon Pagoda. It was my privilege to place gold leaf on the Pagoda.

EDWIN F. STANTON.

7th January 1948.

* * *

Though I have taken much interest in Burmese Buddhism and history in my 20 years in Burma, I have only seen the Shwedagon in my last week. It is even more impressive and interesting than I had expected. I wish the very best of luck and prosperity to Burma and its greatest Pagoda. Many thanks to U Aung Than for showing me round. Could he not publish another guide-book in English for future visitors?

LANGHAM CARTER,

Commissioner, Magwe Division.

9th January 1948.

* * *

Thanks to the courtesy of U Aung Than I have at last, prior to leaving Burma, had the opportunity of visiting the Great Shwedagon. I had previously visited Kyaiktiyo, Ananda and Shwethalyaung and everywhere. I have been made most welcome.

I shall always remember these experiences and pray for the prosperity, happiness and well-being of this lovely land.

D. FISHWICK,

Lately Commissioner of Pegu.

9th January 1948.

It has been my privilege to serve in Burma for the last two and a half years, and it is my earnest hope that the work which I have done in this period will assist the country. I have enjoyed it, and its people have treated me with their renowned courtesy. The reason is supplied by a tour round this Pagoda where peace and tranquillity, faith and tolerance, sunlight and beauty and kindliness, combine to demonstrate the most delightful aspects of the character of those who have been, and will continue to be, my friends. If all the world could learn, and would practise, the same virtues of mutual self-respect and understanding, we would be so much the nearer to peace and prosperity and happiness.

J. C. B. WAKEFORD,

Principal Technical Adviser (Railways), Burma.

18th January 1948.

* * *

A most inspiring visit.

MOUNTBATTEN OF BURMA.

EDWINA MOUNTBATTEN OF BURMA.

PAMELA MOUNTBATTEN.

PATRICIA BRABOURNE.

13th March 1948.

* * *

C. M. AGARWALA,

Chief Justice, Patna High Court.

23rd March 1948.

S. BHATTACHARYYA,

President, Rotary Club of Patna.

23rd March 1948.

AKBAR HUSAIN,

Member, Rotary Club of Patna.

23rd March 1948.

I am most grateful to the Trustees for their kindness in allowing me to visit the Pagoda a second time, and to see the Sacred Relics from Ceylon. The Shwedagon, in its serene and peaceful beauty, seems now as always to incarnate the soul of Burma and its people. It mingles and unites the ancient with the modern greatness of this happy land, the unforgettable achievements and high culture of great generations of free-born Burma with the new spirit of devotion to their country and their fellow men that animates the free Burma of to-day. May the Shwedagon forever shine with the spiritual beauty of a free people—a radiant beacon of hope, and faith, and service, guiding Britain and Burma, and all the other nations of our troubled world, towards the path of brotherhood and peace.

LISTOWEL.

25th March 1948.

I share Lord Listowel's gratitude and endorse all that he has written.

J. B. SIDEBOTHAM.

25th March 1948.

I also am very grateful.

D. L. PEARSON.

25th March 1948.

* * *

I have been deeply impressed by my inspiring visit to this Holy Shrine. It stands in its grandeur as a majestic symbol of the devotion of past and present generations of Burmans to the search for spiritual truth.

KLAHR HUDDLE.

JAMES D. BARNETT, *Col., U.S.A.*

J. RUSSELL ANDRUS.

8th April 1948.

I always have felt that religion and faith will be the salvation of this world. After this visit, after what I have seen and admired, may I express my admiration, respect and gratefulness.

GIRARD RAOUL DUVAL,
Minister Resident for France in Burma.

MONIQUE RAOUL DUVAL.
* * *

I am grateful for the courtesy and kindness shown to me by the representatives of the Foreign Office, the Information Ministry and the Trustees of the Shwedagon Pagoda. It was for me an unique experience to visit this sacred place and I was deeply impressed by the atmosphere of grandeur, sanctity and peacefulness that pervaded over the whole area. Now I can well understand the source from where the people of this great country derive their inspiration which has made them so popular the world over as a peaceful, hospitable and charming Nation.

I take this opportunity of paying my respectful homage to this sacred place.

MOHAMMED ALI,
H.E. the Pakistan Ambassador in Burma.

8th June 1948.

IBNE HASAN,
Counsellor of Embassy.

8th June 1948.

* * *

The beauty of construction and the spirit of worship have been moving experience.

R. MACMAHON BALL,
Leader of Australian Goodwill Mission.

D. W. McNICOL.

10th June 1948.

I am much impressed by the beauty of this Holy Shrine.

L. K. LAKSHMANAN

U.N.I.C.E.F.

17th June 1948.

In each generation mankind gets inspiration from the creative arts of the past.

THOMAS PARRAN.

17th June 1948.

* * *

I was impressed very much with all what I saw here.

L. S. SKOBLIN,

*Field Representative for Radio
Corporation of America.*

8th July 1948.

* * *

It was a great impression all that I saw here.

J. P. JANSA,

Czechoslovak Technical Mission to Burma.

15th July 1948.

The Shwedagon Pagoda is a real treasure of Buddhist Art and Devotion.

SECRETARY,

CZECHOSLOVAK TECHNICAL MISSION.

15th July 1948.

* * *

UNESCO 19 Are Kleber.

KUO YU SHOU.

PARIS 16 E FRANCE :

18th July 1948.

This is a most inspiring place. A visit I will remember always.

GEORGE C. MEANS.

13th August 1948.

* * *

Ever since I woke up in my ship last Thursday which carried me to Rangoon from Calcutta, I had a yearning to come round to see this Buddhistic world's greatest treasure, Shwedagon Pagoda. The fulfilment of this wish has been made possible this morning by the courtesy and kindness of U Ba Thein, Secretary of the Pagoda Trust. I was particularly impressed by the luxuriant growth of the sapling of the Mahabodhi tree carried by the President of India's Constituent Assembly, Dr. Rajendra Prasad and planted by the President of the Union of Burma, His Excellency Sao Shwe Thaik, on the occasion of the establishment of Burma's independence on 4th January this year. I am told that the sapling was only six inches when it was first planted but to-day when it is only little more than ten months old it has grown to a plant of more than six feet in height. I hope and trust this growth is symbolical of the friendship between Burma and India which is bound to grow from strength to strength as years roll by. The Pagoda itself is a wonderful place and is bound to be the outward symbol of unity of the Buddhist world. Burma's men and women by their devotion to the cause of Buddhism are eminently fitted to become the spiritual leaders in this war-weary world of ours.

S. N. BURAGOHAIN,

President, All-Assam Ahom Association.

28th November 1948.

EXTRACTS FROM AUTOGRAPH BOOK

With best wishes from

ARTHUR HENDERSON.

20th January 1948.

* * *

With every good wish, and much gratitude for your guidance during my memorable visit to the Shwedagon Pagoda.

LISTOWEL,

Minister of State.

22nd January 1948.

* * *

Thank you again for another and no less delightful visit to the Shwedagon.

LISTOWEL.

25th March 1948.

* * *

A visit which has been both a very great privilege and pleasure.

J. B. SIDEBOTHAM, C.M.G.,

Colonial Officer, London.

D. L. PEARSON.

25th March 1948.

* * *

With many thanks for courtesies received and all good wishes.

KLAHR HUDDLE,

American Ambassador.

JAMES D. BARNETT.

Colonel, U.S.A.

J. RUSSELL ANDRUS,

Secretary of Embassy.

8th April 1948.

All good wishes.

EDWINA MOUNTBATTEN OF BURMA.
MOUNTBATTEN OF BURMA.

13th March 1948.

* * *

With all my thanks and gratefulness.

G. RAOUL DUVAL.
MONIQUE RAOUL DUVAL.

5th June 1948.

* * *

With gratitude for courtesy and kindness shown to me during my visit to the Shwedagon Pagoda, which made the “ pilgrimage ” a memorable and happy experience “ Happiness is a perfume which you cannot pour on others without getting a few drops yourself. ”

MOHAMMED ALI,
Pakistan's Ambassador to Burma.

8th June 1948.

MORE RECENT REMARKS (UP TO MAY 1956)

ADDENDUM TO SECOND EDITION

Mrs. Nixon and I have deeply appreciated the opportunity which have been given to us to visit this magnificent shrine. For years we have heard of it and we have previously seen pictures of it—but actually seeing it has exceeded even our greatest expectations.

The people of Burma have provided here for all the world to see—one of the greatest cultural monuments ever erected by man.

We hope we can come back at some time in the future to spend more time experiencing the great physical and spiritual beauty we have found here.

(SD.) RICHARD NIXON,
Vice-President, United States.

25th November 1953.

(SD.) PATRICIA NIXON.

* * *

I am happy to have been able to make a pilgrimage to this Great Pagoda.

(SD.) VIJAYA LAKSHMI PANDIT
(India).

19th May 1954.

* * *

On the murky morning when I first saw it, Shwedagon pointed like a tongue of fire into the sky. At noon on a clear day it was peaceful and sublime. On a moonlight night it had a mystic cast. The Shwedagon can be seen from any point of the compass. Its moods are the moods of man; and yet its dignity, its plain beauty, its purity make it the symbol of the

noblest things for which man has strived. I have seen sunsets and storms, glaciers and peaks, flowers and faces that have moved me more. But of all the things that man has created by his hands, the Shwedagon is the loveliest I have known. It made my heart leap when I first saw it; and its beauty keeps coming back to me no matter how distant I am.

(Extract from p. 216 of "North From Malaya" by Justice Douglas of the U.S. Supreme Court.)

* * *

This is the second time that I have had the privilege of visiting the pagoda.—I respect the place that it holds in the hearts and minds of the people of Burma—and the devotion that is associated with it.

(Sd.) R. CASEY,

Minister of External Affairs, Australia.

12th September 1954.

* * *

I am impressed by the spirit of beauty and devotion of this shrine.

(Sd.) ALI SASTROAMIDJOJO,

Prime Minister, Republic of Indonesia.

27th September 1954.

* * *

It was my good fortune to have this rarest opportunity of taking part in the opening ceremony of the Second Session of the Chattha Sangayana.

By the merit of this noble deed, may the peoples of Burma and Cambodia be happy and prosperous for all time to come.

(Sd.) NORODOM SIHANOUK,

King of Cambodia.

November 1954.

A visit to Shwedagon Pagoda is a very rich spiritual experience which I shall treasure for the rest of my life.

(SD.) ANNE RENOVA,

Phnom-Penh, Cambodia.

20th November 1954.

* * *

We find the Shwedagon one of the most inspiring religious monuments of the world. Our faith is reaffirmed by the pilgrimage to this great Buddhist sanctuary.

(SD.) PHAO SRIYANOND,

Thailand.

January 1955.

* * *

I am so impressed by this magnificent shrine.

CLARISSA EDEN.

March 1955.

* * *

The ancient memorial of people's art of Burma produces a strong art impression. What was preserved of the original structure is most valuable.

(SD.) NIKHOLAI TIKHONOV,

Moscow, U.S.S.R.

15th March 1955.

* * *

We are happy to have the opportunity to visit Burma, to visit the Shwedagon Pagoda, centre of the Burmese People's Buddhist faith. Buddhism teaches us to do good not to do evil, mutual assistance and mutual love. Such virtues as

taught by Buddhism drive home to us that we must co-exist peacefully.

This historical and invaluable Pagoda also symbolizes the Burmese People's elaborate arts. The best of luck to the Burmese People.

(SD.) PHAM VAN DONG,

*Deputy Prime Minister,
Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.*

12th April 1955.

* * *

Monument of beauty,
National Emblem,
Symbol of living faith,
Inspiration to all who believe the truth shall make
you free.

*On behalf of Dr. Frank N. D. Buchman and
the World Force of Moral Rearmament.*

*9th July, B.E. 2499.
1955.*

* * *

It has been a very great pleasure to visit once again this Holy Pagoda. There have been many changes since my last visit all of which have been for the improvement of the Shwedagon. I want to thank all my friends for this happy day.

(SD.) HUBERT RANCE.

2nd January 1956.

* * *

The East must produce the illumined men and men who can bring the moral and spiritual rebirth for this land and the whole world.

(SD.) FRANK N. D. BUCHMAN.

14th May 1956.

THE SHWEDAGON PAGODA

CHAPTER I

APPROACH TO THE PAGODA AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

1. The Pagoda is situated on Singuttara Hill, the last hill of the Pegu Yomas. The summit of the hill has been levelled to form a platform, about 900 feet long from north to south, and 700 feet wide from east to west, with a walling round it, $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet thick and 5 feet high. It has a drop of 50 feet on the outside down to the Lower Terrace of the hill, which also has a walling around it.

2. The ascent to the Pagoda is by four flights of brick steps, one opposite the centre of each face. The principal approach is on the south side (104 steps), and originally extended much further than it does now as may be seen from the figures, *zayats* (rest houses) and *pongyi kyaungs* (monasteries) on the Pagoda Road. The Eastern Stairway is the longest and the most crowded one, as it leads to the busy residential quarter of Bahan where there is a bazaar. But, from the road, which cuts it half-way to the platform it has 118 steps. The Northern Stairway, with 128 steps, has a rail track for carrying heavy loads up the Pagoda. The Western one was closed after the Annexation in 1852, and a new one made on that side, passing the Arsenal and leading to the south-west corner, where the

guard-house was situated. The garrison was removed to Mingaladon in 1928, and the platform of the Shwedagon was entirely demilitarized. The Western Stairway was then re-opened for public use at a formal ceremony on the 2nd March 1930. This stairway has been rebuilt in modern fashion and has a pleasant appearance.

3. If you enter the Pagoda by the West Entrance from U Wizara Road you will have to climb about 175 steps to reach the platform. Having gained the platform, one sees that the Pagoda is surrounded on all sides by buildings facing it. The space between the buildings and the curb of the Pagoda is paved with marble slabs. Tarazzo pavement is being constructed in 1956 at an estimated cost of about 2 lakhs of *Kyats* to replace them. The open space is about 50 feet wide in some and 200 feet wide in other places. All these buildings on the platform around the Pagoda are shelters, called *Tazaungs*, and like the *Zaungdons* have scenes of the same nature painted or carved in wood on panels. Some *Tazaungs* have very fine works of wood-carving of floral designs at the entrances or pillars of mosaic work inside, which should not escape the attention of any one with an æsthetic eye.

4. The *Tazaungs* may have as many as 5, 7 or 9 storied roofs, those culminating in a spire and *hti* (crown) being called *Pyathat Tazaungs*. The figures of the Buddha are generally of alabaster (which is found chiefly at Sagyin near Mandalay) or of brass; the large ones are of bricks plastered over. The Buddha is usually represented in a sitting position—that in which He attained the Buddhahood—in His meditations. The top knot on the head is meant to represent His hair. When He cut off His long hair with a sword after deciding on adopting a religious life He left about a couple of inches, which is said

never to have grown longer or become shorter. The standing figures of the Buddha represent Him after he had attained the Buddhahood in the position in which He addressed the people. His right hand is usually on His chest, though in some figures it is hanging down. The reclining figures represent Him as he attained *Nirvana*. The sitting position represents Him in His meditations. (*See the Message of Buddhism—Appendix C*).

5. The Western Entrance was blocked up for nearly 80 years. The old covered-way down the Hill was removed by the British when they occupied the Pagoda in 1852. It had been constructed by Ma Mya Gale, Queen of King Tharrawaddy, celebrated both for her beauty and talents. After the removal of the garrison to Mingaladon, this entrance was reopened for public use at a formal ceremony on the 2nd March 1930 ; and the place was crowded with bamboo *marquees* for the festive occasion which were all but one pulled down at the instance of the Trustees. And it was that particular tent which was allowed to remain that caught the flames of a burning rubbish heap and spread right up to the *Tazaung* at the top of the stairway and then on to the further side on the east. The flames travelled eastward in this fashion. The Pagoda was then being re-gilt as is being done now in 1947-48 and along the bamboo scaffolding, from west, round north to the east the fire crossed over in a semi-circle to the *Tazaung* facing the Eastern Entrance and extended down the eastern *Zaungdan*, destroying every combustible thing it found on its way till it got to the moat on the east side, where it was brought under control. It happened on the 6th March 1931 at 3 p.m. Altogether 23 structures were destroyed—13 *Tazaungs* on the platform (6 on the west and 7 on the east of the Pagoda), 7 sections of the eastern *Zaungdan*, the *Tazaung* over the *Damazedi* inscriptions and 2 *zayats*. The present western *Zaungdan* was built after the

reopening of the Western Gate and the conflagration. That is why some part of it is still unfinished, though the stairway has been built after the Western fashion with its majestic golden pillars of Byzantine architecture.

6. The *Tazaung* (1) * at the head of the Western Entrance (37 and 38) is quite modern, the original one being built out of a daily contribution of half anna per head from the Buddhist shopkeepers and bazaar sellers of the Surati Bazaar, Rangoon, and is popularly referred to as the “Two-pice *Tazaung*”. The *Tazaung* opposite was built in 1841 and subsequently repaired. The figures in the niches inside belong to the wall of the great Pagoda. The figure on the wall is that of King Okkalapa (2). Three dainty damsels are paying homage to the memory of the Buddha at three newly gilt shrines (3 and 4).

7. At the north-west corner is a small pagoda (5) honey-combed with niches containing images of the Buddha. There are eight, and above each is the animal, or bird representing a planet or a day of the week. To the Burmans the sun and the moon are planets, and Wednesday ends at sunset, the night hours from sunset to sunrise on Thursday being regarded as another day. Thus there are : the *Galon* or Mythic Bird, representing the Sun and Sunday (North-East) ; the Tiger, the Moon and Monday (East) ; the Lion, Mars and Tuesday (South-East) ; the Elephant, Mercury and Wednesday till sunset (South) ; the Serpent, Saturn and Saturday (South-West) ; the Rat, Jupiter and Thursday (West) ; the tuskless Elephant Rahu, the planet that causes eclipses of the sun and moon, the day from sunset on Wednesday to sunrise on Thursday (North-West), and the Mole, Venus and Friday (North). Then we come to the Bell (6)

* The numbers within brackets refer to the corresponding numbers in the Guide Chart and Plan of the Pagoda Platform (Appendix D).

Mahaghanta, of great sound, presented by Singu Min, son of Sinbyushin, son of Alaungpra, in 1778. It is a bell of bronze, weighing 15,555 viss (or about 16 tons). It is 7 feet high, 6 feet 8 inches wide at the mouth and 1 foot thick. This bell bears an inscription in Burmese in twelve lines, which is a prayer that the donor (the King) might attain to *Nirvana* for this deed of merit. During the first Burmese War (1824—26) the present bell was removed by the British as a trophy, but the raft which was carrying it to the “Sulamani” bound for Calcutta, heeled over and the bell sank. It remained in the river till after the Treaty of Yandabo, when it was raised and replaced on the Pagoda Platform in January 1926.

8. To the left is a huge sitting image of the Buddha, about 30 feet high, and the *Tazaung* which shelters it is often used for public meetings of various kinds. Further to the left are some small pagodas, and in front of one, before a tree, is a wishing stone. Further to the north is the walling from where one can command a fine panoramic view of the landscape. In the open space stands a banyan tree, about six feet (but 30 feet in 1956) high, which has grown from a sapling of the Mahabodhi tree brought over by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of India's Constituent Assembly and planted by His Excellency Sao Shwe Thaik, on 4th January 1948, Burma's Independence Day. On the right is another banyan tree (5) which was planted by a Trustee 45 years ago. Next to it was a miniature replica of the Kyaiktiyo Pagoda seven miles from Kyaikto in Thatôn District. It has fallen down and has not been renovated. The legend of Kyaiktiyo Pagoda will be found separately in Appendix B. Going further on there is a cluster of small pagodas with a *padauk* tree (*Pterocarpus Indicus*) in the centre. Then we pass the well (*Sandawdwin Tazaung*) to the left (8).

9. In the *Tazaung* (8) is the brick *Pyatbat*, built in 1879 over the sacred well (*Sandaundwin*) in which the eight Hairs of Gaudama Buddha are reputed to have been washed before being placed under the great Pagoda.

10. Next to it, where the new brick building now stands, there was an open hexagonal *Tazaung* (9) built by Daw Hpwa, which sheltered the present *Hti* of the Pagoda, when it was received from King Mindon before it was hoisted on to the Pagoda. The modern brick building on this site is the headquarters of the Zediyingana Association, established in 1895, with a library of approximately 6,000 books on religion and general information. Next to it is a *Tazaung* (10) containing several old figures of the Buddha, with a pair each of life-size figures of Indians in the front and at the side. The chief figure of Buddha (12), in it is represented as a prince guarded by a dragon (11). Before this figure there is a *Chidawya*, or symbolical footprint of the Buddha in stone (11). It is said to be a copy of the real impress of the Buddha's foot which He left where the Shwezettaw Pagoda is in the Minbu District in Upper Burma. All the sides inside this *Tazaung* are full of images in a sitting position and there are eight standing which are of teak and plastered with gold. On the right is a small pagoda put up by a Karenni Chief in 1879.

11. We then go back towards the main Pagoda (13) and on the east side of the corner *Tazaung* is a *Tazaung* (14) containing three figures of the Buddha. The oldest legend of the Shwedagon is attached to this small pagoda, and the shrine in front of it, and its site is probably that of the oldest of all the erections on the platform. The story runs that in the time of Gaudama Buddha the King of Okkala came to this spot and prayed that he might be the depositor of relics of the Fourth Buddha, those of the three previous Buddhas of this

dispensation having already been deposited there. Gaudama Buddha then appeared to him in a vision and told him that his request would be granted. It was to this King that the eight Hairs were brought by the two brothers. In front of the central figure called the *Sudaungbyi* (15) or prayer-granting Buddha, is the wishing stone (the Delphic Oracle) which the suppliant must lift after *shikoing* or bowing to the *Sudaungbyi* or you should say to yourself thus, —“ May this stone be light if my wish will be granted.” If it feels light, your wish will be granted. If it feels heavy, your wish will not be granted and *vice versa*.

12. *Tazaung* (16) south of Naungdawgyi, with a sitting image (17) (the one on the left of the middle image) having a pair of eyes of unequal size is said to have been built by or in memory of *Shin Itzagona* who could turn lead into gold in the Pagan Era, 900 years ago.

13. Behind this *Tazaung* we find Naungdawgyi Pagoda built by Bayinnaungdawgyi; it is reputed to be on the spot where the eight Hairs of Gaudama Buddha were deposited on their first arrival. A small pagoda was originally built there by the King of Okkala and has been enlarged at different times, lastly by U Mun Taw, a trader of Moulmein, in 1876. The North Entrance is the one on each side of which the *beloos* and dragons resembling crocodiles forming the banisters of the flight of steps were put up by Queen Shinsawbu of Pegu about 1460. Looking north are two tanks. The one to the right is called *Thwezekan* or Blood-washing Tank, because a great soldier Kyanzittha, after taking Thatôn, is stated to have killed so many of the enemy that his sword and other weapons, reeking with blood, were washed in this tank about A.D. 1000. During the First Burmese War it was known as the Scotch Tank.

14. The *Tazaung* facing the East Entrance (23) was rebuilt in 1940. The old one was originally built by King Tharrawaddy's Queen but was subsequently repaired and altered, and lastly renovated in 1869 before it was destroyed by the great fire of Shwedagon in 1931. In the centre niche you will find the image of the Buddha (24) with its right palm turned upwards instead of down like other images. Outside the niche in front there are four big sitting images of the Buddha, three also with their right palm exposed. The cash offerings to the Pagoda are strictly allocated by the donors and each collection box on the Pagoda bears a label indicating the purpose for which the donations are to be used. The man guarding the collection box recites blessings whenever some cash is dropped inside the box and beats the triangular brass gong to acknowledge its receipt. The Eastern Entrance is the one on which the assault was made by the British on the 14th April 1852. About half-way down on the left are three stone slabs bearing inscriptions put up by the Môn King Damazedi, in the year 1485, which record the story of the brothers and the foundation of the Pagoda in Burmese, Pali and Môn (25). The old *Tazaung* was burnt down by the great fire in 1931 and a new shed was built in its stead, by U Tha Tun, A.R.I.B.A.

On the slope near the eastern approach, an electric lift is being set up in January 1957 for old people to gain access to the pagoda platform without difficulty.

15. At the top of the East Entrance is a *Tazaung* (25A) with five gilt spires which is one of the handsomest on the Pagoda platform; it has just below its ceiling figures on panels depicting the life story of Gaudama Buddha before and after renunciation. It contains four big sitting images of the Buddha and the pillars have within the last few years been inlaid

with glass mosaic, which is very effective. Fine specimen of brasswork in imitation of excellent wood-carving is seen here. Further on is a *Tazaung* with corrugated iron roofing containing several images of the Buddha. You will see a handsome little *Tazaung* at the south-east corner. In front there is a post called *Tagundaing* from which streamers or banners are hung; on the top is the sacred goose (*Hinta*) which gave its name to the Kingdom of Hanthawaddy, and was also the sacred bird of the Peguan Dynasty. Most of the *Tagundaings* are surmounted by the goose or the ordinary pagoda *hti*, or umbrella (crown), or a miniature pagoda, while on some there is also a circular extension for the convenient hanging of streamers. You will see here a group of men washing and sweeping the pavement on a Sunday, as on every other Sunday morning (26).

16. Further on to the left you will find behind two shrines in a corner *Tazaung*, two footprints of the Buddha (27). There is a fine view over the barracks and lakes from the south-east corner of the ramparts. The glittering pagoda in the distance is that of Syriam. Not far from the corner is the sacred Banyan or Bo Tree on an octagonal masonry base (28). This tree has grown from a seed of the Bo Tree at Bodh-Gaya in India. It is the centre of attraction on the full moon day of *Kason* (some time in May), when it is ceremoniously fed with water at day-break, under the auspices of the Mahabodhi Society, founded in 1925, of which *Thado Thiri Thudhamma* Sir U Thwin is the President. It was at the foot of the Bo Tree at Bodh Gaya in India that the Buddha obtained His Enlightenment.

17. Gilt *Tazaung* (29) in front of the Trust Office--resting place for distinguished visitors, where the Visitors' Book is to be signed. A curio gallery with a collection of old pagodas, images and curios is next to it (30).

18. The *Tazaung* (30A) facing the South Entrance was renovated in 1947. The interior of the *Tazaung* contains many images of the Buddha, some of which are probably of considerable age, the cast of countenance and the posture being different from those of the present day. Those in the niches adjoining the Pagoda have been much defaced by the promiscuous and haphazard way gold leaves have been plastered on to them and are probably the oldest figures on the platform. The *Tazaung* (31) at the top of South Entrance, was lastly rebuilt by a Chinese devotee in 1936.

19. Behind the Bell *Tazaung* in the north-east corner were buried some of those (Lieuts. R. Doran, 18th Royal Irish ; J. M. Taylor, 9th Madras Infantry, Capt. C. G. Lock, C.B., H.M.S. "Winchester") who fell at the taking of the Pagoda and elsewhere about that time. All these were removed, with full military honours, from the Pagoda on the 22nd January 1929 to the Cantonment Cemetery at Mingaladon. The Bell *Tazaung* (20) was built in 1885 over the bell and its teak supports, which were given by King Tharrawaddy in 1841. The bronze bell weighs roughly about 26,000 viss or 40 tons and is 8½ feet high, 7 feet 8 inches' wide and 1 foot thick. The inscriptions, in Pali and Burmese on this bell, styled as Maha Tisadda Ghanta (three-toned) give an account of the deeds of merit of King Tharrawaddy (otherwise known as Shwebo Min or Konbaung Min), in the cause of Buddhism, including offerings at this Pagoda and of his asseveration that he might become a Buddha himself to save mankind. Then there is a concrete model (21) of the present Pagoda *Hti*, which was presented by King Mindon in 1871, and next to it on the left a similar model of the one presented in 1774 by Sinbyushin, King of Ava, the son of Alaungpra. To the north of the East Entrance is a white

Taxaung (22). It houses the Yegyidaw Wut Association established in 1937.¹ This has replaced the old one which was built by Daw Hla Byaw, a lady paddy-broker, but did not escape destruction in the fire. In front is a *Tagundaing* with a small pagoda on top and there are many similar posts in various other places about the platform. They are supposed to confer health, wealth, and prosperity upon the persons who construct them.

20. The next *Taxaung* (32) to the left is the one built by the Chinese Merited Association of Rangoon in 1898. It contains 28 small images of the Buddhas in glass cases. On the right is a *Taxaung* (32A) built in the typical Chinese joss house style. The Buddha inside is of the best marble procurable in Mandalay and similar in material and pattern to the figure of the Buddha at Kyauktawgyi near Mandalay. The clearing in the corner is the spot where the guard-house stood before, and from here one gets a fine view of the south-west part of Rangoon and its suburbs—the constant-flowing Rangoon River, the evergreen paddy fields of Twante and the busy rice mills of Kanoungto. Figures of Sakka and Mè Lamu are on the wall (33), west-south-west corner. Further on is a handsome *Taxaung* (34) with a reclining figure of the Buddha, 28 feet long, as when he attained Nirvana. At his feet is his faithful brother Ananda, and in front his two disciples, Shin Sariputta and Shin Moggallana. On the walls are Burmese paintings depicting the legend of the foundation of the Kyaiktiyo Pagoda, near Kyaikto in Lower Burma. (For an account of the legend see Appendix B.) Adjoining it is the *Taxaung* covering a pagoda built over a shrine. The standing image of the Buddha in front of the shrine is said to have been to England and returned from there, though very few can vouch for it.

21. Entering the Pagoda by the South or Main Entrance, you will see at the top of the first flight of stairs two large Leogryphs or *Chintbes* (40) (see Appendix A) about 30 feet high, one on each side. The *Beloos* (ogres) come next on each side. The two *Yogis* (ascetics) are supposed to be in search of the Philosopher's Stone and the Well of Life.

22. The covered-way consists of a high central passage and two narrow side aisles, and contains some fine teak pillars, which are old, but the buildings up to the Pagoda were more or less injured in 1852, and those now existing have been put up by different individuals as works of merit since then, and form a continuous covered-way called the *Zaungdan* (as all the four stairways are called). The buildings on the left hand side as one goes up are called *ṣayats* or rest-houses where pilgrims are supposed to lodge but are mostly occupied by owners or their friends, as a result of the shortage of accommodation in town due to war-time bombing. The *Zaungdans* are works of merit of different donors whose names are inscribed in the sections concerned. Most of the sections of the *Zaungdans* have scenes on panels around, just below the ceiling depicting the life of the Buddha in His different existences or different scenes of the story of the foundation of the Pagoda, carved in wood and painted.

23. After passing the *ṣayats*, we come to the moat which is spanned by a concrete bridge, which is of recent origin. Up to 1928, when the garrison was still present, the moat was crossed by a wooden draw-bridge and at this place there was a gap in continuity of the covered-way. The gate in the wall which was constructed by the British has now sliding iron-plate doors with embrasures for muskets.

24. Under the cover of the fantastic roofs that in a continuous ascending line make this picturesque South Entrance, with about 104 steps to climb, we find that sellers of many kinds of merchandise, chiefly altar offerings, have erected their stalls, the sites of which they hold year to year with the permission of the Trustees. Besides offerings to be presented at the many shrines round the Pagoda above, such as tapers, paper flags and flowers, some of the stalls are devoted to female ornaments, ear-rings and bangles of coloured glass, bead necklaces, artificial flowers and combs of several kinds (bamboo, ivory and tortoise-shell) for the hair ; while in others are rows of sober and mysterious looking books in vernacular on the life of the holy Buddha or rules of conduct for the Religious Order, or the Buddhist Philosophy. On the slopes of the Shwedagon is a small satellite town, a town within a city with a bazaar as well.

25. If you have time and permission to go up to the upper terrace or platform, you will see the golden shrine on the east side with an image inside the vault (36). The distinguished visitors usually leave the Pagoda by the western stairway (37 and 38) to get back to their cars. But, if you choose, as other pious pedestrian pilgrims do, you may depart by the southern stairway or approach (39) and you are sure to be greeted with a "good bye" from the leogryph at the foot of the stairway (40).

CHAPTER II

THE PAGODA : ITS STRUCTURE.

1. The perimeter of the base of the Pagoda is 1,420 feet and its height 326 feet above the platform. The base is surrounded by 64 small pagodas with four larger, one in the centre of each side. There are also four sphinxes, one at each corner with six leogryphs (*see* Appendix A for an account of their origin), three on each side of them. Projecting beyond the base of the Pagoda one on the centre of each side are *Tazaungs* in which are images of the Buddha and where offerings are made. There are also figures of elephants crouching and men kneeling, and pedestals for offerings all round the base. In front of the shrines (72 in number) surrounding the base of the Pagoda, you will find in several places images of lions, serpents, *beloos*, *yogis*, *nats* (spirits) or *wathundari* (Recording Angel). On the wall below the first terrace of the Pagoda at the west-south-west and west-north-west corners you will see embossed figures. The former (2) represents King Okkalapa who first built the Pagoda. The latter (33) is a pair of figures ; the one above represents Sakka who assisted in the foundation of the Pagoda, and the one below, Mè Lamu, consort of Sakka and mother of Okkalapa.

2. The Pagoda itself is divided into different parts—

- (1) The Base, with the 64 pagodas, etc. It is 2 feet 3 inches high.
- (2) The three Terraces, called *Pichayas*—the first terrace with 64 small pagodas and four large ones is 15 feet 10 inches high, and the second and the third terraces are respectively 38 feet 5 inches and 25 feet 10 inches high.

- (3) The Bell (*Khaung-laung-bon*) which has a circumference of 344 feet 8 inches is 70 feet 4 inches high.
- (4) The inverted *Thabeik* or begging-bowl.
- (5) The *Baungyit*, or twisted turban, the Embossed Bands which stand to a height of another 41 feet has a circumference of 96 feet 5 inches at the top.
- (6) The *Kyalan*, or ornamental lotus flower, which is 31 feet 5 inches high.
- (7) The *Hnget-pyaw-bu*, the plantain bud-shaped bulbous spire which has a girth of 65 feet is 52 feet 11 inches high.
- (8) The *Hti* or umbrella (crown) which has a circumference of 45 feet 6 inches at the bottom and a diameter of 14 feet 6 inches is 33 feet high.
- (9) The Vane which is 4 feet 8 inches long and about $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide at the end hinged to the shaft, tapers outwards. It turns with the wind on the shaft which stands 15 feet on the top of the *Hti*.
- (10) The *Seinbu*, or the Diamond Bud, which crowns the apex of the Vane-shaft. It is a spherical globe of gold, 10 inches in diameter inlaid with diamonds and other precious stones.

The gold plating of the Pagoda

3. In order to make the gilding stand the weather, the Trustees after the year 1900 decided to cover the bulbous spire, called the plantain bud with gold plates, each plate measuring 1 foot square and weighing 5 ticals of gold. Subscriptions were called for and the work commenced in 1903, when the whole plantain bud was covered. It is on record that four such gold plates were donated by the late King George V (then Prince of Wales) and Queen Mary when they visited Burma in the course

of their tour of India in 1905-06. During the 30 years or so from the time it was taken in hand the covering work was done gradually over the gold accumulated by gilding the Pagoda from time to time since the present Pagoda was first built. And step by step in 1911, 1915, 1919, 1921, 1925, 1928, 1929, 1931, 1936 and 1946 the Pagoda from the bottom of the bulbous spire to the top of Bell has been covered with gold plates of 1 square foot each. A fresh coating of gold leaves was put on in the early part of 1948 at cost of approximately 2 lakhs of rupees. A further fresh coating of gold leaves is being put on right down to the base of the Pagoda.

In January 1957, a coating of gold leaves was put on the *hti* (crown) and unsightly banyan trees removed from the *Thabeikmauk*.

The Hti or the Umbrella (crown)

4. Some idea of the size and shape of the *Hti* may be obtained from the model of it on the east side of the platform (21). It consists of seven wrought iron tiers, the lowest of which is $14\frac{1}{2}$ feet in diameter and each upper one decreasing uniformly in size. The tiers are gold plated and are inlaid with diamonds, rubies, emeralds and other precious stones. It is 33 feet high and weighs $1\frac{1}{4}$ tons.

The Diamond Bud and the Vane

5. The Diamond Bud has numerous pieces of cut diamond and other precious stones.

In the Vane and Stand also there are many pieces of cut diamond and other precious stones.

In both the Diamond Bud and the Vane there are quantities of gold and quantities of coins used in the making of the Vane-shaft, the Stand and the Stays.

Structure

6. Perimeter	...	...	...	1,420 feet.
Height	...	...	...	326 feet above platform.
				ft. in.
Base *	...	...	...	2 3
				15 10
Three terraces, <i>pichayas</i> †	...	{		38 5
			{	25 10
Bell (<i>khaung-laung-bon</i>)	...			70 4
<i>Thabeik-mauk-taungyit</i>	...			41 0
<i>Kyahlān</i>	...	...	...	31 5
<i>Hnget pyawbu</i>	...	...	...	52 11
<i>Hti</i>	...	...	...	33 0
Vane	...	...	...	15 0

		Total	...	326 0

On the upper platform is a golden Shrine on the east side, with an image inside the vault (36).

Seinbu.—Spherical globe of gold 10 inches in diameter inlaid with diamonds and other precious stones.

Plantain Bud covered with solid gold plates since 1903 each measuring 1 foot square and weighing 5 ticals of gold—8,688 plates in all, costing over 16 lakhs of rupees including expenses ; each plate costing about Rs. 725, four times the former value.

In 1956 there were no less than 9,272 gold plates weighing nearly 464 viss to the total value of about 128 lakhs of kyats at the current market value of gold, or eight times the former value. For the past 3 years each gold plate used weighs 6 ticals instead of 5.

* Base—367 ft. 2 in. long.	} This is from the records in the possession of the Trustees.
† 1st <i>pichaya</i> —322 ft. 2 in. long.	
2nd <i>pichaya</i> —199 ft. 2 in. long	
3rd <i>pichaya</i> —184 ft. long.	

Hti or Umbrella (Crown).—Seven wrought iron tiers, the lowest and biggest is $14\frac{1}{2}$ feet in diameter, 33 feet high and weighs $1\frac{1}{4}$ tons. It has gold, silver and alloy bells and gold images and precious stones. When received from King Mindon it was valued at nearly $6\frac{1}{4}$ lakhs and with subsequent additions its aggregate value is said to be more than doubled, *i.e.*, over $12\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs.

Diamond Bud and Vane. —

In Bud	...	4 350 pieces diamond weighing 2,000 ratis.
		93 pieces other precious stones.
In Vane	...	1,090 pieces diamond weighing 240 ratis.
		1,338 pieces other stones.
In Stand	...	886 pieces of precious stones.
		886 nuts.

In both the Bud and the Vane there are 17 viss $11\frac{1}{2}$ ticals of gold and 26,751 silver rupee coins used in making the Vane-shaft, Stand and Stays, 1,065 gold bells and 420 silver bells. The Bud and the Vane are worth over Rs. 10 lakhs.

CHAPTER III

HISTORY OF THE PAGODA

1. When Tapussa and Bhallika, the two Burmese merchants, who sailed away to trade in India 2,500 years ago, met the Buddha near the sacred Bo Tree, they obtained from Him eight Hairs of His head to be enshrined in their native town of Okkala. The authenticity is furnished in the Vinaya Pitaka and by Shin Buddhaghosa's famous commentary on that portion of the Buddhist Scriptures.

2. Five hundred and forty-three years before the birth of Christ, the great Being was born in the Royal Lumbini Garden, near the City of Kapilavastu. His mother was Maya, the Queen of Raja Suddhodana of the Solar Race of India. When the Buddha attained to the age of 16 years the King built three palaces for Him, suited to the three seasons and provided with pleasures. While He was thus enjoying great splendour for 13 years, He proceeded to the park in a chariot. He saw the four signs, a decrepit old man, a diseased man, a dead man and a monk, on four different occasions. On Tuesday, the full moon of *Kason*, in the year 97, Sakaraj Era, when He was 29, He returned to the forest riding—His mighty steed, Khantika, and accompanied by His courtier, Channa. He took milk and rice presented by Sujata, daughter of a rich man in Sena Village, received eight bundles of grass from Suddhaya, the grass cutter, went in the evening to the Bo Tree, and sat in meditation without rising, completely overcame the temptations and became the omniscient Buddha, Chief of men, *nats* and *Brahmas*. He spent 49 days at various places near the Bodhi Tree. At the end, in the seventh place, He ate honey cakes presented by two brothers, Tapussa and Bhallika of Asitanagara Paukkaravati, or Okkala, later

known as Dagon (Rangoon). He gave them eight Hairs taken from His head with His own hands. On Saturday, the full moon of *Wazo*, in the year 103, Sakaraj Era, He preached the *Dharma* to 8 *koudes* (crores) of *nats* and *Brahmas* headed by Kondinya Thera, His first disciple. During the 45 *Vasas* (Lents) He preached the Law and saved 24 *thingies* (*Tbingi* = 20 crores), 60 *koudes* and 100,000 creatures, beginning with Kondinya Thera and ending with Subadha Thera from the whirlpool of Samsara (sentient existence) and brought them to the blessed shore of *Nirvana*. For the benefit of those that were not then saved, he left 84,000 volumes of Dharma (Law) and various relics of His body, so that they may shine for 5,000 years like the cloudless rays of the sun and dispel the darkness of men. On Tuesday, the full moon of *Kason*, in the year 148, Sakaraj Era (542 B.C.), He attained *Nirvana* on a couch stretching north and south in a grove of sal trees in the Garden of Mala Princes, in the Kusinagara country.

3. Legend has it that Tapussa and Bhallika brought the sacred Hairs from India in a ship. On their way to Burma, the two brothers were relieved of two Hairs by the King of Ajetta, and two more were robbed by the King of Nagas, who transformed himself into the likeness of a human being and boarded the ship at night. On arrival in Burma, a great festival was celebrated in honour of the Hairs for several days. Sakka, Lord of the Heavens, came down to earth and assisted in the selection of the site ; but he had to invoke the aid of the four *nats* : Sule, Amyitha, Yawhani and Dakkhina. Relics of the three preceding Buddhas [the staff, the water-dipper (filter) and the bathing garment] were excavated under their direction in one spot and were buried there again along with the sacred Hairs brought by the two brothers. Before placing them in the

vault dug on the hill, King Okkalapa opened the casket containing the Hairs and instead of four, eight Hairs flew up to a height of seven palm trees emitting rays of variegated hues with such a dazzle that the dumb could speak, the deaf could hear and the lame could walk, and a rain of jewels fell knee-deep. A golden stone slab was placed on top of the vault by Sakka and on it was erected a golden pagoda enclosed within silver, tin, copper, lead, marble and iron brick pagodas up to a height of 44 cubits (66 feet).

4. Up to the 14th century, little was known of the Pagoda. In 1372, Binnya U, King of Hanthawaddy (Pegu) visited Dagon (Rangoon) in state and repaired the Pagoda. Successive Kings in Burma, Môn and Burmese, repaired or re-gilt it till the Shwedagon reached its present size some five centuries ago. The little town of Okkala has since grown into the City of Rangoon, but it has no greater glory than the gleaming golden shrine, the spire of which rises majestically into the sky as if conscious of the veneration which the Pagoda invokes. The Shwedagon apparently began to assume its importance as a place of religious veneration during the years of the Môn Kingdom of Pegu roughly coinciding with the reigns of Binnya U (14th century), Binnya Dammayaza, Binnyaran, Binnyawaru and Binnyagyan (15th century). But it was in the time of Shinsawbu that it first assumed something of its present shape and appearance. Shinsawbu, Queen Regnant of Hanthawaddy, during 1455—62 improved the Pagoda, for which she built the terrace, the great balustrade and the several encircling walls, and dedicated a vast area of glebe lands. She gilded the Pagoda from top to bottom with gold leaves equal to her weight, much in the same way as H.H. the Aga Khan does it now with diamonds for charitable purposes. She set up a town on the

north-west of the Pagoda in the locality now known as Myenigon, so that she might supervise all the works of merit at the Pagoda. Her brother and immediate predecessor Binnyagyan had raised the Pagoda to a height of 302 feet.

5. King Damazedi, Shinsawbu's son-in-law and successor, erected inscriptions relating the legend of the foundation of the Pagoda (25). He also offered a great bell said to weigh 180,000 viss of bronze, which the Portuguese adventurer, de Brito, removed in or about the year 1608, so that he might cast the bronze into cannon. But on the way to Syriam, of which he was the lord, the boat bearing it sank in the river. The Pagoda was revered by Bayinnaung, his son Nandabayin, Anaukpetlun, Minredeippa and Thalun (17th century). Alaungpaya worshipped at the Shwedagon and embellished it by re-gilding. Sinbyushin, King of Ava, raised the Pagoda to its present height in 1774 and made a new *Hti* (21) for it gilding it with his own weight in gold costing Rs. 94,000. King Singu, son of Sinbyushin, in 1778 re-gilt the Pagoda and cast a bell (6) which weighed 55,555 viss or roughly 16 tons of bronze. It stands at the north-west corner of the Pagoda platform. After the First Burmese War of 1824, this bell was taken away by the Prize Agents, but it sank to the bottom of the river and was re-floated and replaced at the Pagoda. King Tharrawaddy in 1841 set up a town on the west side of the Pagoda, re-gilt it with 12 viss (over 40 pounds) of pure gold and cast a bell 26,000 viss (about 40 tons in weight). It stands at the north-east corner of the platform (20). King Mindon, who founded Mandalay in 1857, sent down the *Hti* (21) by steamer to Rangoon in October 1871, when Lower Burma was already under British Rule. On the day the *Hti* (crown) was elevated, there was present at and around the Pagoda a huge crowd of about 100,000 persons,

but everything went off smoothly. In 1919 there was an earthquake and the Trustees repaired the diamond bud and vane and replaced them two years later at a cost of a million rupees. The Pagoda has stood the ravages of time and the inclemencies of the weather, having been afflicted with earthquakes on no less than eight occasions in 1564, 1628, 1649, 1661, 1664, 1769, 1888 and 1919, and with a serious fire in 1931. It still looks sombre and majestic and perhaps you will agree with Ralph Fitch, who says, "It is the fairest place, as I suppose, that is in the world."

CHAPTER IV

THE MANAGEMENT OF THE PAGODA

1. The Pagoda is in the charge of nine Trustees elected by vote by the Burmese community of Rangoon who manage everything connected with it and the lands and buildings belonging to it. A Managing Trustee is on duty for three months at a time and they take their turn by rotation.

2. The first batch of Trustees selected by the people were U Maung Gale, U Hpu, U Shwe Thwe, U Po Hnyin, U Po Gyi and U Hpaw Gyi and they carried on till about 1871. Then U Kywe Oh and U Yaung were later added to the panel of Trustees. In 1885, the Recorder of Rangoon laid down certain regulations for the Trust and provided for the appointment of nine Trustees. There were four vacancies among the first eight Trustees and with the additional vacancy arising on account of the ninth place, U On Gaing, U Kywet Ni, U Po Hnyin, U Myat San and U Nyun were selected to fill the vacancies. Later vacancies in the Trust occasioned by death or resignation, were filled by the co-option of U Dun, U Shwe Zin, Retired E.A.C., U Tha We, U Kala, U Nyein, Retired E.A.C., and U Thun.

3. The first group of nine Trustees elected by popular vote and their successors were U Po Tha, U Po Min, U Po Aung, U Shwe Waing, U Maung Gyi, U Tha Gywe, U Po Myaing, U Tun Tin and Saya Pu U Lan, U Po Hla, U Ne Dun, U Po Kyin, U Tu, U Po Kin, U Maung Gyi, U Ya Thi, U Maung Gyee, U Thein Maung, U Ba Gyaw, U Po Ta and U Thwin (now Sir U Thwin). Including the first batch of six Trustees selected by *Sayadan* U Bya there were altogether 41 Trustees up to that time.

4. The Managing Trustees in 1924 were U Po Tha, O.B.E., C.I.E., K.-I.-H., U Po Aung, U Po Myaing, U Ne Dun, U Maung Gyi, U Thein Maung, M.A., LL.B., *Bar.-at-Law* (now Hon'ble Justice Thein Maung), U Ba Gyaw, U Po Ta and U Thwin (now Sir U Thwin).

5. The Trustees in 1929 were Sir Po Tha, C.I.E., O.B.E., K.-I.-H., U Po Aung, U Ne Dun, U Thein Maung, M.A., LL.B., *Bar.-at-Law* (now Hon'ble Justice Thein Maung), U Ba Gyaw, U Po Ta, U Thwin (now Sir U Thwin), U Po Mya and U Myint.

6. The Trustees on the list on 10th April 1946 were as follows :—

- (1) U Thein Maung, M.A., LL.B., *Bar.-at-Law* (now Hon'ble Justice Thein Maung).
- (2) U Ba Gyaw, Land Owner.
- (3) Sir U Thwin, Rice-Miller.
- (4) U Myint, Trader.
- (5) U Po Byaw, former Director of Reserve Bank.
- (6) U Ba Thaw, Trader.
- (7) U Po Saw, Broker.
- (8) U Nyun, Managing Director of the British Burma Film Company, now dead.
- (9) U Po Thaung, A.T.M., Retired Land Officer, Rangoon Development Trust.

Later, U Ba Po, the broker, was elected by the Buddhist populace of Rangoon, though only a small percentage turned up at the polls, to fill the vacancy caused by the death of U Po Thaung.

7. The Trustees in office in 1956 were as follows :—

- (1) *Agga Maba Thray Sithu Thado Thiri Thudhamma*
U Thein Maung, M.A., LL.B., *Bar.-at-Law*, Chief Justice of the Union of Burma.
- (2) U Ba Gyaw, Land Owner.

- (3) *Thado Thiri Thudhamma* Sir U Thwin, Rice Miller.
- (4) *Wunna Kyaw Htin* U Myint, Trader.
- (5) *Sithu* U Po Byaw, Chairman of the Rangoon Turf Club.
- (6) U Ba Thaw, Rice Mill Owner.
- (7) *Thado Thiri Thudhamma* Bo Hmu Aung, Speaker of the House of Deputies.
- (8) U Nyun, Managing Director of the British Burma Film Company (who died lately and his place has been filled by *Thado Maha Thray Sithu* Pagan U Ba Gyan).
- (9) *Thray Sithu* U Hla Gyaw, C.E.O., Rehabilitation Brigade.

8. The following members of the Advisory Board of Sayadaws (Abbots) from Rangoon give advice to the Trustees of the Pagoda on religious matters :—

Name of Monastery.	Name of Sayadaw	Number of <i>Was</i> (Lents) spent as a monk. *
1. Shwedaung Pitaka Taikkyang, Pazundaung.	U Tezeinda	55
2. Weluwun Kyaungdaik, Gyatawya, Bahan.	U Kemasara	50
3. Hnakeikshitsu Kyaung, Thayet-taw Taik.	U Nyanika	50
4. Salin Kyaungdaik, Kemmendine	U Zawtara	49
5. Man-u Kyaung, Kyaungdawya, Bahan.	U Zawta	49
6. Alè Tawya Kyaungdaik ...	U Rewata	47
7. Chauktatkyi Kyaungdaik ...	U Kundinnya	45
8. Zeyawaddy Taik, Kemmendine	U Oggantha	43
9. Shin Adeiksawuntha Kyaung, Pazundaung.	U Kikthariya	40

* A man cannot be ordained as a monk until he attains the age of 20.

The Board is assisted by two Honorary Secretaries—

- (1) U Thiletkhanda, Thondat Kyaung, Shwegyin Taik and
- (2) U Wayama, Taungzun Kyaung, Alètawya.

Festivals

9. Practically the whole year round festivals are celebrated one after the other, and the Pagoda is the centre of attraction and veneration. Six of these feasts are noteworthy :—

- (1) *The Tabaung Festival in March.*—This is the anniversary of the enshrinement of the Hair Relics.
- (2) *The Water Feast in April* in celebration of the Burmese New Year. The images and shrines are cleaned with water brought in tins, pots or hand-pumps. People go about the town and throw water at one another in hilarious mood. Decorated cars with orchestral troupes and dancing minstrels are also much in evidence.
- (3) *The Kason Festival in May.*—The sacred banyan trees (the most important one being at the south-east corner of the platform) are refreshed with water. This feast is three in one, in that it marks (a) the anniversary of Gaudama Buddha's birthday, (b) attainment of Buddhahood and (c) of *Nirvana* (passing away).
- (4) *The Wazo Festival in July.*—This marks the beginning of the Buddhist Lent, when flowers and candles are offered in profusion at the Pagoda and to the elders and teachers in town and the monks in monasteries. From July to October there is virtually a ban on marriages which is not lifted until the next festival.
- (5) *The Thadingyut Festival in October*, which marks the end of the Buddhist Lent, is known as the Lighting Feast. It is celebrated in very much the same

fashion as the *Wazo*, but perhaps with greater zest by the lads and lasses on account of the lifting of the astrological ban on formal marriages.

(6) *The Tazaungdaing or Katein Festival in November.*---

This is the last day of the period during which yellow robes are offered to the monks and such offering is believed to bestow great merit on the donor as well as the donee.

Religious Associations

10. There are more than half a dozen religious associations which give service to the Pagoda in one form or the other :—

(1) *The Zediyingana Pariyatti Association* established in 1895, collects donations in town and offers rice, etc., to the monks of Rangoon. It has a lending library of 6,000 books of scripture and *belles lettres*.

(2) *The Yegyidan Wut Athin*, established in 1937, presents offerings of food, water, light, etc., in memory of the Buddhas at the four main *Tazaungs* on every Sunday and Sabbath day at dawn. The members used to do it daily before the outbreak of the last war.

(3) *Kyanmathanshinye Association* sweeps the platform at least once a week on Wednesdays.

(4) *Thukakayi Association* washes and sweeps the platform once a week on Sundays. Government officers, clerks and students are amongst its members.

(5) *The Water Sellers' Association* also used to sweep the platform on Fridays. They clear the brushwood from the precincts of the pagoda.

(6) *The Parami Aphwe* white-washes the pagodas and shrines on the platform once a week on Sunday; but has its recess during the rainy season.

(7) *Atetpyitsayan Association* sweeps the upper platform and changes the flowers every Sunday at the golden shrine there (36).

11. The Shwedagon captured the imagination of the Burmese many centuries ago and respect for the shrine has never waned. The world may be short of gold but of whatever gold there is among the Buddhists of Burma, a portion is freely donated for the gilding of the Pagoda. Pilgrims come to the Shwedagon from all parts of Burma, and also from across the seas, from Ceylon, Thailand, Nepal, Tibet, China and in pre-war days from Japan also, for nowhere else in the Buddhist world is there a shrine so fully authenticated by the Scriptures. (For the Message of Buddhism—see Appendix C.)

APPENDIX A

STORY OF SIHA BAHU

The Mahavamsa Version is this : About 100 years before the birth of Gautama Buddha the King of a Province in Bengal married the daughter of a King of a Province in Madras and begot a daughter who, according to the astrologers, was destined to become the wife of a lion and was named *kesari*. She was very pretty but her character was so loose that she was banished from the Kingdom. She joined a caravan of carts travelling to Magadha. As the travellers reached a dense forest in Lala State a lion came out of a rock-cave and attacked them. The cartmen ran for safety, but the Princess, remembering the prophecy of the soothsayers, remained where she was, undaunted by the lion's presence. The lion approached her and without hurting her at all carried her on the back to his den. In due course she gave birth to a pair of twins, a son and a daughter. The son was as strong as the father and was called Siha Bahu, the daughter was named Siha Sivali. When they came of age they asked the mother why their father and mother were not of the same kind and appearance. The mother related the whole story, explaining that when their father, the lion, went out in search of food, they were left behind shut up in that cave, the entrance to which was blocked with a boulder and they could not get out. One day as the lion was out in search of prey, Siha Bahu carried his mother and sister, one on each shoulder, and fled towards Bengal. They arrived at a frontier village and met the general of that Province, who happened to be a cousin of the Princess, Siha Bahu's mother. When the lion came back to his den, he did not find his family and felt very sad. He roamed the whole forest in search of them and notfinding them anywhere he approached the

outskirts of towns and villages. The people were so terrified by the presence of the lion that the news was carried to the King, who proclaimed a reward in favour of any person who dared slay the lion. Siha Bahu heard this and although prevented by his mother, accepted the reward and proceeded to the lion's den. The lion was very weak and gladdened by the sight of his son prepared to welcome him. But, Siha Bahu shot him with an arrow as soon as he got within range. The first three shots were ineffective, the darts ricochetting back towards the striker after hitting the lion's forehead, on account of the power of paternal love exercised by the lion at that moment. When the prince again attacked him with another shot, the lion lost his temper and shook his body as if about to retaliate. The arrow then pierced his body from the front to the back, killing him on the spot. Siha Bahu then brought the lion's head with the mane to the capital. His grand-father, the King, had during his temporary absence died and the Ministers offered him the throne. Siha Bahu abdicated in favour of his uncle, the general who had married his mother, and went himself with some followers back to the rock-cave in the grove of Lala. He established a town at the place with Siha Sivali as his bride, giving birth to sixteen pairs of twins, the eldest of whom was Vijaya, who is said to have founded a kingdom in Ceylon. So far is the Mahavamsa story.

Tradition has it that he was thereafter afflicted with a severe headache, which the physicians could not cure and the sooth-sayers advised him to worship the figure of a lion, as a sop to his conscience. This is said to be the origin of the practice of placing lions in front of pagodas (40).

APPENDIX B

FOUNDATION OF KYAIKTIYO PAGODA

During the lifetime of Gautama Buddha there were two hermits, Teiktha Dhamma and Thihayaza, living in the sylvan shades of the mountainous tracts of the Thatôn District. One day the elder hermit found two eggs on the seashore and took one for himself and gave the other to his brother. Out of these two eggs were hatched two brothers who were brought up by the hermits. The elder boy was called Teiktha Dhamma Thihayaza and he became King of Thatôn at the age of 16. The younger boy died at the age of ten and was reborn as the son of a rich man in India and became Shin (Saint) Gavampati. He had the faculty of knowing his previous existence and came over by air to the two hermits at Thatôn. At the instance of the hermits he returned to India and invited Gautama Buddha to Thatôn. Gautama Buddha accepted the invitation and came over to Thatôn by aerial journey together with 500 disciples and was given a grand reception. The two hermits and the hermit of Kelatha were also present, and asked the Buddha to leave some relics in remembrance of His visit. The Buddha gave the hermits two Hairs each, six in all. The younger hermit enshrined one Hair in a pagoda on the Zingyaik Hill and another Hair in a pagoda on the Zwègabin Hill. The elder hermit always carried the two Hairs of the Buddha in the top-knot of his hair. The Kelatha hermit enshrined one Hair on the Kelatha Hill, while the remaining Hair he carried in his top-knot; and on his death the elder hermit (Teiktha Dhamma) retrieved it and added it to the two he already possessed. When he was 80 years old Sakka came down to the earth, and bringing the King (Teiktha Dhamma Thihayaza) along to the

hermit, told him of his impending death and advised him to entrust the Sacred Hairs to his adopted son, the King, to be enshrined in a pagoda at a suitable spot. The hermit agreed to do so on one condition only, and that is that, if the Sakka could procure a boulder exactly similar in appearance to the shape of his head, he would make over the Sacred Hairs and not otherwise. This the Sakka did and the hermit took out the three Hairs from his top-knot and made them over to Sakka and the King, who enshrined them inside that boulder and built a small pagoda $3\frac{1}{2}$ cubits high on it, which stands to-day on the brink of a precipice. The pagoda is called *Kyāik-ithi-yo* meaning (the old hermit's pagoda)--- now called *Kyāiktiyo*.

APPENDIX C

THE MESSAGE OF BUDDHISM

In presenting their offerings of candles, flowers, rice, small paper flags, etc., before the images of the Buddha or the *pongyis* (Buddhist clergy), the Buddhist lay devotee bows himself thrice, the palms of the hand being placed together, the legs touching the ground and the thumbs touching the forehead ; then he rises to a sitting posture and after repeating the formula “ I seek refuge in the Buddha, the Law and the Assembly (of Buddhist monks)” he promises to take on himself observance of the precepts of the law.

The Buddha as a young man was very concerned about the amount of suffering He saw around Him, suffering connected with birth, disease, old age, death, running the whole span of man's life. Finally He left his father's court, His wife and new-born child to try to discover for men a way of release from suffering. He studied the philosophies of the leading teachers of His day, He underwent every form of asceticism, but in none of these did He find the answer to his problem. At last understanding came to Him under the Bo Tree at Buddhagaya. He saw that suffering springs from desire, craving, lust, attachment to people and things, in a word selfishness. To escape from suffering men must get free from desire and break all bonds of attachment and the way to do this was to follow the noble eight-fold path of right belief, right aim, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right contemplation.

This enlightenment gave the Buddha the spiritual freedom which He sought for all men. In that moment He could, had He

wished have entered the spiritual state of *Nirvana*, but for the sake of all living creatures He decided to stay on in the world and preach His gospel of how to attain Perfect Peace. For forty-five years He wandered round preaching His message in Central India and inspiring a band of devoted disciples who were to carry His teaching in successive generations to every country of the East. At the age of eighty He died and went to that blessed state of *Nirvana*, the full enjoyment of which He had in the interests of mankind denied himself for so many years. Cessation of selfish desire and emancipation from the three cardinal evils of *lobha*, *dosa*, *moha* (lust, ill-will, ignorance) must be achieved to attain *Nirvana*.

It is interesting to note that, strictly speaking, there is no Deity and no worship in Buddhism. Every person is the master of his own destiny ; his present is the result of his past thoughts and deeds, and his future will be the combined result of his past and his present thoughts and deeds. No other individual can help or mar his destiny, but others who by their own efforts found the true path can show him the way to it. Buddha, who founded the true religion by His own efforts has shown the way for others to follow. One of the most honoured epithets of Buddha is therefore the simple one of Teacher. It is in honour to Him that the original Shwedagon was erected and it is to honour His memory and to be reminded of His teachings that pious Buddhist pilgrims visit the Shwedagon (front cover and 13) and the thousands of lesser shrines that dot the green landscape of Burma.

The message of Buddhism is that happiness and final bliss cannot be attained by ordinary means. It is not by almsgiving, as has been usually preached, nor by mere observance of the rules of moral conduct that the final knowledge can be

gained. Almsgiving and observance of precepts by themselves may not bring about total emancipation but they are essential qualities required of a Path Finder. Buddhism has a special message to give to the world, which has not been proclaimed by any other system of thought. Buddhism teaches practical ways of gaining insight. Only by inner search can spiritual experience be discovered and nurtured. In this search one becomes aware that there is nothing constant or permanent. Life consists of momentary formations and dissolutions both in the physical plane and in the mental plane. The realization of such changing phenomenon in one's own body and mind is the only basis on which both the conviction and the practice of the spiritual life can be built and the fear of death dispelled.

Some people will personally testify to what they felt and thought and reacted in the different stages of the mental and spiritual training on the way to a fuller realization of that peace and tranquillity which the world cries for and which only Buddhism and Buddhist practice can help to attain.

Buddhism preaches universal love and as such is above politics. Buddhism, like other religions of the Orient, is often misunderstood and misrepresented as a type of Animism or worship of the spirits which it is not, and idolatry as understood in the West is strictly prohibited by it. The essence of Buddhism is universal love and its final goal is the attainment of eternal peace through scientific training of the mind. "This venerable religion (Buddhism)" says Sir Edwin Arnold, "has in it the eternity of an universal hope, the immortality of a boundless love, an element of faith in final good and the proudest assertion ever made of human freedom." "Sabbapapassa akaranam Kusalassa Upasampada Sacittapariyodapanam Ettain Buddhanasasanam." "To cease from evil, to do good and to purify one's mind. Such is the teaching of the Buddha."

APPENDIX D

GUIDE CHART

The visitor will enter the premises of the Pagoda by the western approach and will be conducted around the Pagoda in clock-wise direction, *i.e.*, in a right wheel and shown the following objects :—

(1) Two pice (half-penny) *Tazaung* at the head of the Western Entrance, with gilt pillars and a dancing *nat* (spirit) on the roof.

(2) Figure of King Okkalapa on the wall (West-north-west corner)—Builder of the Pagoda.

(3) Three dainty damsels offering flowers and worshipping at the shrines. “A thing of beauty is a joy for ever.”

(4) Two recently renovated shrines near the Western Entrance. Note the squatting sphinxes above, the standing Sakkas in the middle, and the roaring lions on their haunches, below.

(5) Pagoda with figures of animals, symbols representing different planets or days of the week. The building on its left is a *Tazaung* containing the Mahaghanta Bell. The Banyan tree above was planted by one of the Trustees half a century ago.

(6) Mahaghanta Bell (16 tons) $7' 6 \times \frac{2}{3}' \times 1'$, presented by Singu Min, son of Sinbyushin, son of Alaungpra, in 1778.

(7) Banyan tree, at the North-west corner of the platform. It has grown from a sapling of the Mahabodhi tree brought over by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of India, then President of India's Constituent Assembly, and planted by H.E. Sao Shwe Thaik, on 4th January 1948, Burma's Independence Day.

(8) *Sandawdwin Tazaung* with a shrine over the sacred well, where the relics were washed.

(9) *Zediyingana* Association Building. The Association established in 1895, lends books from a library of over 6,000 volumes, collects alms and distributes rice to monasteries. Annual Scripture examinations of a high order are held for monks and prizes offered.

(10) *Chidawya Tazaung* with the symbolical foot-print of the Buddha. At its entrance stand two Indian sentinels on guard. Water on the foot-print is used by the pilgrims to apply to their eyes and ears.

(11) A symbolical foot-print of Buddha, replica of those at Shwezettaw in Minbu District, guarded by a dragon. It rests in a shallow well with water inside, offered by pilgrims.

(12) Buddha's sitting image in regalia to subdue the haughty King Jambupadi. The face is covered with gold.

(13) Shwedagon from the north side, showing three shrines, half gilt on the upper terrace.

(14) This *Tazaung*, with gilt pillars and carved turrets is the *Kannaze Tazaung* containing the Delphic Oracle or wishing stone. It marks the sacred spot where King Okkalapa made an asseveration.

(15) The image of the Buddha inside the vault where King Okkalapa made an asseveration. Just outside the vault is the Wishing Stone, counterpart of the Delphic Oracle, where one's wishes are usually granted. The consultant must lift the stone after *shikoing* or bowing to the *Sudaungkyi* and saying to himself thus : " May this stone be light if my wish will be granted." If it feels light his wish will be granted ; if heavy,

no. Similar wishing stones can be found in four or five other places of the Pagoda platform.

(16) Behind this white *Tazaung*, in front of which the author with a black jacket, is standing, can be seen (on left) half of the building in which can be found the sitting image of the Buddha with a pair of eyes of unequal size, said to have been built by or in memory of *Shin Itzagona* (Assagona) who could turn lead into gold in the Pagan Era, more than 900 years ago.

(17) The image of Buddha with eyes of unequal size, the left eye being perceptibly bigger than the right. It is said to have some association with *Shin Itzagona* of Pagan fame, who could turn lead into gold.

(18) This white pagoda is the *Naungdawgyi*, built by Bayinnaungdawgyi. It is reputed to be on the spot where the eight Hairs of Gaudama Buddha were deposited on their first arrival.

(19) “*Thwezekan*” (Blood Washing Tank), to the north of the Shwedagon, with the original World Peace Pagoda, in white colour. The water in the tank has much shrunk.

(20) Bell *Tazaung* (Maha Tisadda Ghanta). Bronze bell weighing about 40 tons, 8½ feet high, 7 feet 8 inches wide and 1 foot thick. Presented by King Tharrawaddy in 1841. This King also re-gilt the Pagoda then. A lay devotee (a noted artist) is seen striking the bell.

(21) Three tall pillars, one white on the right and two black on the left are *Tagundaings* or sacred pillars which confer health, wealth and success on the donors. In between them stand two white shrines. The smaller one on the left is the concrete model of Sinbyushin's *Hti* (umbrella or crown) 1774 A.D. The bigger and taller shrine or model on its right

is that of King Mindon's *Hti* hoisted in 1871 A.D. 33 feet high, $1\frac{1}{4}$ tons in weight.

(22) The *Tazaung* on the extreme right is that of the *Yegyidaw Wut* Association, established in 1937.

(23) The Eastern Prayer Hall was rebuilt in 1940 by U Myaing and Daw Le Kin. The image in the centre niche has its right palm turned upwards. The cash offerings outside are allocated for different purposes connected with the Pagoda.

(24) This image of Buddha is unique. It has its right palm turned upwards. It is held very sacred by the pilgrims.

(25) Damazedi inscriptions containing three stone slabs which record the story of the two brothers Tapussa and Bhallika and the foundation of the Pagoda in Burmese, Pali and Mon. The slabs were put up by the Mon King Damazedi in the year 1485. These inscriptions can be found about half-way down on the left (north) of the Eastern Entrance.

(25A) The *Tazaung* in the middle, rather black in colour has five gilt spires re-gilt in 1939 by Dr. U Nyo. It has pillars inlaid with glass mosaic. The *Tazaung* on its left is the one which stands at the top of the Eastern Entrance.

(26) Members of the *Thukakayi Athin* washing and sweeping the Pagoda platform on a Sunday, as on every other Sunday. They are seen here doing their job well at the South east corner of the platform.

(27) *Chidawya* (Symbolical Foot-print of the Buddha) with 108 divisions marked on it showing the different seas, mountains, forests, etc. It can be found in a *Tazaung* near the

south-east corner of the quadrangle of the platform on the way to the Sacred Banyan tree.

(28) Bo tree—sacred fig or Banyan tree, looked after by the Mahabodhi Society founded in 1925. It has sprung from a seed brought from the Holy Land of India. It is ceremoniously fed with water in May every year. It is at the South-east corner of the Pagoda platform.

(29) Gilt *Tazaung* in front of the Trust Office where distinguished visitors sign the Visitors' Book. This is the resting place for distinguished visitors. The Trust Office behind it was built in 1926.

(30) Next to it on the right is the Curio Gallery with a collection of old Pagodas, images and curios.

(30A) The picturesque *Tazaung* on the extreme right is the one facing the South Entrance containing images of considerable age. This has recently been renovated and puts on a smart appearance.

(31) *Tazaung* with the turret at the top of the Southern Stairway, rebuilt by a Chinese Devotee in 1936.

(32) Sino-Burmese *Tazaung* (bigger building) of the Chinese Merited Association founded in 1898, with 28 images of the Buddhas.

(32A) On its right is a typical Chinese *Tazaung* in joss house style. The beautiful image inside is of the best type of alabaster from Sagyin near Mandalay.

(33) Figures of Sakka—Lord of the Heavens (above) and his human consort Mè Lamu, below on the wall, West-south-west corner. King Okkalapa was their son.

(34) *Tazaung* with a reclining figure of Buddha, 28 feet long, and Burmese paintings above depicting legend of the Kyaiktiyo Pagoda. At his feet is his faithful brother Ananda,

and in front his two disciples, Shin Sariputta and Shin Moggalana.

(35) A standing image of the Buddha said to have been returned from England. Behind it is a meditation chamber.

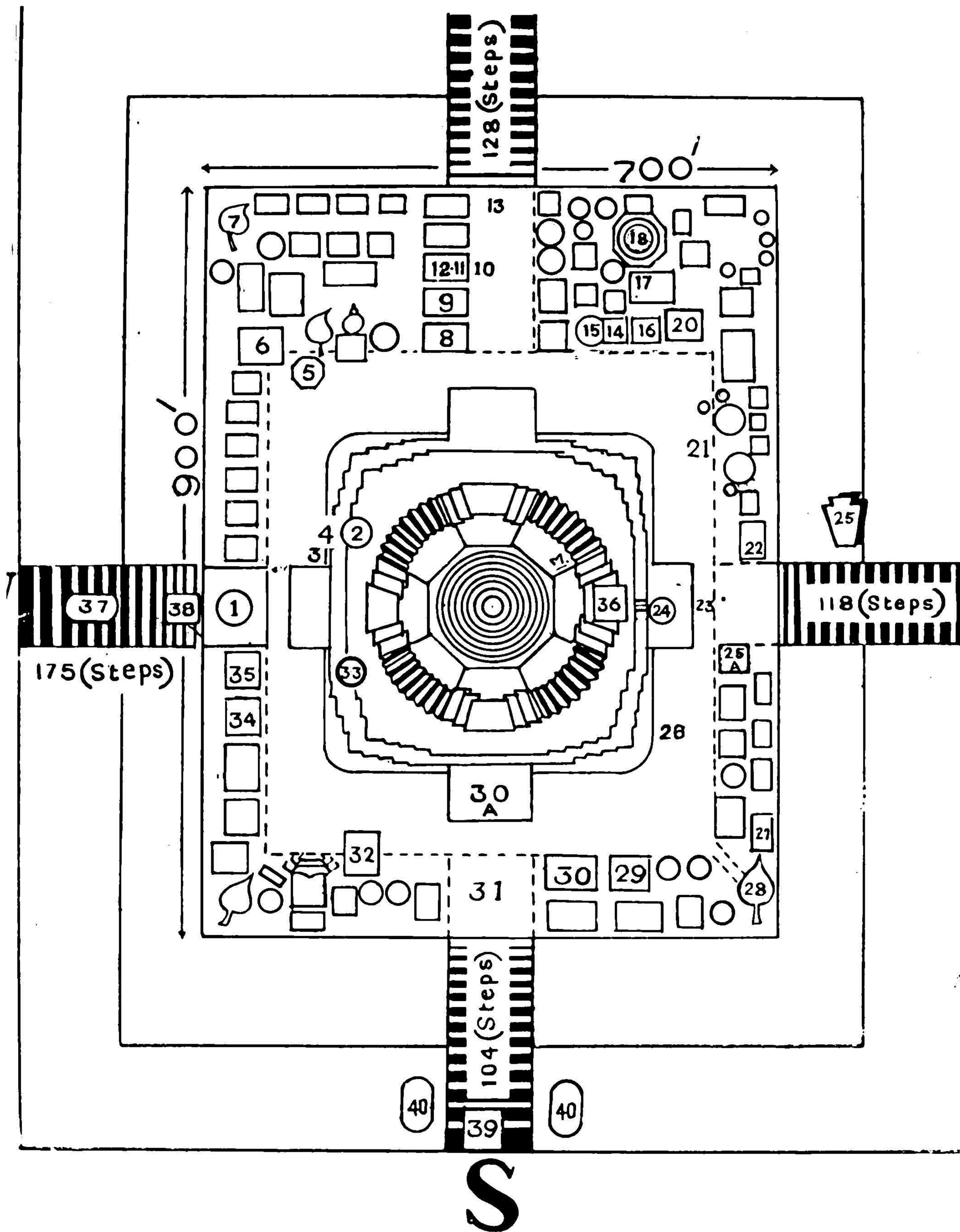
(36) The golden shrine on the upper terrace with an image inside the vault. Water and flowers are offered there by an association every Sunday morning. On the wall of the Pagoda to the left of this vault gold leaves were laid by Lord Listowel, Secretary of State for Burma, Sir Hubert Rance, the last Governor of British Burma, and Mr. F. E. Stanton, Plenipotentiary Extraordinary of America, who attended the Burma Independence Celebrations.

(37) Part of the Western Stairway.

(38) Upper part of the Western Stairway, by which distinguished visitors usually approach and leave the Pagoda.

(39) The Southern Approach to the Shwedagon with the leogryph. The notice on the left should read "Footwear prohibited".

(40) Leogryphs or *Chinthas* at the foot of the Southern Approach to the Pagoda, about 30 feet high, one on each side. They are saying "Good-Bye" to the departing visitor.

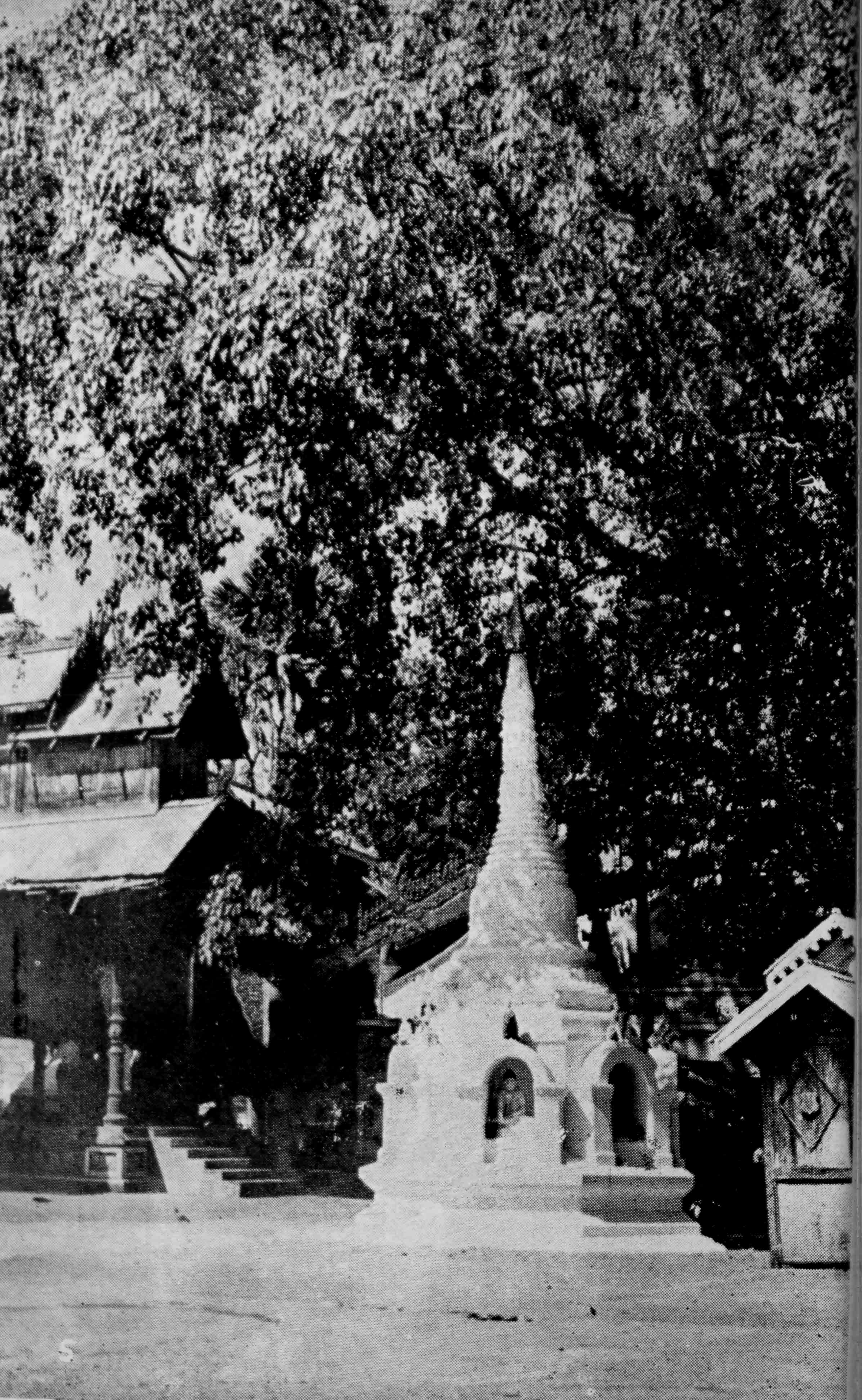


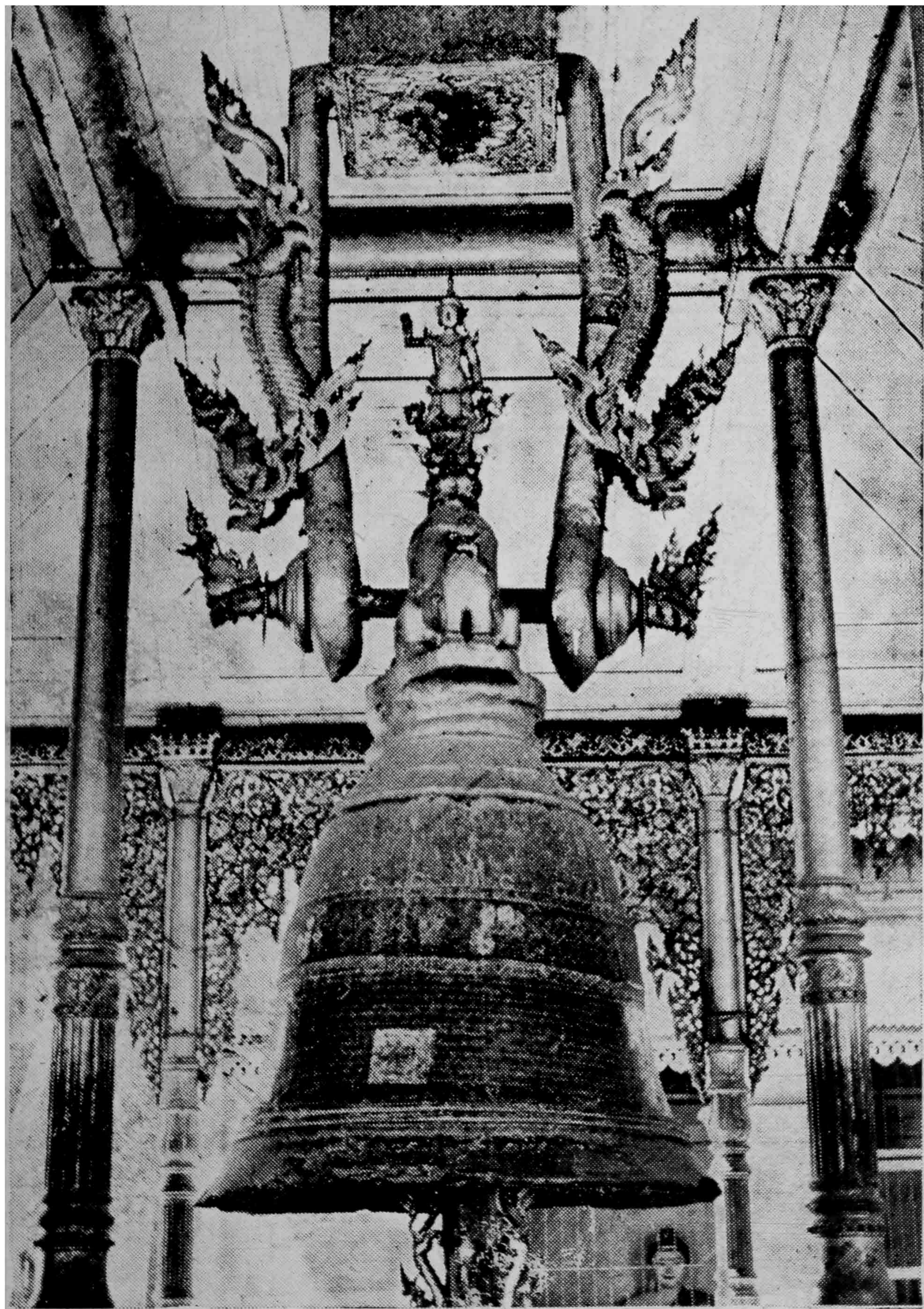










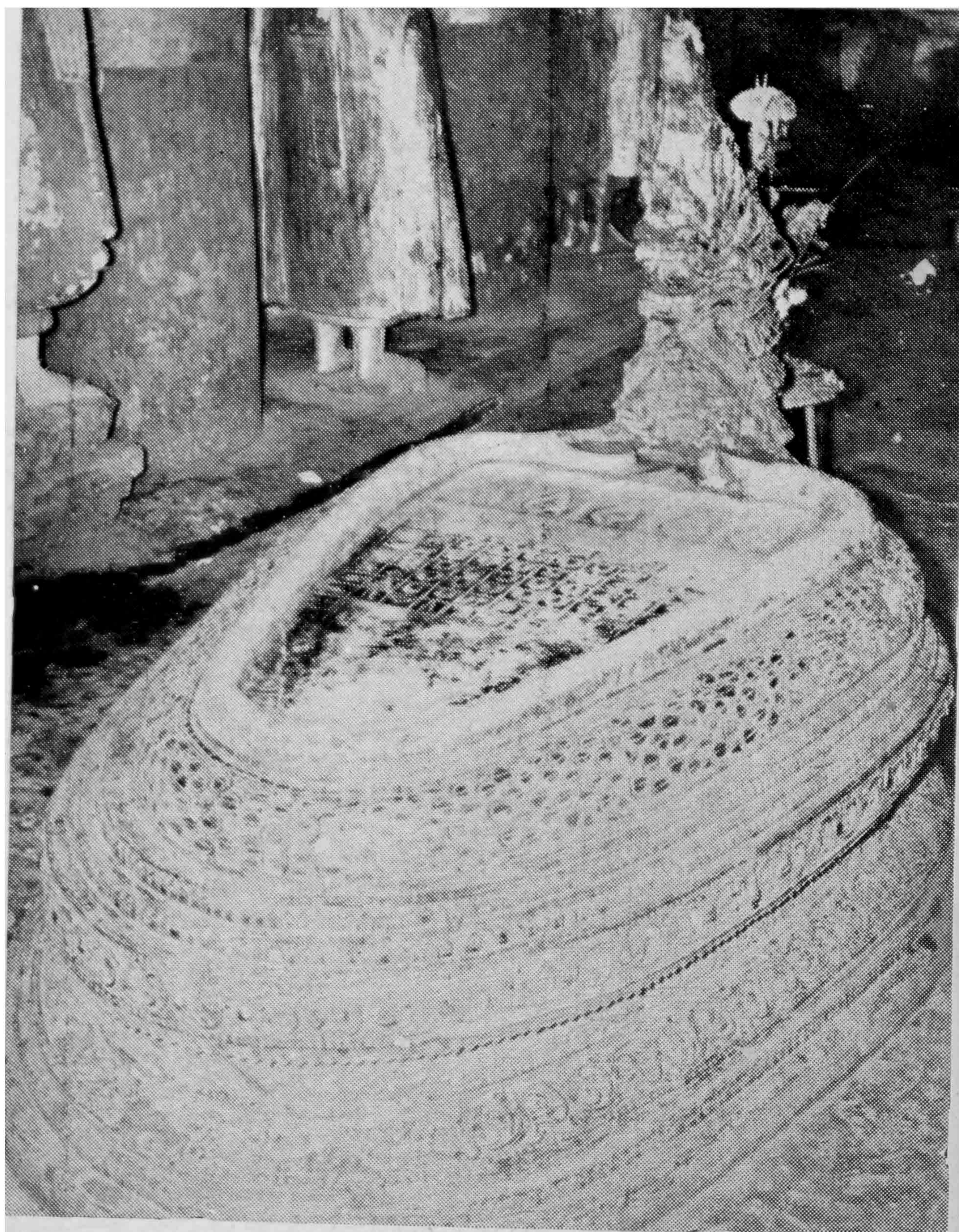






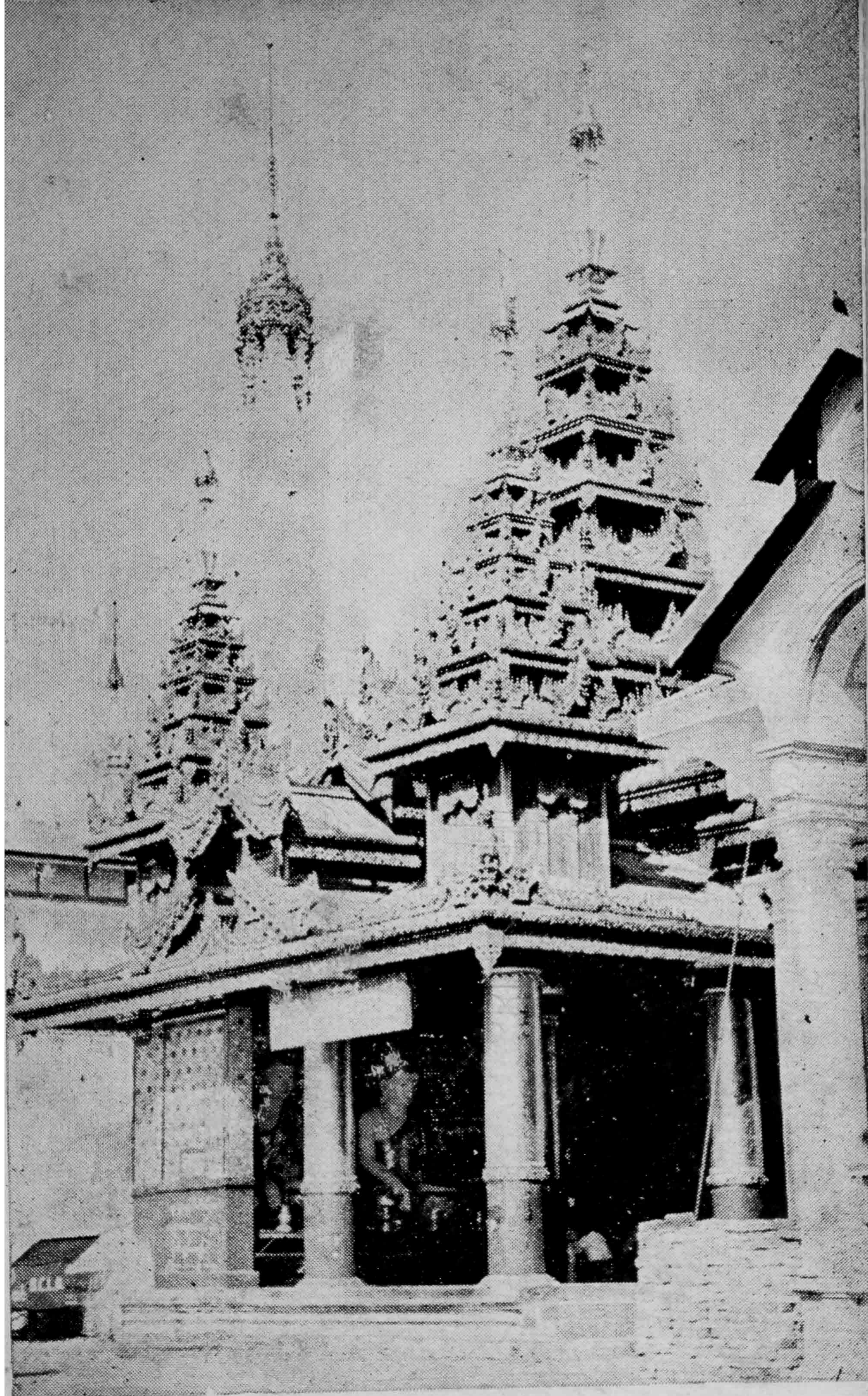


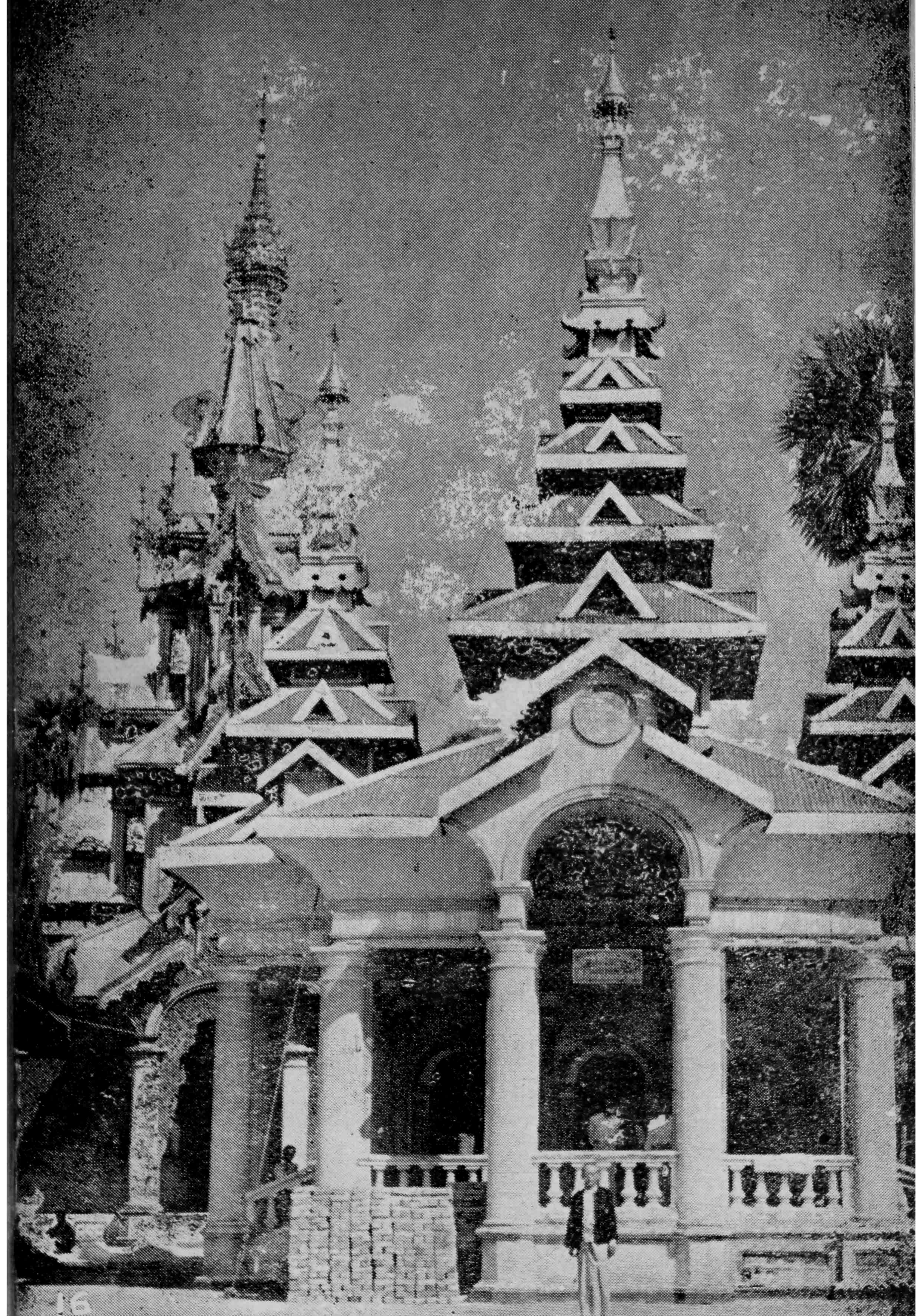




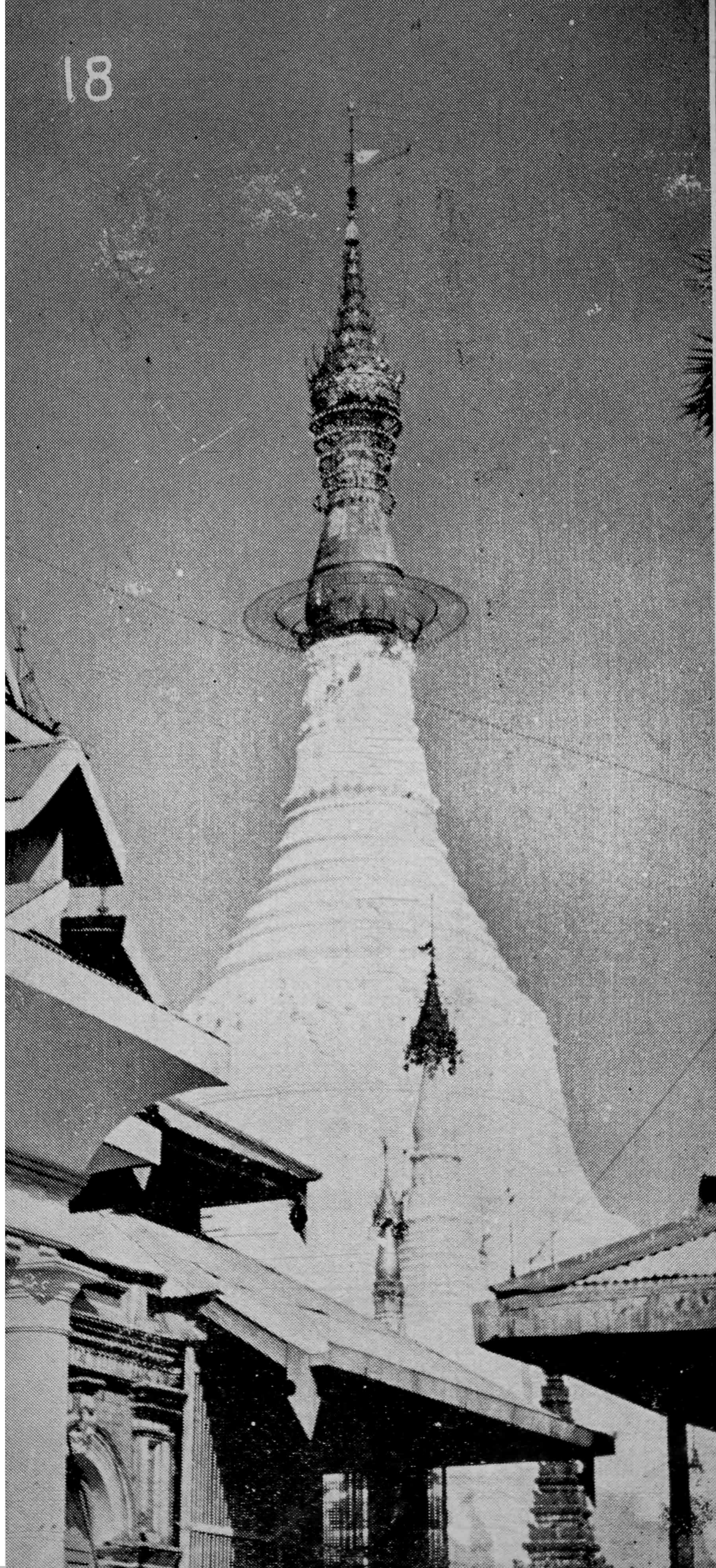


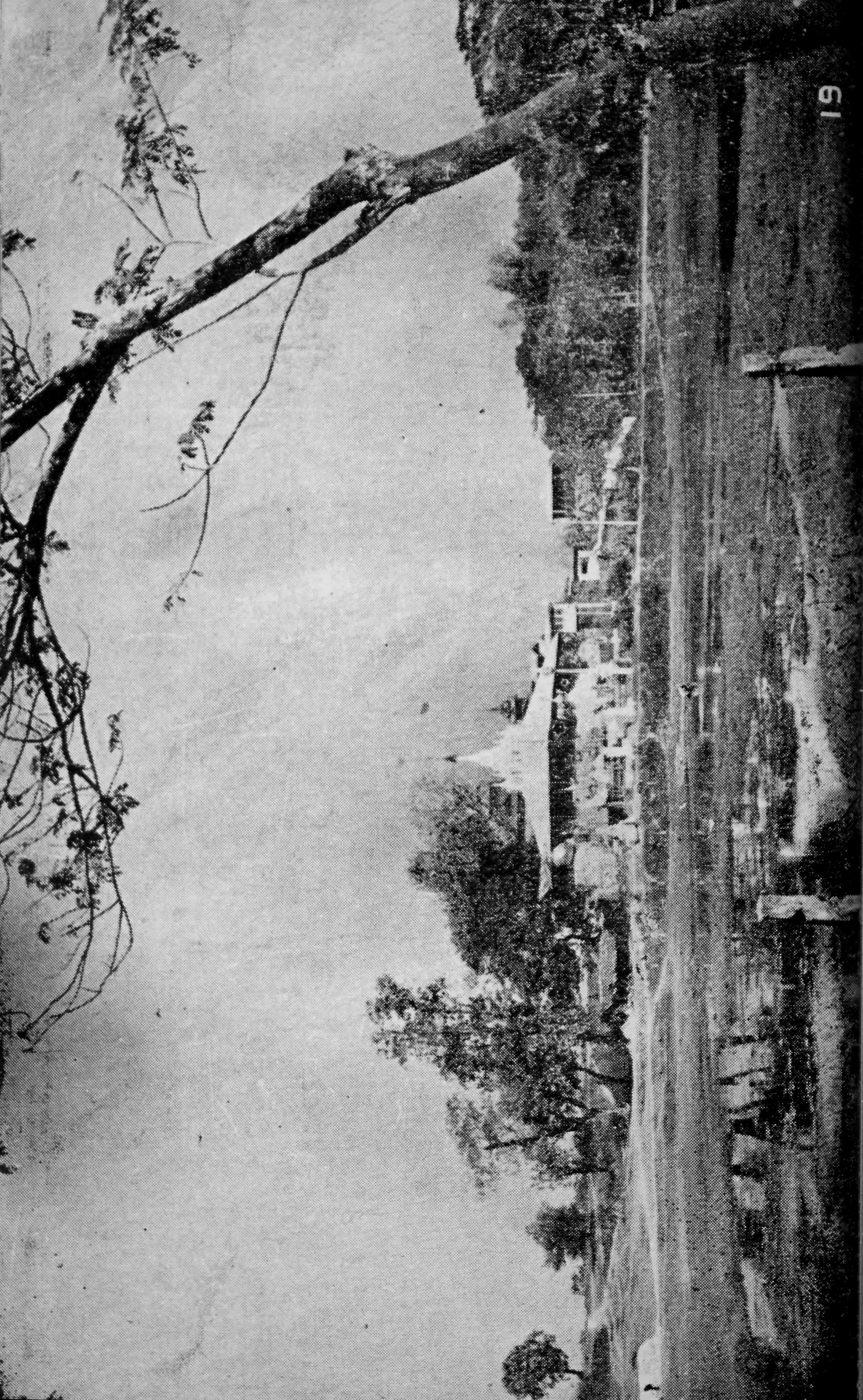






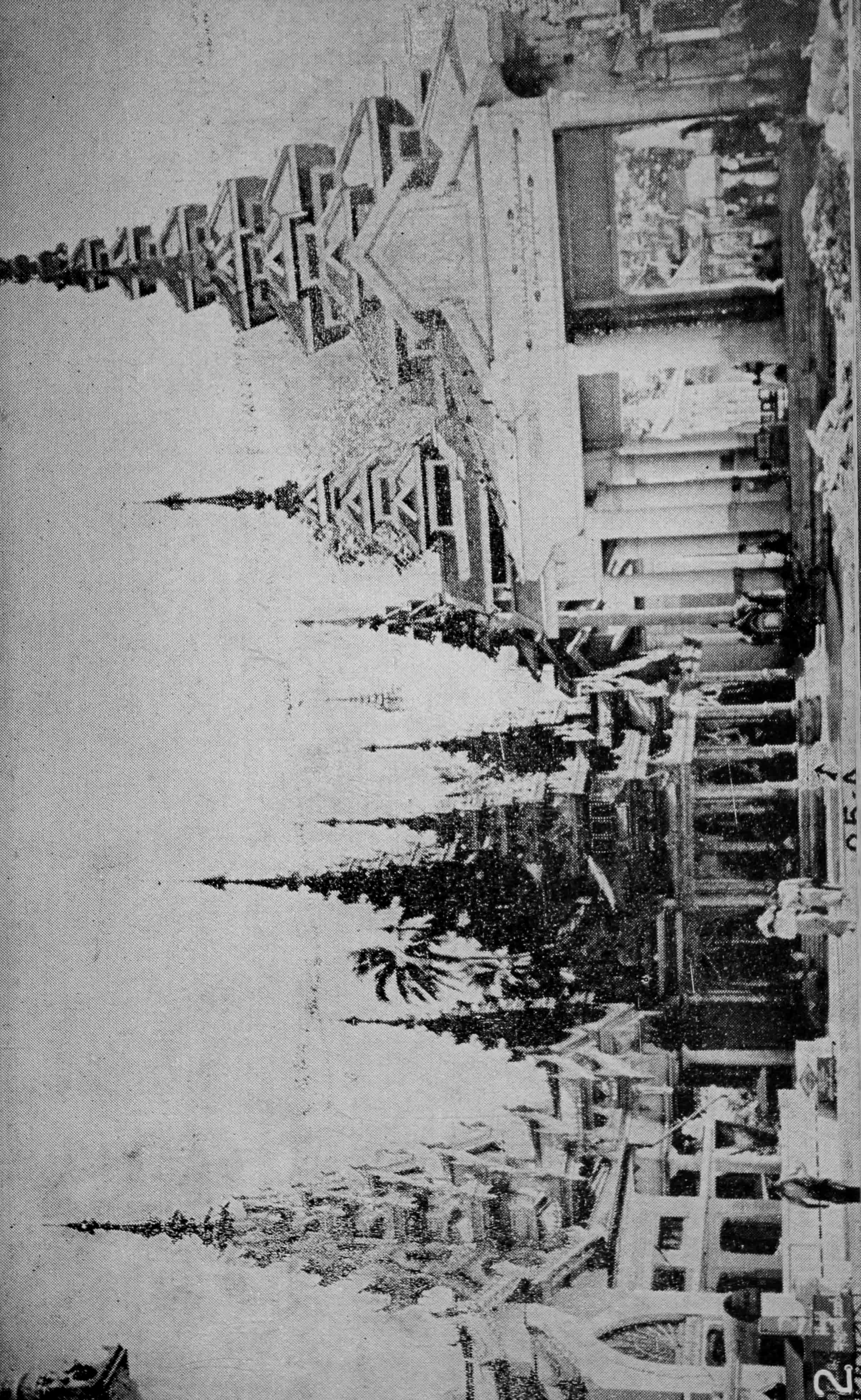


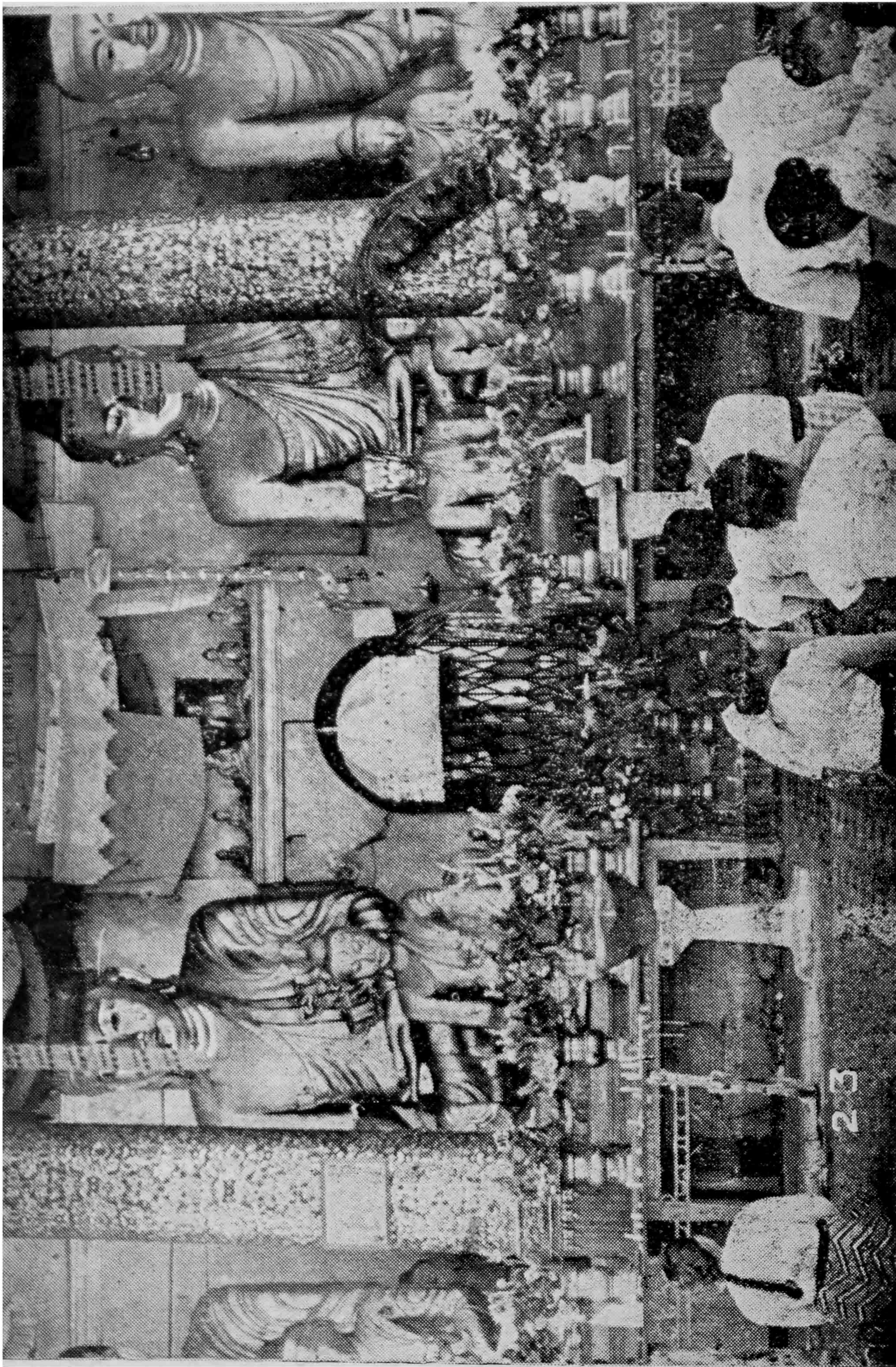




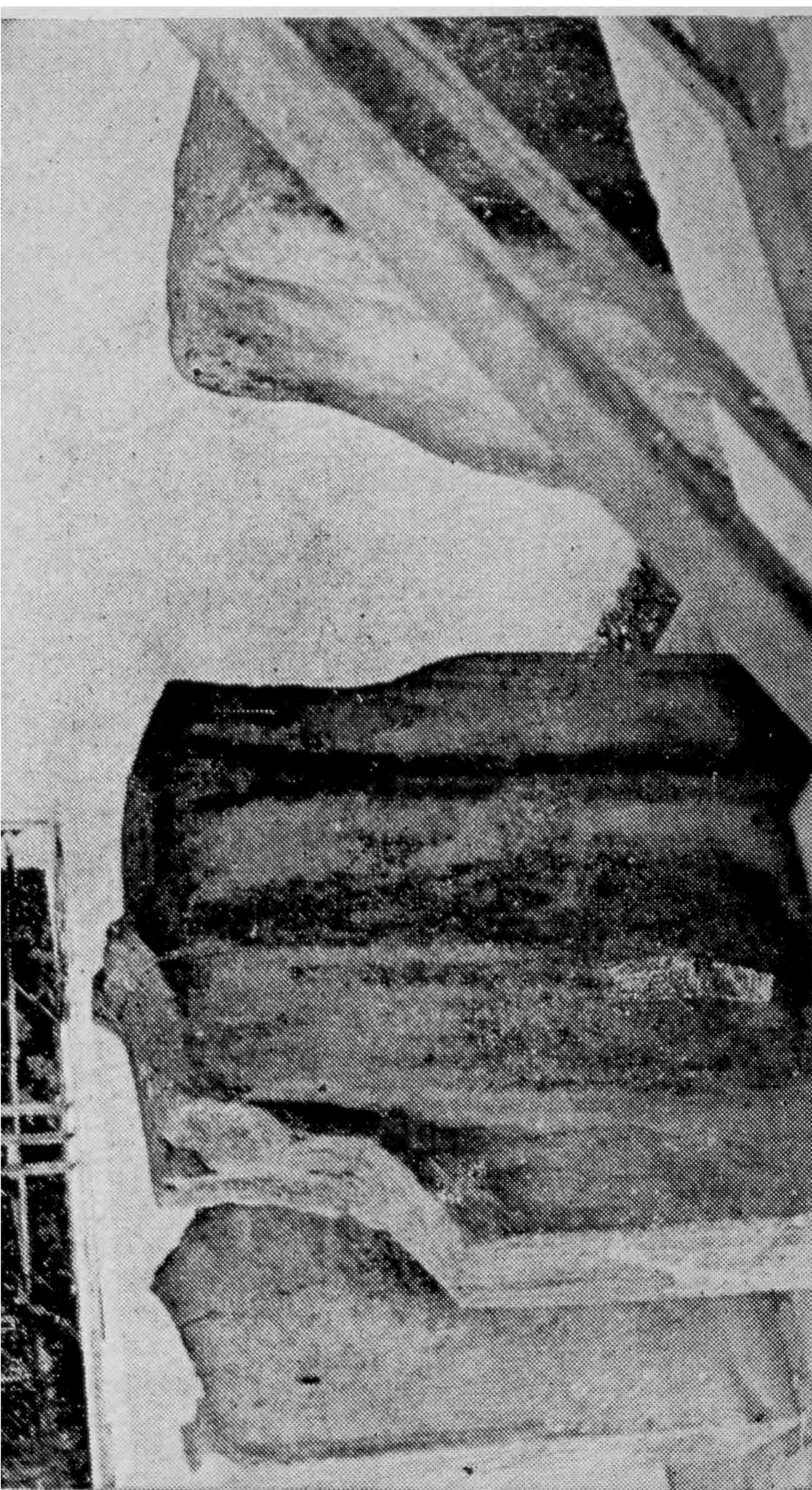


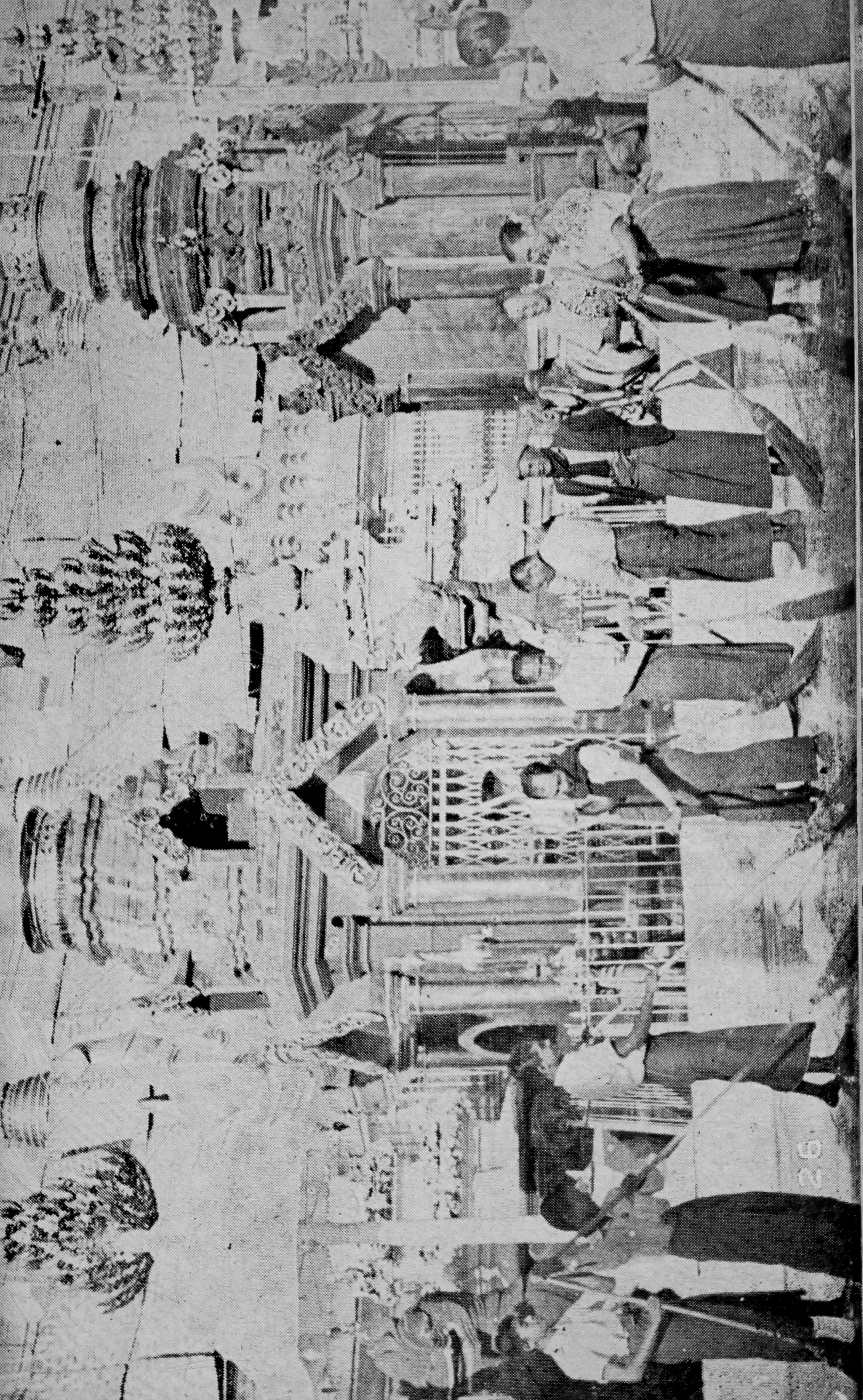


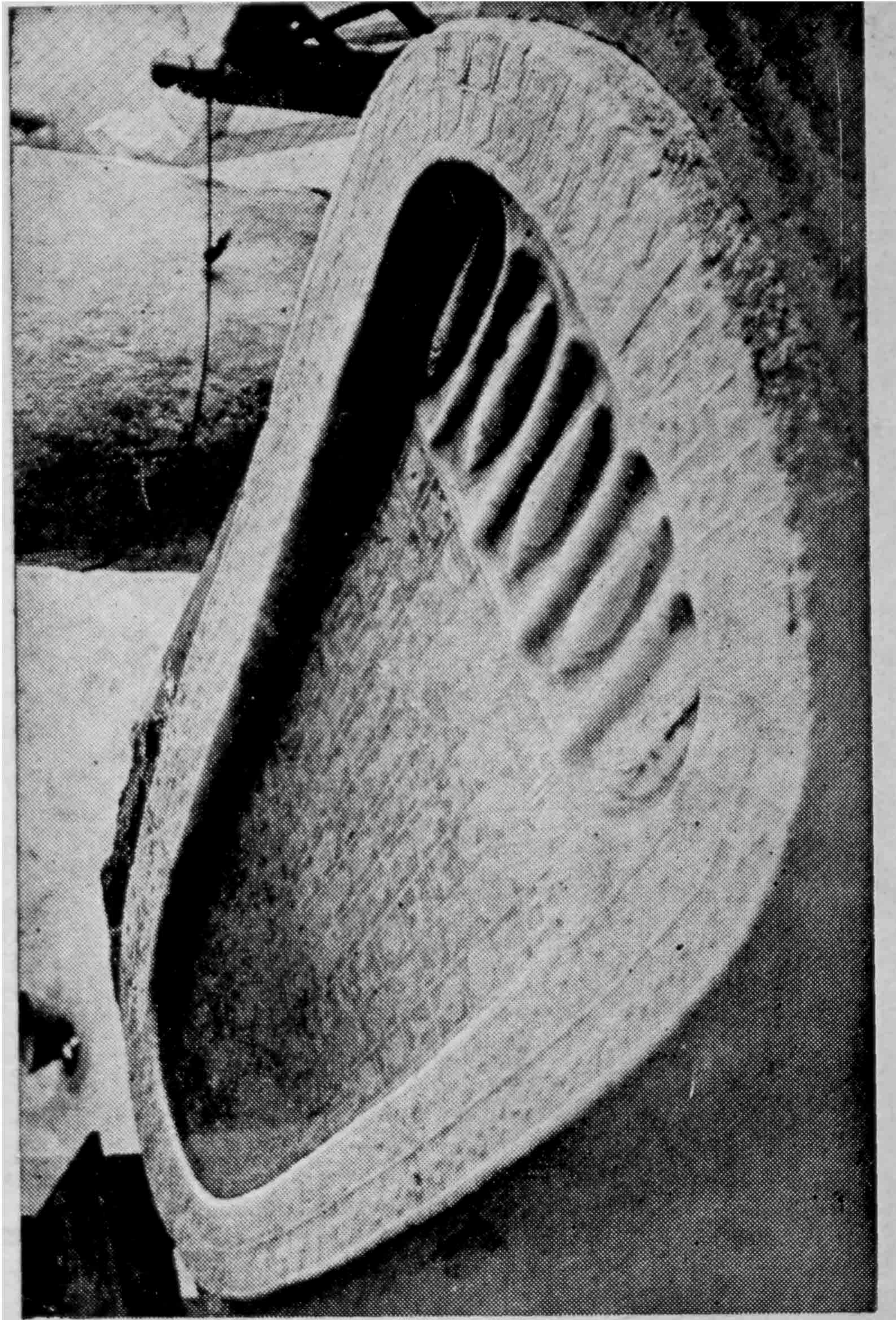








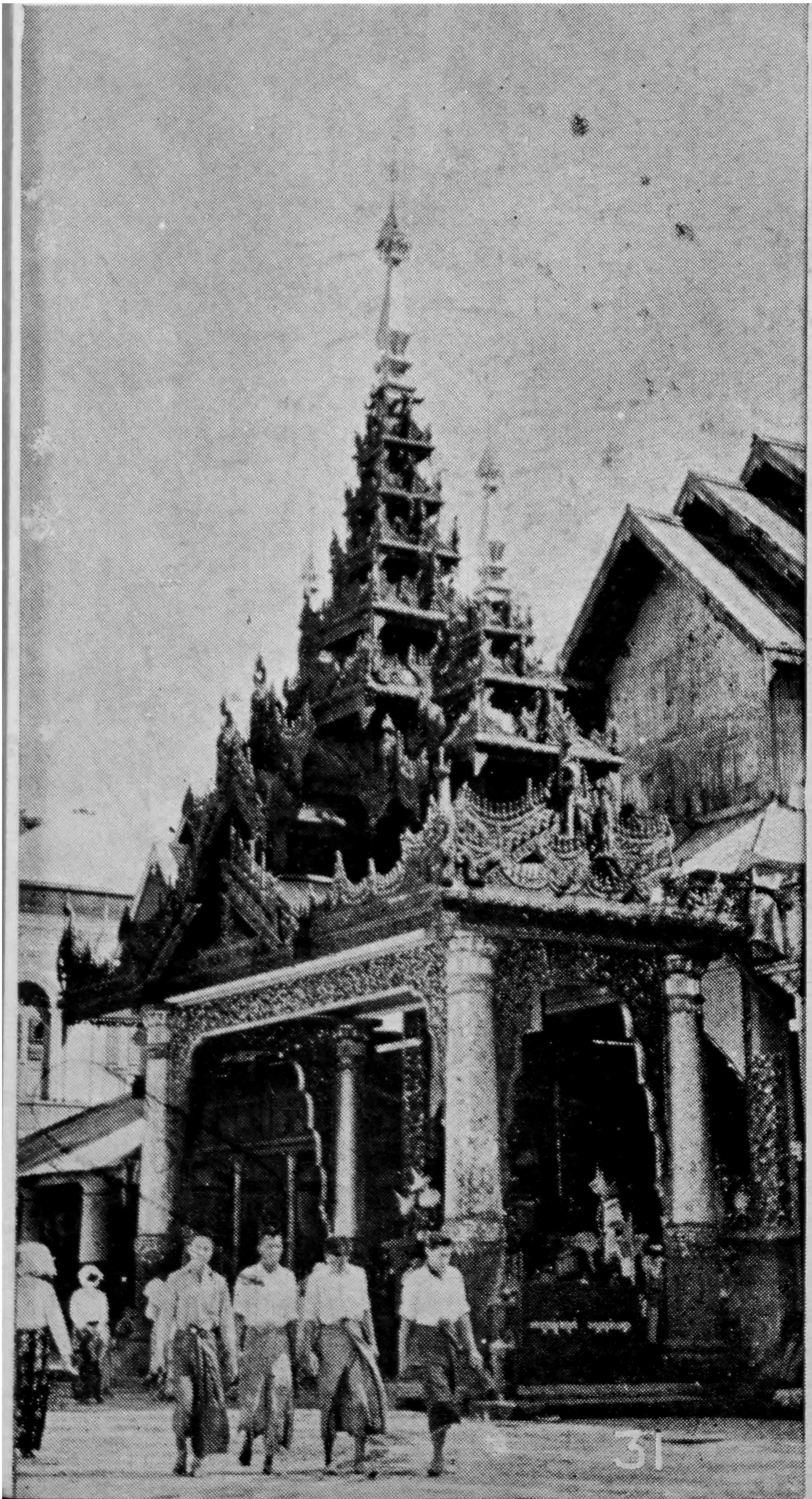


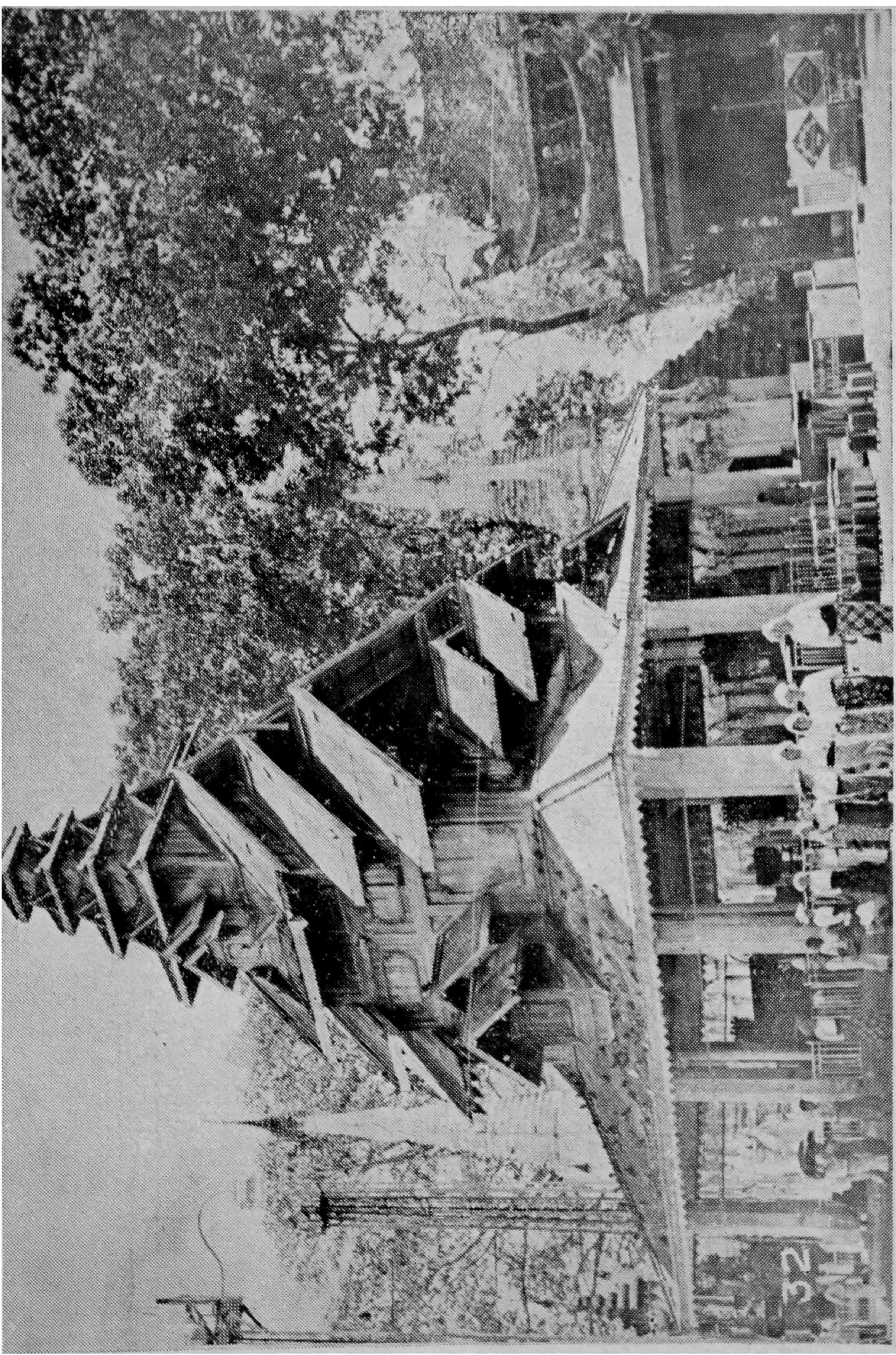




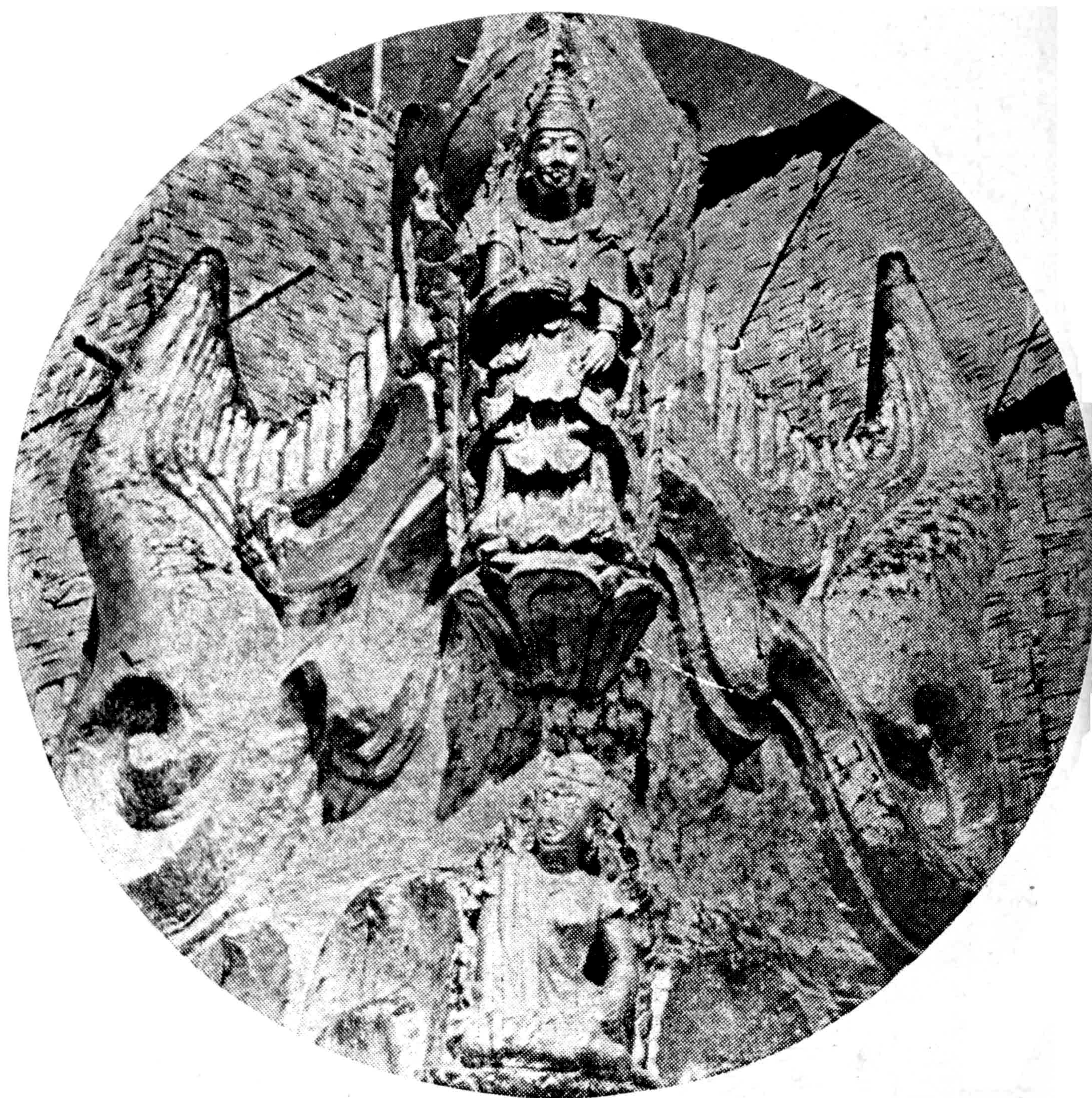


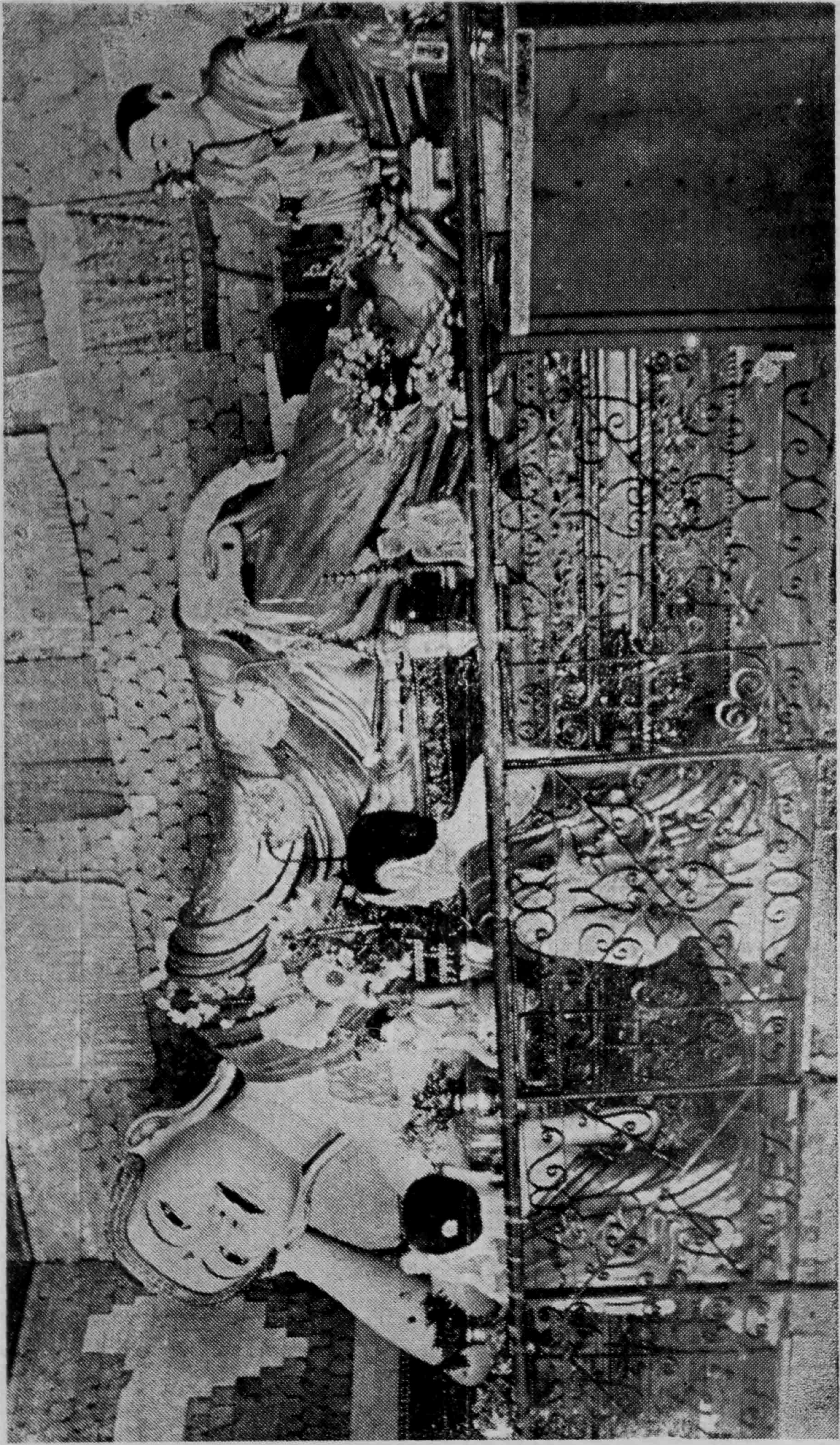






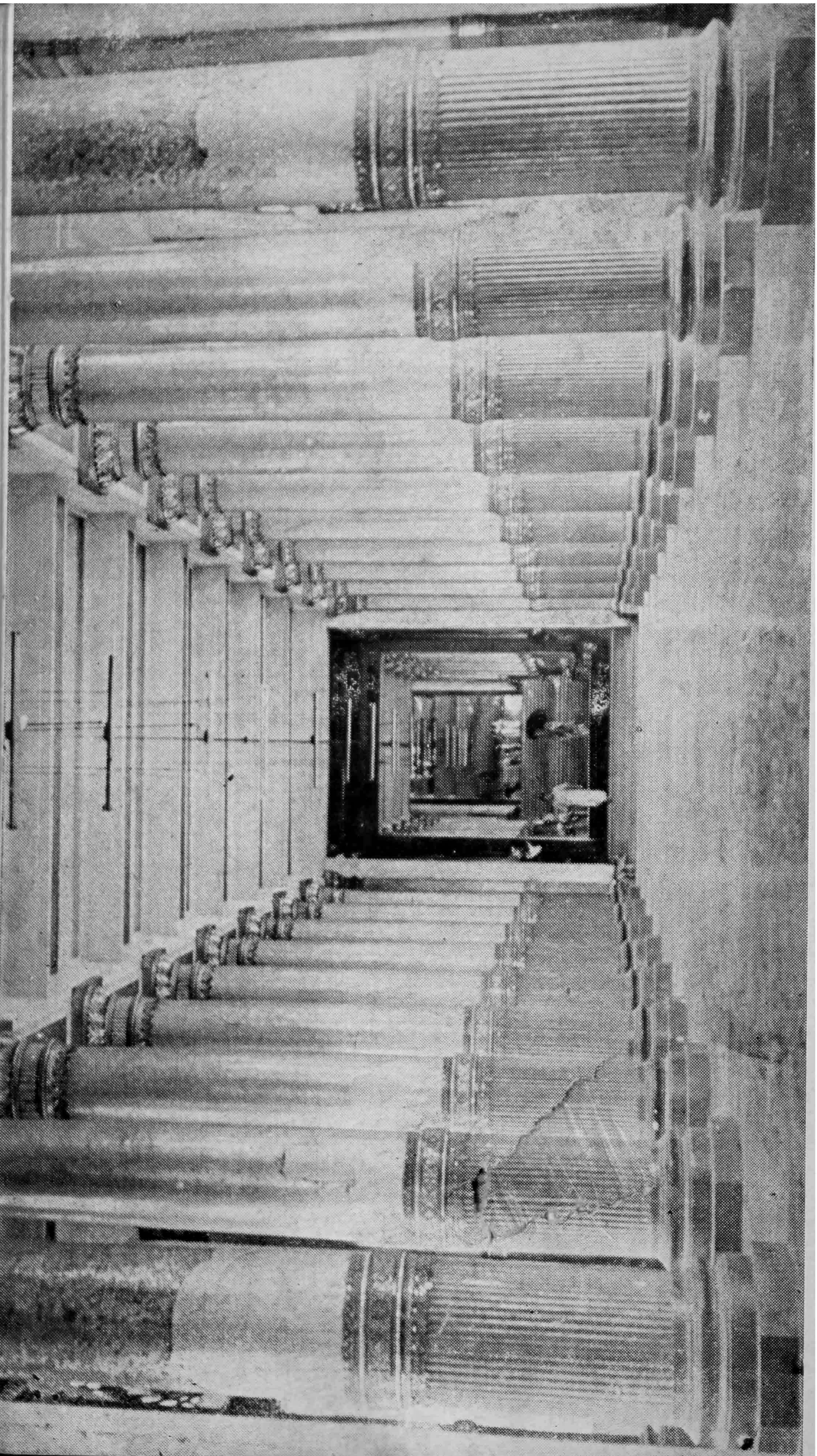
32-A

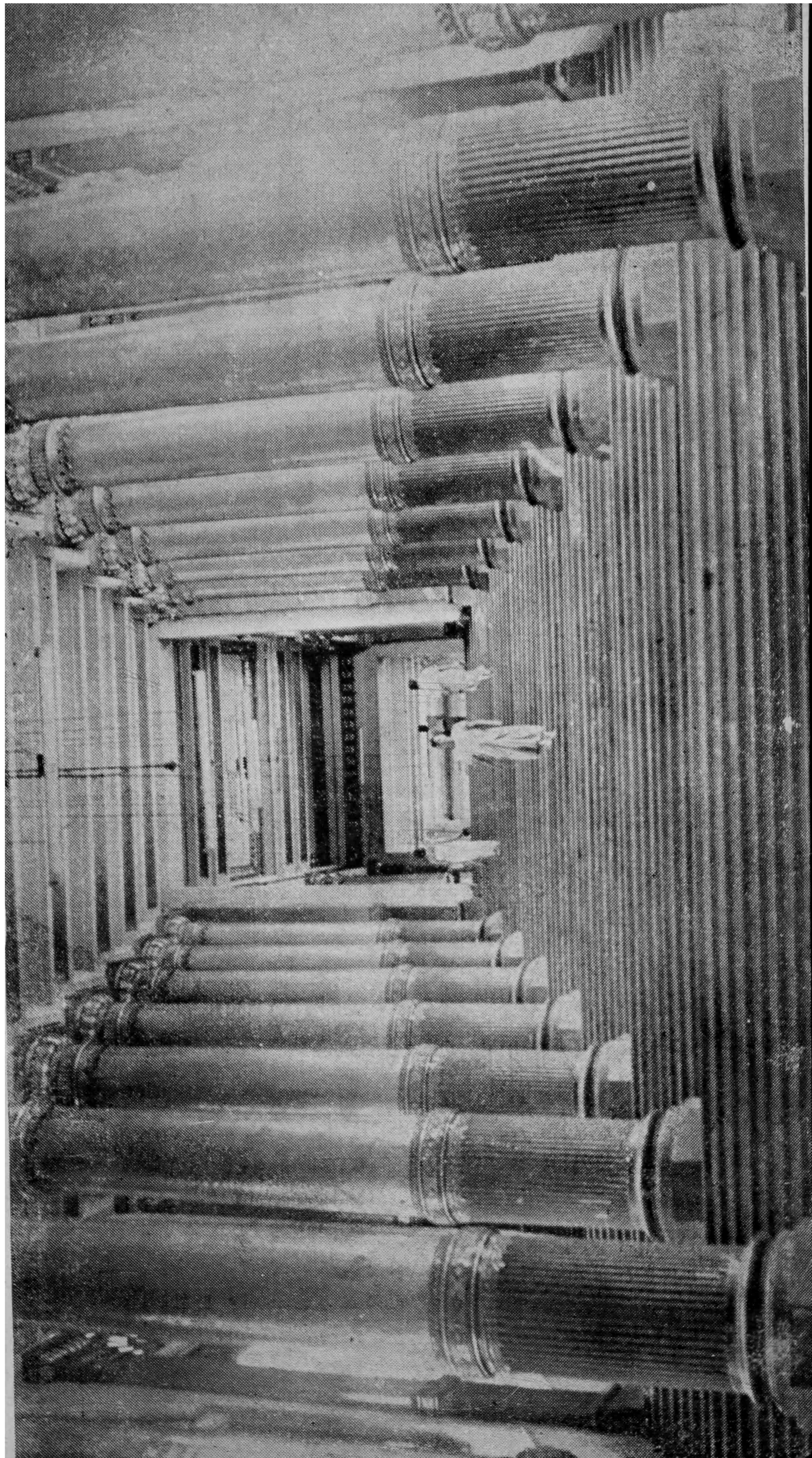












SKETCH OF THE PAGODA

(with parts indicated).

